

to the cause of saying that everyone should be equal when they paid their fare to ride a bus. That ignited the civil rights movement.

We know that the mother of civil rights, Rosa Parks, was the catalyst in bringing about the civil rights laws that we now know because when Rosa Parks refused to get up from her seat, it was the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King who said: I will not stand for this woman to be removed from a bus and not fight for cause. Indeed, she is a drum major for justice.

So on Monday, April 19, 1996, the United States Senate unanimously approved legislation to award the congressional medal to a woman who is deserving of that, an icon of the civil rights movement. According to Mrs. Parks, she has been pushed as far as she could stand when she was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1955, for refusing to give up her seat and move to the back of the bus.

As I look at myself as the vice chair of the Women's Caucus here in the U.S. Congress, I know that I would not be standing here had it not been on the shoulders of Rosa Parks, a woman who saw a need to open the doors for opportunities for all of us, not only African American women, but for all women in this country. Mrs. Parks is an integral part of the civil rights movement which led to sweeping changes of the laws and the social fabric of these United States. These changes, due in part to the efforts of Mrs. Parks, have paved the way for not only the opportunities for me, but for my grandchildren, my granddaughters and my grandson.

She is a quiet strength, Mr. Speaker. If you have seen her, you would wonder how this woman, who seemed to be so frail perhaps, would have done this; but her strength and her courage and her commitment and her faith caused her to say: I shall not be moved, I shall not return back to the days of degradation . . . So, she is truly a drum major for justice, Mr. Speaker.

I am so proud that this House now has seen befitting for it to bestow a congressional medal on a woman who deserved this. She will now take her position and stand with Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela as persons who changed the core of this civil rights movement in this country and in this world and made it better for all of our children, black children, white children, brown children, red children, yellow children, to have the opportunities that should be accorded them in these United States.

Mr. Speaker, I am so happy to be a part of the 106th Congress who bestowed a congressional medal on such an outstanding woman.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, April 19, 1999, the United States Senate unanimously approved legislation to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Rosa Parks, an icon of the civil rights movement.

According to Mrs. Parks she: "had been pushed as far as she could stand," when she

was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955 for refusing to give up her seat and move to the back of the bus, as mandated by law. This courageous act of civil disobedience led to the Montgomery bus boycott, which helped to form the foundation of the civil rights movement in this country.

Mrs. Parks was an integral part of the civil rights movement, which led to sweeping changes of the laws and social fabric of the United States. These changes, due in part to the efforts of Mrs. Parks, have paved the way for increased opportunities for all Americans.

The title of Mrs. Parks' autobiography "Quiet Strength," is a fitting title and description of a woman whose selfless act made this country a better place, and whose life should serve as an example of public service. Mrs. Parks is truly a drum major for justice and it is for these reasons that Congress should honor this American hero with the Congressional Gold Medal.

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to lead the House's special order on mathematics and science education.

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to imagine a successful enterprise during the 20th century that has not involved proficiency in math and science. Skilled mathematicians and scientists have led the way in smashing the atom, discovering vaccines and cures for diseases, landing astronauts on the moon and developing the Internet. In fact, a notable author has heralded the last 100 years as the American Century.

It is no exaggeration to say that mathematics and science provided the bricks and mortar that helped the U.S. construct its prominence on the world stage as a leader in the global economy and its sole status as superpower.

Mr. Speaker, if the U.S. is to maintain its status as a world leader, it is necessary to fundamentally change how America looks at education and specifically mathematics and science education.

The House Democrats have joined with President Clinton to improve education. We recognize that a high-quality education will ensure that today's students will become the skilled employees and business leaders of tomorrow. The Democrats have strongly supported measures to reduce class size, to repair outdated school facilities, to construct new schools and to ensure that public schools are safe places for our children to learn. These are important initiatives.

We believe that it is in the national interest that improvements are made not only in our country's school architecture, but also in how we teach our students mathematics and science in kindergarten through the 12th grade.

Toward this end, we believe that greater emphasis needs to be placed on the training and recruitment of mathematics and science teachers. We need to make changes in mathematics and science curricula to give some students more access to computers. We can make improvements to study math and science in greater detail rather than focusing on just the basics.

Today I would like to highlight some of the problems that exist when it comes to mathematics and science education. We will examine how these educational shortcomings adversely affect the recruitment of employees to businesses, particularly in the field of information technology and other information-based fields.

When it comes to mathematics and science education in the U.S., students need practice and more practice. Compared to their international peers, American students ranked near the bottom in the Third International Mathematics and Science Study that was released last year and in 1996. Results at the third and fourth grade levels showed that Korea was the top-performing country in science; Japan was second; and the U.S. and Austria shared the third position.

In mathematics, Singapore, Korea, Japan and Hong Kong were the top, while American students came in in 12th place. For 12th graders, U.S. students ranked 16th in their knowledge of science and 19th in their knowledge of mathematics among the 21 competing countries. That is unsatisfactory.

