

should be allowed to go into effect, and frankly, we think we should do what the Congress said 2 years ago and then again repeated last year, and that is to allow the compacts to expire.

They were designed originally only as an experiment which would last a year, and part of that experiment was to find out if they could curb the number of small dairy farms that were going out of business. The evidence is in, the evidence is clear; they have not done that. They have cost consumers more money. They have increased the number of corporate farms on every front; in my opinion, the compacts have been an abysmal failure.

We should allow them to do what the agreement originally was, which is just keep all ends of the bargain, move ahead with the dairy reform that Secretary Glickman has come out with, and end these crazy compacts and do not expand them to other States.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. The gentleman has been fighting this fight a lot longer than I have, and I applaud his efforts.

I guess, just to wrap up and summarize, as the gentleman has pointed out, Secretary Glickman's order is not perfect; and for those of us in Minnesota and Wisconsin, we would argue it is far from it, and it is a very small, modest step. But at least it is a step in the right direction.

It recognizes that the long-standing system, standing since 1937, of Federal orders and compacts is bad for farmers, driving our family farms out of business; it is bad for consumers because it inflates the costs of milk, it adds a milk tax in so many ways; and finally, it is counter to free enterprise, free enterprise not just in the manufacturing sector, not just in the service sector, but even in the agricultural sector. It is the only agricultural product treated like this.

So it is bad on all counts. It is time to make a larger change, but at least to support Secretary Glickman's proposal, let that come on line, make a small but positive step and offer some hope to our farmers.

PROGRAMS THAT WORK FOR EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, this evening I want to spend some time with my colleagues talking about an issue that is important not only to me and my colleagues on the minority side, but I think to all Members of this Congress and certainly to the people of America.

The topic is education, an issue that we talk an awful lot about, but I want to talk this evening and share with my colleagues some examples of not only

programs that work, but also people that are doing outstanding things for our children, certainly in my district and in my State.

I want to talk a little bit about an innovative program that I visited a couple of weeks ago in Greensboro. It was a program called Reading Together. One of the things that I learned before I came to Congress, and I think we have all known it for a long time, but certainly it was pointed out to me very vividly while I was superintendent of schools, if one can teach a child to read by the time they are in the third grade, one has accomplished a great deal as to what we need to do to help a child learn and do well, and certainly make it in school and in the world.

The Reading Together program is a program that is being piloted in a number of areas; I think it is in Pennsylvania, but also in Greensboro. What that program does is takes mentor students from the upper grades, and in this case they were fifth graders, and on a regular basis they are trained, they work with a trained teacher, and they come down and work with children who have difficulty reading in the earlier grades, normally in the first and second grade, and they become not only mentors, but they become tutors.

I watched them for over an hour, and in this process, as those children worked and worked with young people, they had been trained; and when they finished the reading, they debriefed the young person they were working with, and then when the second graders went back to their classes, the fifth graders met with their teacher. They then were debriefed, talked about what had happened, how each child had done, made notes, kept a journal.

These are things that very few adults do, and here we have young people doing them. I hear so many times people talk about our young people. They need to get out in the schools and see what is happening, the good things that they are doing, the outstanding jobs our teachers are doing. So I thought this was a good time to talk about these good things, as we are now all across America beginning to close down the school year.

In my State, some of the schools were out last Friday and others will finish up this Friday, and many Members like myself will be speaking at commencement exercises. I did last week and will again this week.

But I would like to share a program that really is working and making a difference. It is a pilot program that had been started really before I came to Congress, and it is working with some money through the U.S. Department of Education on a direct grant, and it is making a difference. The reading scores have improved dramatically.

Students really work their way out of these classes and into the regular class. So that is what it is all about. We give a child some help, and then they can help themselves.

Mr. Chairman, my friend from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) has been out in

his schools working, and is a great leader for education and a leader in this Congress. He has some excellent examples, and I would like to yield to him so he may share those with us.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding and thank him for his leadership in the Congress in reminding all of us how important education is.

Mr. Speaker, I am a great believer in Dr. James Comer. Dr. Comer has a philosophy which I truly believe in, and he talks about the fact that a child can have the will, a child can have the genetic ability, but if a child does not have the opportunity, then that child is in trouble, he is going to have problems.