These findings underscore that U.S. students do not share the same proficiency in mathematics and science that their overseas peers have. Since these students will comprise tomorrow's work force, they will have a direct impact on our country's ability to compete in the global economy.

There are many of us in the House who believe that the President and Congress need to embrace public policies to improve mathematics and science education. As the Subcommittee on Basic Research's ranking member, I have had several discussions with representatives of the information technology community. These business people have expressed their frustration in not being able to find qualified job applicants. In fact, one chief executive officer testified last month that in his company he had received 630 resumes in the first 6 months of its start-up, and of those considered qualified, none were American born. One out of 10 jobs in information technology is currently unfilled according to the Information Technology Association of America. One in three job applicants tested by U.S. companies lacks the reading and mathematics skills for the job as reported by the American Management Association.

These statistics reveal that there is a direct relationship between proficiency in math and science as a student and one's ability to be a successful employee in the evolving information-based workplace.

□ 1800

American Airlines, for example, is a major employer in my congressional district. This company has written me to express its interest in having a highly-trained workforce.

"Dear Representative JOHNSON: American Airlines, for instance, relies heavily on complex computer systems in order to plan and coordinate 2,200 flights, track over 300,000 pieces of baggage moving through our system and manage 343,000 reservation calls each day. Approximately two-thirds of American Airlines' 125,000 employees use computers on a daily basis, and our pilots, yield management specialists, and flight operation personnel depend on advanced math and computer skills in the routine performance of their jobs."

Some schools have already recognized the importance of promoting mathematics and science education. They have implemented programs that are developing our students' skills in math and science. These institutions ought to be commended for their efforts and encouraged to push the envelope when it comes to math and science instruction.

The Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Magnet Center located in Dallas in the low income area of my district is one school that provides cutting edge instructions of mathematics and science through its School of Science and Engineering.

In addition to the Science and Engineering School, the Townview campus has schools of business and management; education and social services; government and law; health professions; and talented and gifted.

The Townview campus, particularly in the Science and Engineering School, has many of the features that other American schools need to help other students compete in the 21st century's workforce. These components include small classroom size, the latest in computer technology, job site based internships that are related to the curriculum, independent learning, and a highly trained teaching staff.

Townview students participate regularly in academic and technological competitions. They have even built voice-activated robots. I salute Townview students and its faculty. One component of the Townview experience sheds some light on one way that schools can improve education opportunities for children. That is through the development of partnerships between schools and the businesses in their community.

Businesses can work with schools in their communities to do such things as donate computer equipment, set up job site internships for students, as well as the establishment of college scholarships for promising math and science students.

Last month, I introduced the Math and Science Proficiency Partnership Act, H.R. 1265, to improve mathematics and science education for students kin-

dergarten through the 12th grade, as well as to increase training for math and science teachers.

The purpose of H.R. 1265 is to encourage partnerships between schools and businesses in their communities, to improve lower test scores by students and to enrich the applicant pool for high technology firms in other fields dependent upon engineering and math. My area is prolific in its need for this skill and it will grow as we move into the 21st century.

Schools in urban and rural areas do not always have the resources that other schools have. Schools and the businesses located in their communities are strategically poised to partner with each other. My bill authorizes the National Science Foundation to award 10 partnership grants through its urban and rural systemic initiative programs.

The National Science Foundation director will make five grants to urban areas and five grants to rural areas. Each grant will not exceed \$300,000 and the total amount authorized is only \$3 million, a small amount for the need that this entire Nation needs for its workforce for the future.

The purpose of the partnership grants is to assist in training of math and science teachers and to further education opportunities for science and math students. The grants will be awarded to schools that have successfully established partnerships to accomplish the above-mentioned teacher training and educational opportunities for mathematics and science students.

Eligibility of the grants will be based on how well the participating schools and businesses have forged their partnerships. Ways that schools can participate include sponsoring advanced and innovative training for math and science teachers. Ways that businesses can participate in the partnership include setting up college scholarship programs for promising math and science students, establishing mentoring and internship programs at the company's job site, as well as donation of computer hardware and software to participating schools.

The legislation directs the National Science Foundation director to conduct a long-range study on the students who have participated in the partnership program and their ability to land and to retain jobs in math and science and information technology.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this bill but, moreover, I continue to urge the entire Congress to look at these areas because it impacts directly on our economy in this global society. The ability of students to be skilled in mathematics and science education is directly linked to whether the U.S. and its companies will be successful in the 21st century. That is why schools and businesses need to increase their efforts to establish these partnerships now, so that today's students can take their places in the skilled information workforce tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON).

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, as a former high school physical science teacher, I know the value of science education, and I remember the sense of anticipation and excitement that my students shared with me when we huddled around a television set as Neil Armstrong stepped onto the moon in 1969. I saw the gleam in their eyes that inspired them to become our future engineers and scientists, those of today.

Unfortunately, today's scientists and engineers do not accurately represent the ethnic and racial makeup of our melting pot society. In fact, the Beaumont Independent School District is comprised of about 70 percent minority students and, of those, 55 percent are considered to be economically disadvantaged.

We must do something today to ensure that every child in every home or apartment building in this Nation, regardless of their color, religion, economic status, can realize their dream of becoming an astronaut or physics instructor or researcher.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to talk about an exciting program in my southeast Texas district that motivates school-aged minority students to study math and science and explore new frontiers where no man or woman has gone before.

As a member of the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics, I was able to help Lamar University in Beaumont to secure a space, science and technology educational program grant to provide disadvantaged high school students with science curriculum and related hands-on interactive learning activities.

For example, students from my hometown will be going on a field trip to Austin, Texas, to explore the relationship between asteroid impacts and the extinction of dinosaurs more than 65 million years ago by studying dinosaur tracks. So far, this program has trained more than 200 teachers and has benefited more than 23,000 students in Beaumont public schools.

It is also worth pointing out that the in-kind and cash contributions of the consortium members total more than \$800,000. Moreover, Lamar University, which is my alma mater, waived the institutional overheads for this program because of its wide-ranging regional impact on the education of southeast Texas youth.

I am not a gambling man, Mr. Speaker, but I bet that NASA's educational grant will turn out to be a wise investment in the future of engineering, technology and scientific research. My guess is that a decade or so from now there will be men and women who attended Beaumont Independent Schools working as astronauts and physicists at NASA and other space industries. That is what I am banking on.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) for putting this together and giving us a chance to speak on the important subject of science and math, and also for representing our subcommittee.

I also want to thank the gentlewoman from Texas, our distinguished ranking member of the Subcommittee on Basic Research, for bringing us here together today. I am very proud to serve on her committee, and under her leadership I am enjoying exploring important issues like math, science and technology education for our children.

As one of the few members of both the Committee on Science and Committee on Education and the Workforce, how our children learn math, science and technology is extremely important to me and I consider it important for everyone in this Nation.

Math and science have not only shaped our history but now, more than ever, will shape our future. I am concerned, however, that our students are not learning math, science and technology as well as students of other countries, the countries that we compete against in the global marketplace. This is reflected in the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, which measured fourth, eighth and twelfth grade students in the United States with comparable countries.

Disturbingly, by the 12th grade our students were ranked among the lowest in math and science, and in physics we finished last. I know we can do better. We must do better and we will, but we first need to deepen our commitment to math, science and technology education.

A recent President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology, or PCAST, report recommended an applied research study to determine what has been effective and what has not been effective in teaching our children math, science and technology. The Ehlers report last year pointed out that we spend about \$300 billion annually on education but only about 1/100th of a percent of that is spent on researching how our students learn.

Again, I hope that the bipartisan desire to improve math, science and technology education will lead to increased funding for education research so that our children can grow into our country's current role as a nation of innovation.

Even more concerning to me, however, is that too many girls have been largely left out of the technological revolution. A recent news story had a brother and a sister talking about their interest in computers. The girl said, and I quote, I do not like them. I only use them when I have to. The boy, on the other hand, saw computers as a tool to make his work easier.

It is clear that there are inequities in the education system between boys and girls, and that this would be the worst time to step away from fixing those imbalances. We are finding that girls do well with math and science education until about the ninth grade. After that, they are largely absent in classes and programs that teach math, science and technology.

As we talk today about the criteria to measure success, we want to include criteria for measuring the progress of girls and boys in these fields. We need to learn more about how girls and boys learn, both about math, science and technology; what makes it interesting and what keeps it interesting. We cannot expect girls to be motivated the same way as boys.

We also need to improve what our students are being taught and by whom. Teacher training is a vital link in improving our students' math, science and technology education. Again, the Ehlers report saw this need and recommended recruiting teachers with a formal education in these disciplines. However, retaining quality math, science and technology teachers is very difficult. That is why I strongly recommend compensating them accordingly.

Again, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) for convening this very important special order. Hopefully, through events like these and through our work on the Committee on Science, we can help find a direction that takes all students, girls, boys, wealthy and disadvantaged, younger and older, into the 21st century.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN), an outstanding legislator.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON), my good friend and colleague from Dallas, for organizing this special order tonight on education in math and science.

Just to digress for a minute on a personal note, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and I have served together since both of us were many years younger, starting in 1973 as a State representative in Austin, Texas, and then in the State Senate before we both felt the urge to run for Congress in 1992. It is good to serve with her for all these 26 years. I need to go back to my math to count all of those years now.

□ 1815

Mr. Speaker, our country, a leader in the world, has fallen dramatically behind the rest of the world in the critical subjects of math and science. When compared to students in European nations, our students finish at the bottom of their class.

I would like to commend my colleague for introducing the Mathematics and Science Proficiency Part-

nership Act, and I am proud to be a co-sponsor of this legislation. This important legislation will help us provide both students and teachers the critical skills in math, science and information technology. Without these skills, our youth will be ill-equipped to compete in tomorrow's high-tech, computer-oriented marketplace.