I look at my own life. I started it off in special education. I was told I would never be able to read or write. But because of opportunity, because there were teachers who stood by me and told me what I could be instead of telling me what I could not be, because of my parents who were involved, and I know we are going to be talking about parents tonight and how important that is; but I can remember, I say to the gentleman, that when my father, who worked at Davidson Chemical Company, he would come to our PTA meetings. And he used to work in the evenings and his boss would let him come to the PTA meetings in his overalls, all greasy, but he would come in there and talk to the teachers and participate in the PTA meetings, and he played a significant role in our lives, and the teachers expected him to be there.

But just going back to some of the things that the gentleman was saying a little while earlier, I too have been involved in these commencements and I have seen so many of our children who go through so much difficulty to get through high school and they make it, and it just makes one feel good to see those young people marching down that aisle and to know that they have truly accomplished something.

I think it is important for us as Members of Congress to do what the gentleman said that he does and I do and I am sure many of our other Members do, and that is to celebrate our children's lives, to celebrate their victories.

I think I was telling the gentleman a little bit earlier about a wonderful contest that we had in our State whereby our Department of Children, Youth and Family, the Governor's Department of Children, Youth and Family, sponsored a contest for the school that read the most books. Out of our 24 counties, I am very pleased to say, and out of our eight congressional districts, there was a school in my district that read the most books, an elementary school. The school is not located in the most affluent area, but these children made a decision that they were going to work hard; and they read these books and they had a way of making sure that they examined them, and they had to do little reports and whatever.

But I say to the gentleman, I am going to go by there when they have the awards to celebrate with them, to say, hey, you did a good job. I think that those are the kinds of things that are so important.

Again, I emphasize that I want to thank the gentleman, because as we watch the gentleman on this floor and all of the things that he does behind the scenes, his coming to this Congress has been very significant in that he has lighted the way we view education; and the gentleman has put it definitely out on the front burner and has made it something that is extremely significant, reminding us that if we support our children and work with them, we can make a difference.

So I am going to yield back to the gentleman, but I will be here for a while, so I look forward to just listening him.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman mentioned the reading program, and I want to share one with him, if I may. It was something that we started maybe 2 years ago, and I shared this with the gentleman earlier.

First, though, I want to tell a little story. We gave out an award we call the Golden Key Award for parent involvement, for the parents who got involved in the PTA, because I think this is the key to improving the quality of our schools and helping the teachers get the parents back in the schools.

So that led to the issue of how do we engage the parents with students and really help the reading, because I believe that is important.

When I came to Congress and was no longer superintendent, I wanted to keep that going. So we started what we call a Congressional Reading Program, for lack of a better word; I could not think of a better one. So what we do is, I have encouraged the students to read. I told them last year, if they would read 100 books, I would personally come and deliver a certificate.

Well, I figured there would be a few books read, and I had just an outstanding principal in Anderson Creek. We had a number of others involved. We had probably a half a dozen schools in our pilot, but we only do it for kindergarten, first and second graders. We did not want to go much higher than that, realizing how many it would be. So we kept about six schools involved. They did an outstanding job.

The reason I mention Anderson Creek is because they were one of our first pilots. They did it again last year. They must have had 300, and some children read 100 books, at least 100. Some of them read as many as 200 and 300. The significant thing was that when I went to give those awards a year ago, there were probably 400 parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles that filled up the gym.

So I will go back this year to give the awards again. This year, there were 481 children who read at least 100 books. Several of the children had read more than 500 books. I mean, we are talking

about children reading two and three books a day. They were not very big. We did not tell them how thick the books had to be. But the interesting thing was the number of kindergartners in this school, a lot of them, they received an award.

Well, it is quite obvious to me that kindergartners, very few can read when they start, they do not read. But guess who read the books? The parents or the grandparents or the aunts or uncles, whoever. But what we do is, we get a significant adult involved with that child early and then we get the linkage to the school.

So this year I delivered 481 certificates. We had more parents in the gym than it would hold. They were standing outside. They stood in line, a lot of them stood up, because they did not have seats, for almost 2 hours because I stood up for 2 hours and handed out the certificates and shook the hand of every child in that school.