I would like to also highlight the success of our home State of Texas in developing the tools necessary to begin addressing the problem. Texas, in 1984, set an example and created the TAAS test, the test that represents a comprehensive assessment of problem-solving ability and higher-order thinking skills that all students must pass to earn their high school diplomas. It is given all during their latter years in school, but it is an exit-level exam that is required for graduation.

Texas has taken it even one step further. In 1994, Texas schools began administering an end-of-course exam. These exams are designed to measure student progress toward the achievement of academic goals. These tests not only provide a solid measure of student achievement, they can also provide a benchmark that can be used to measure the performance of future students and provide for institutional accountability.

Texas schools have used these tests to find out what works and what does not when it comes to educating our children. I sometimes think we can test too much, and with both TAAS and the end-of-course exams, that may be too much, but I know we do not need anymore, because now we need to focus on content, and that is what my colleague has in her legislation.

Mr. Speaker, in 1994 in the Houston ISD, only 49 percent of the students in HISD could pass the TAAS exams for mathematics. Among African-American students, it was only 41 percent. Among Hispanic students, 44 percent, and among low-income students, the rate was 42 percent. That was in 1994. In 1998, four years later, we have seen the dramatic impact that these tests have in helping increase the rate of passage.

Mr. Speaker, 77 percent of all students passed the TAAS mathematics test, an increase of 28 percent in 4 years. Among African-American students, the passage rate went to 73 percent; that is a 32 percent increase in 4 years. Among Hispanic students, the passage rate rose to 74 percent, an increase of 30 percent; and the passage rate among low-income students also rose to 74 percent, and that is a 32 percent increase.

We saw similar results in the Aldine ISD, a district that is just north of Houston; again, two very urban districts, Mr. Speaker, and another school district that I am proud and honored to represent. In Aldine, we have seen an even more dramatic increase in the number of students passing the mathematics portion of the TAAS test. In 1994, in the Aldine district, 56 percent

of all students passed. Among African-Americans it was only 42 percent, and among Hispanics, 55 percent, and among low-income students, 49 percent. In four years, what a difference four years makes. In 1998, 87 percent of all Aline students passed their math TAAS, an increase of 31 percent. Among African-American students, the passage rate rose to 82 percent, an astounding increase of 40 percent. Among Hispanic students, their passage rate rose to 88 percent, an increase of 33 percent, and among low-income students, the passage rate rose to 86 percent, an increase of 36 percent.

Mr. Speaker, we are testing the students now on the quality of what they are learning. We have seen success in the last 4 years, at least in the two districts that I represent, and that is true with a lot of our districts. But we still need to do programs like my colleague from Dallas has suggested, because what may work today will surely be behind the times tomorrow.

Two weeks ago I had the opportunity with NASA, and NASA assigned an astronaut to me in my district, and so we went to middle schools in a predominantly Hispanic community in my district and had an astronaut, Dr. Franklin Chambias, along with a businessperson to talk about the importance of math and science. That is a one-day-a-year chance, we can only do three middle schools, to encourage those seventh and eighth graders to realize math and science are important. Programs like my colleague has introduced is something that needs to be done every day of the year, because if we do not, surely our students will be behind and the United States will not be the competitive Nation that we are now, and that is why this legislation is so important.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague not only for tonight, but also for authoring this legislation, and again, I am proud to be a cosponsor.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I recognize the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE).

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Texas for yielding me time, and I also want to express my deep appreciation for her setting up this Special Order and providing leadership on this very important issue. It is an issue of grave importance I think to this country and certainly to the economic life and viability of America.

I also want to thank the gentlewoman and congratulate her for introducing this legislation, and I am proud to be a cosponsor, that will go a long way, in my opinion, in encouraging our youngsters to take an interest in the fields of science, math, and really an area we sort of tend to forget sometimes; we talk about it as if it is a separate piece, and that is this whole area of information technology that really is deeply rooted in science and mathematics.

We can talk about standards for students and teachers and we can talk about the math and science curriculum until we are blue in the face, but if we do not generate more interest in these fields among our children, these efforts will mean very little. Talk is cheap, but it takes a lot of hard work to do it. So I want to thank the gentlewoman for her leadership on this issue. It is an issue that I think deserves the interest and an awful lot of time of Members of this Congress.

I am sure it does not come as a surprise to the gentlewoman or to anyone else on this floor tonight that as the former superintendent of the schools of the State of North Carolina, the topic of science and math education is not only near and dear to me, but it is an important one that I have spent an awful lot of time working on. When I was superintendent in our State, one of our primary goals was to improve the science and math education for our children, and we did a number of things in this regard in North Carolina.

As the gentlewoman knows, her home State and my State of North Carolina, the States of Texas and North Carolina are two States that have been singled out by the Secretary of Education and the President on numerous occasions as two States that really are doing some of the right things. But, the thing to remember is, we have a long ways yet to go. Science and math education is a long journey.

We have worked hard in North Carolina to encourage local curriculum. We have a State system of schools really, and we worked on it hard in the early grades to make learning of math and science fun for our children, but at the same time, putting a lot of rigor in it. We have done a lot of applied learning at the same time. Rather than just the analytical kind we have done for years, we have put a lot of applied opportunities in the classroom, and that takes money. It means that we need to have tools to work with.

We have worked hard in North Carolina to increase the availability of technology in the classroom and to link our schools to the information highway, what we now call the Internet, and that is so critical. If we want to open up the opportunities for teachers to teach and children to learn, they have to have access to the things that we take for granted in the business community every day.

I used to say when I traveled the State that if one wants to go into any modern office, one will find a telephone, a computer and a whole number of other things. If one goes into a school, we expect the teachers to go to the office to use the telephone, and they may have a computer in the library or the media center, as we call it, and that is not acceptable in the 21st century if we want our children to learn.

We placed a great emphasis on putting children into a more rigorous math and science curriculum and we

have done a lot of that in North Carolina. We raised standards in our math and science curriculum, increased the units of math and science every child needed for graduation, and probably one of the most significant developments that we made, and this was done early on as I went in as superintendent, we required algebra as a requirement for graduation for our students. We said, well, that is nothing great. Well, the truth is, too many students were allowed to get out with just general math and we went to requiring it for graduation, and many said, it will not work. We are going to fail a lot of students. Well, what happened, too many times algebra has been used as a filter. It filtered out an awful lot of students that had an opportunity and ability to do it: females, African-Americans and a number of our minority students were filtered out. We turned it into a pump primer. And what that meant is we forced more into it, and we got better at teaching; we had to do a better job of staff development for our teachers. And lo and behold, guess what happened. Math scores went up, and so did our reading scores.

So we have used it in a way to make a difference. I think if we enrich the curriculum and we give the teachers the tools and we help them in staff development and we encourage students, they will rise to the occasion. I read with interest this weekend that other States are beginning to follow our lead and require algebra in earlier grades.

Obviously, there is no silver bullet to improve science and math education. It is hard work. However, there is no doubt that we must start in the earlier grades to help our children develop the skills that they need to be successful in the science and technology-based economy of the 21st century.

The debate over science and math curriculum is not simply one of improving test scores or making our children smarter. It is fundamental to the future of our country and its prosperity in the 21st century, and it is absolutely fundamental to our children's ability to deal with the complicated issues that they will face in the 21st century.

North Carolina has become a hub of our Nation's technology revolution. The Research Triangle Park area boasts some of the best research universities in the world and is the home to a host of a world renowned pharmaceutical, biotechnology, telecommunications and computer companies, the same list that you can read in Texas and some of our other high-tech centers.

The technology revolution has been good to North Carolina. But hardly a week goes by that I do not talk to a company's CEO who tells me that we need to improve science and math education and that we need more people with technical skills entering the workforce. It is true in our State, it is true across this country. Unfortunately, too often in this town, what is best for our children gets bogged down

in petty politics and partisan power struggles.

Take the Dollars for the Classroom program, block grants that were just introduced today by the loyal opposition. Having been a superintendent for 8 years and been at that level, I can tell my colleagues that block grants are great if we have a great grant-writer. It is a sorry way to dispense money for poor folks who do not have grant-writers. Guess which children have the greatest need for science and math education? It is those children in those districts that do not have good grant-writers. And I think it is a sham if we go through such a charade talking about putting more in the classroom. People who have the greatest need are hurt the most by block grants.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when we are forced to stand on the floor and debate whether or not we should increase the number of foreign workers we allow in this country to meet the needs of our companies here for workers in some of the fields that our high-tech companies and biotech companies and others need, something is wrong. I can tell my colleagues that something is wrong, and we need to fix it. I am here to tell my colleagues that there is one Member of Congress that is committed to fixing it, because the future of this country, the future of my State and the future of our children depend on it.

□ 1830

I want to thank my friend, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON), because she has decided that she is going to do more than talk about it. She has put together a bill, and I commend her for it.

I am proud to be a cosponsor on a piece of legislation that does something about the issue of putting resources out there where children are across the country in rural districts that have great needs, as well as urban districts, because the one thing that we are short of in this country is having the kind of staff development that teachers need to be able to teach math and science in a way that children can learn, and we can move them into a higher level as we approach the 21st century.

I commend the gentlewoman from Texas for her vision, and I thank her for highlighting the importance of this issue.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina, and I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) for her leadership on the Committee on Science.

I am delighted to join her this evening as a member of the Committee on Science, and also a chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, to congratulate her for her legislation that really has as its underlying premise that children can learn.

I think that that is the key element of what we are discussing this evening: One, the importance of math and science, and the fact that America's children should not be at any less of a level than any of the children of the world; that America's children can learn math, they can learn science, and more importantly, they can enjoy it.

As a member of the Texas delegation and a member of the Committee on Science and a member of the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics, I interact a lot with NASA and the needs of NASA, the funding needs, of course, but the technological needs.

How exciting it is for young people, as I had the opportunity to bring into my district a number of the astronauts to introduce to young people what the fun things are that one can do by knowing math and science. How interested they were, elementary school students, high school students, in being exposed to the career options that math and science can bring about.

The fact is that our children are not willing to not learn, if I can use a double negative, science and math. They only have to be inspired to do so. I think it is very important that we include the corporate combination that the gentlewoman has included in her legislation, the partnership, the mentoring that is so very important to encourage our young people to study math and science.

Mr. Speaker, I am a ranking member on the Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims. In that there is great discussion always about the number of individuals we must bring in from other places outside the United States because we do not have enough of an employee base to provide for the various technological companies around the Nation. We do not have enough people to fill the slots.

This past weekend I met with and talked with one of the human resource persons of our number two company in this Nation that deals with technological issues. He documented that there are not enough Americans trained in math and science or coming through the pipeline to be able to provide all of the positions that will be needed as we move into the 21st century.

I say shame, shame, shame on us. So I hope that this legislation can move quickly. I hope we can collaborate with the gentlewoman to do even more.

This is an authorizing piece of legislation. I hope that we will find more dollars in the appropriating forces to ensure that we give dollars to our school districts or complement the school programs that will help make math and science interesting.

My daughter had a professor, or there was a professor in her school, and there was a rumor going around that he taught physics, and he taught it by laying horizontally across the desk. Some people say he even levitated into the air. That was a rumor going around in the school. Well, there was standing

room only in his physics class, as we can imagine. That is because he made math and science interesting.

Therefore, I would look forward to supporting the legislation of the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON). I think it is extremely important that we say to America's children, you can learn, and that we pass legislation that will emphasize the value of math and science to provide career opportunities for all of the children of America, and that we can stand equal in the world's market, that we will be the leaders in math and science. I know we can.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH), the chair of this subcommittee.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me. I would like to commend the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) for moving ahead with something we need to accomplish, because it is so important that we look at all avenues in encouraging additional students to pursue the sciences.

Let me just say, as we contemplate more seriously the world's situation, as we consider where America might be in the next 10 or 20 or 30 years, the challenges of staying ahead and being on the cutting edge of science and technology and information so that we can maximize our productivity and therefore our competitiveness is so very important today, probably more so than it has ever been in history.

Again, I commend the gentlewoman from Texas for exploring and looking at these avenues of how we might continue to encourage more students and higher qualifications in the area of science and mathematics.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to also express my appreciation for having the opportunity to visit scientists from New Zealand on a recent trip.

I appreciate the gentleman's leadership in looking to see what other places around the world might be doing so that we can better understand what we need to be doing. I thank the gentleman very much.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to do some final closing remarks by reading a portion of the statements of the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE BROWN), ranking member of the full committee, an outstanding Member of this Congress, who knows full well what we are talking about here. He is not able to be here this evening, but he sent his statement.

In part, it reads:

"The importance of science and math education to the Nation's future well-being is without question.

"The post-industrial society will have an ever growing need for highly trained individuals in science and technology. Clearly, we must ensure a full pipeline of students moving towards careers in these fields, if we are to compete successfully with our Major

economic competitors in the 21st century. To meet the demand, the Nation must take advantage of the human resource potential of all the people.

"But there is an equally important reason for effective science and math education in all parts of the Nation. Technology now infuses more and more aspects of daily life. Most workplaces are becoming increasingly technological. This means that all citizens need a basic grounding in science and math to function in an increasingly complex world and to lead fulfilling lives.

"The situation is complicated by the uneven quality of educational opportunities across the broad diverse Nation. We are running the risk of a widening gulf between those with the training to thrive in this new work environment and those lacking the basic skills to qualify for the high-tech workplace.

"It is important to find ways to spur the interest and encourage the study of science and math by students at all levels of ability. The growing reality is that a strong back and a strong work ethic will not be enough to ensure a good job in the 21st century.

"In addition to mastering the three Rs, students must learn as much as they can about science and technology, because such knowledge will be a key to their future. Efforts to reform science and math education must seek to engage and cultivate the interest of all children.

"There is much evidence that young children are naturally interested in science and that grade school students in the U.S. perform well in science and math. This was shown to be the case in the recent results of the Third International Math and Science Study, known as TIMSS. U.S. students at the fourth-grade level were near the top in the international comparison.

"However, the picture changes for the worse as students move through the school system. By middle school, again from the TIMSS findings, U.S. students have drifted down to the average performance level of the international comparisons, and well below most of our major economic competitors. And by the terminal year of high school, U.S. students are near the bottom of the rankings in math and science performance.

"There are no simple answers for reversing this dismal situation. Many interrelated factors are involved. Engaging curriculum materials coupled with a hands-on, inquiry-based approach to teaching have promise for improving student outcomes in science and math. This will require curriculum development and teacher professional development." But we also must be motivated, and our children must be motivated and excited.

"An excellent example of an educational program that has a proven record for providing such excitement is the JASON Project. The brainchild of world-famous explorer Dr. Robert Ballard, JASON is a year-round sci-

entific expedition designed to engage students in science and technology through live satellite and Internet broadcasts.

"For 2 weeks, students at interactive network sites in the U.S. and other countries can watch the expedition live, interact with scientists, control live-feed video cameras. The JASON network now reaches over 2 million students.

"The tenth expedition in this series this past March focused on a comparative study of temperate, tropical and fossil rainforests, with the live segment originating from the Peru tropical rainforest."

The gentleman from California (Mr. BROWN) had the opportunity to spend a day participating in this exploration at one of the JASON network downlink sites located at the A.B. Miller High School in Fontana, in his district. This is currently the only JASON downlink site in Southern California.

"JASON is helping to change how science is taught in the classroom and will help to reverse the harmful decline of students interest in science and technology."

The gentleman from California (Mr. BROWN) has been a JASON supporter since its inception, and is pleased to see its expansion and continuing excellence.

"The JASON Project is driven largely by private sector initiatives and supported mainly by industry contributions. But there is also a role for Federal programs to improve science education.

"There is no doubt that the Federal role in K-12 education is limited and that the Federal resources available are but a small fraction of the national investment in K-12 education. But the Federal Government can be a catalyst for constructive change in our schools, if its a relatively small education investment and is wisely directed."

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the text of the entire statement of the gentleman from California (Mr. BROWN).

The text of the statement of Mr. BROWN of California is as follows:

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, the importance of science and math education to the nation's future well being is without question.

The post-industrial society will have an ever growing need for highly trained individuals in science and technology. Clearly, we must ensure a full pipeline of students moving toward careers in these fields, if we are to compete successfully with our major economic competitors in the 21st century. To meet the demand, the nation must take advantage of the human resource potential of all our people.

But there is an equally important reason for effective science and math education in all parts of the nation. Technology now infuses more and more aspects of daily life. Most workplaces are becoming increasingly technological. This means that all citizens need a basic grounding in science and math to function in an increasingly complex world and to lead fulfilling lives.

The situation is complicated by the uneven quality of educational opportunity across this broad and diverse nation. We are running the risk of a widening gulf between those with the training to thrive in this new work environment and those lacking the basic skills to qualify for the high-tech workplace.

It is important to find ways to spur the interest and encourage the study of science and math by students at all levels of ability. The growing reality is that a strong back and a strong work ethic will not be enough to ensure a good job in the 21st century.

In addition to mastering the 3R's, students must learn as much as they can about science and technology, because such knowledge will be a key to their future. Efforts to reform science and math education must seek to engage and cultivate the interest of all children.

There is much evidence that young children are naturally interested in science and that grade school students in the U.S. perform well in science and math. This was shown to be the case in the recent results of Third International Math and Science Study, known as TIMSS. U.S. students at the fourth-grade level were near the top in this international comparison.

However, the picture changes for the worse as students move through the school system. By middle school, again from the TIMSS findings, U.S. students have drifted down to the average performance level of the international comparisons, well below most of our major economic competitors. And by the terminal year of high school, U.S. students are near the bottom of the rankings in science and math performance.

There are no simple answers for reversing this dismal situation. Many interrelated factors are involved. Engaging curricular materials coupled with a hands-on, inquiry-based approach to teaching have promise for improving student outcomes in science and math. This will require curriculum development and teacher professional development. But we also must have motivated, excited children.

An excellent example of an educational program that has a proven record for providing such excitement is the JASON Project. The brainchild of world-famous explorer, Dr. Robert Ballard, JASON is a year-round scientific expedition designed to engage students in science and technology through live satellite and Internet broadcasts.

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JASON is helping to change how science is taught in the classroom and will help to reverse the harmful decline of student interest in science and technology. I have been a JASON supporter since its inception and am pleased to see its expansion and continuing excellence.

The JASON Project is driven largely by private sector initiative and supported mainly by industry contributions. But there is also a role for federal programs to improve science education.

There is no doubt that the federal role in K-12 education is limited and that the federal resources available are but a small fraction of the national investment in K-12 education. But the federal government can be a catalyst for constructive change in our schools, if its relatively small education investment is wisely directed.

School budgets are tight and meager resources are available for such things as supporting experimentation with new curricular materials or training teachers on how to implement science standards in the classroom. The federal science and math education programs can provide an important supplement that can have an influence on reform efforts out of proportion to the size of the investment.

In addition to providing financial resources, the federal government can bring to bear the scientific talent available in federal laboratories as an important resource for support of teachers, many of whom are unprepared to teach science and math subjects.

An example of a Federal program to help train science and math teachers is a recent initiative involving the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy's national labs. Teachers from school systems participating in NSF's education reform programs will be eligible to attend in-service training programs at the labs where they will use state-of-the-art facilities and instrumentation.

The program will provide hands-on experience and help improve teachers' skills in integrating the tools of computer simulation and modeling with implementation of science and math standards. In California, the Lawrence Berkeley Lab, Lawrence Livermore Lab, and the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center will participate in the program.

Another example of an innovative federal education programs is the NASA Student and Teacher Excellence Project, or STEP. STEP includes participation by some schools from San Bernardino County in my district.

STEP has several complementary components to increase student performance in science and math. It will draw on NASA's resources to develop curriculum tied to real-world problems; it will provide professional development opportunities for teachers; and it will provide for home access by students and parents to STEP resources.

The last component is a particularly important innovation which will greatly enlarge student access to the educational materials and draw in participation by parents.

As I indicated earlier, there are no simple answers for improving K-12 science and math education. Federal, state and local government, and the private sector all have important roles. We must identify best practices and effective programs, and then work to achieve their widest dissemination. Much remains to be done, but we cannot afford not to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, I will close by simply making one more plea, that we must give attention to this most critical need. We owe it to our Nation. We certainly owe it to our future.

Our jobs will ultimately follow where the skills are located. If our companies are now having to hire mostly people

that are non-American born, we can be sure that our companies cannot remain competitive until we make sure that every American child is excited about math and science.

We must start with teacher preparation. Many of our best teachers graduated more than 10 years ago from college. Our colleges did not have the integrated system of including our technologies at that time, so most of our teachers will have to return for further education.

That further undergirds the notion that education is lifelong, and teachers more and more will have to continue to return for their offerings of improving their skills, but our institutions must be responsible for offering those needed skills. Mr. Speaker, we will continue working.

AMERICA'S NATIONAL DRUG POLICY AND THE ROLE OF CONGRESS IN REDUCING DRUG USE BY AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House again tonight to talk about the subject of our national drug policy, and what Congress can do to improve the situation relating to the abuse and misuse of illegal narcotics, not only by our young people but by all Americans.

I come before the House as chair of the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources, which has been charged with trying to help develop a better policy, better legislation, and better action by Congress to deal with the growing social problem that we have.

Tonight I am sure that the eyes of the Nation are focused on Kosovo, where we have a very difficult international situation, and probably rightfully so. We have thousands of our troops in potentially harm's way. We have our pilots and other dedicated military involved in that conflict.

I believe that the focus of attention tonight also is on the tragic shootings in Colorado. I believe some young people were involved there. A large number of young people were killed in that tragic incident.

Rightfully, America should be concerned about Kosovo. America should be concerned about international situations and also about a situation where we have death and mayhem of young people in our Nation. It is a very serious situation. I know that both the Colorado situation and Kosovo will capture the attention of the Nation for the next number of days.

As a courtesy to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO), who has expressed concern about what has happened in that State, Mr. Speaker, I yield to him at this time for his comments on that, again, tragic situation.

PRAY FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN, VICTIMS IN TRAGIC COLORADO HIGH SCHOOL SHOOTINGS

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I come here tonight to ask everyone listening, watching around America, I come here to ask you for your prayers for those parents who have lost children in this incredible, horrible, devastating event.

There are no words any of us can utter from this position, even in this House, that can ever soothe the hearts of the people who have lost their family members. But it behooves us all to think about how precious life is and how quickly it can be taken away any time, any place, anywhere.

It must make us all think again about turning to God and asking for his counsel and for wisdom which we all need in order to address these kinds of issues and others that will confront us.

So I have no other speeches to make. I have no other words to utter than to simply say again to everyone, please pray for the grieving, pray for the lost, and pray that this never, ever happens again.

Mr. MICA. Again, my prayers are with the gentleman from Colorado and with the families who have experienced this great tragedy in their community. Again, it is something that will be reflected in the news reports for the coming days just as Kosovo and other tragic events of our Nation.

Tonight I came to the House to really address another social tragedy that is facing our Nation. As I said, I chair the House Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources and trying to formulate some legislative efforts, some actions by this Congress to deal with a situation that has taken last year the lives of 14,000 Americans.

We have an illegal narcotics and drug abuse problem in this country that is reaching unparalleled proportions, particularly among our young people. I want to review again, and I did this last week, and I have done this a couple of times before, the situation that led I believe to the current problem we see with epidemic narcotics use by our young people across the Nation and the drug situation that faces almost every community across our land.

In 1993, when I came to Congress and I was in the minority, the majority party at that time, the Democrats that controlled both the House, the other body, and the White House, I think that they made some very tragic mistakes at that point in, first of all, cutting the resources of the drug czar's office, almost eliminating all of the staff in the drug czar's office.

The next step that was taken was to appoint a Surgeon General that in fact did not take the drug situation seriously, that helped advocate a policy of "just say maybe" to our young people, and this of course eventually has had consequences as we see in the drug statistics which I will cite.

Unfortunately, the administration also, and the majorities of 1993 to 1995, with the concurrence of the administration, they held majorities again in