Mr. Speaker, I only tell that story because I think every Member can do something like that.

We ought to honor and encourage our children. It is not enough to stand on the floor of the House and point out the problems; there are plenty of problems in the world. But I think we need to go and honor and reward the good things that are happening.

I have always believed that if one rewards successes, one will get more. If you let people know you encourage good things, more good things will happen.

I was so pleased because I left there that day, and of course my back was sore from having to bend over to shake hands. When one is 6 feet, 6 inches and shaking hands with little folks, one gets sore, but I felt so good. I was late for the next school; I had to deliver more certificates.

We are now going to expand it.

But these are the kinds of things all of us can do. It is not very creative, and the cost of a little certificate is not much, but for some of those children it was so important. We could tell in talking with the children and watching their parents who came up to take the photographs.

The neat thing was the principal, a lady by the name of Alice Cobb, who is just an outstanding leader and a great educator, she was smart enough to understand how important it was to her children.

□ 2200

So she had a video camera going, digital video camera, through all of it so she could photograph every child in the video. Of course, as we know, one can print that out on paper. She sent me a whole stack of stuff she had done.

I know the type of person she was, that she had given every child a photograph when they got their certificate. There are some things that we do not think about sometimes. Those of us who are in public office appreciate being acknowledged. Just think what

we will do for a plaque or certificate. So a child will do good things, and schools understand that.

I hear people sometimes belittle some of the good things teachers do and call it woman fusses. If you are a child and you need someone to say you look good today when you do not feel good, when you are not real sure you look good, someone to tell you you are a nice child or they love you when nobody at home may be telling you that, it may make the difference in that child's life. All of us can talk about things like that to make a difference.

We have to require the academics of every child, make them achieve the most they can do. We do that in North Carolina. We require it. We assess each child. We have a tough curriculum. But at the same time, all of us need to be loved, and every child needs that. If you do that, you encourage, you give them love and you give them tough love when you have to, you can get a lot.

That is what the gentleman is talking about with the program he was just sharing in his district. We can do a lot of those things.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I agree with him. As the gentleman was talking, I was thinking to myself that we spend a lot of time on this floor and we spend a lot of time in committee, but the kind of things that the gentleman is talking about costs very little.

We are always worried about how much money we are spending, spending. We just allocated quite a bit of money for the war in Kosovo. But the fact is, is that taking some time, just taking some time and celebrating, that is what we are doing. First of all, we are encouraging our children to read. Then when they have done that, we take time to celebrate their victories.

I have often said to parents in my district that there is nothing greater that we can do as adults, nothing greater than creating positive memories in the minds of children.

One of the things that I have to always remind myself of is that children think differently than we do. Those certificates will last those children until they die. They will go with them. That is something that they can look back on and say that "I was recognized by one of 435 Members of the House of Representatives." Not a lot of children in our country can say that. That is very significant.

I have given certificates to children, and then parents will let me know, grandmothers let me know, "You know what? You presented a certificate to my child 7 years ago, and it is still up there on my child's wall. It is up there on that wall to remind my child that she was recognized or he was recognized at an early age."

That leads me to another point. I would like to really have the gentleman's comments on this. I had an opportunity to visit a school not very long ago where a teacher, the principal

said "We really want you to see our best teacher." We had gone through several classrooms. My staff and I had gone through several classrooms.

When we got to this last classroom, it was a second grade class, and this was on a Monday. So the principal said, "Well, Ms. Jones, what are you teaching today?" She said, "Well, I am teaching the material that we tested on Friday, this past Friday." So the principal said, "Well, why are you doing that? I mean you already had the test."

The teacher said something that will stick in the DNA of every cell of my brain forever. She said, "Every child in my class should have an A, and not everybody got an A." That really touched me, because I mean she got it. She understood. She wanted all of her children to rise. She did not want some As, some Bs, some Cs and some Ds. She made it clear that "I am going to make sure that all of my children rise so that they can move on to the next level."

I think sometimes what happens is we are so busy trying to categorize our children that maybe, just maybe we do a disservice. One of the things that research has shown over and over again is that a lot of our children, the children that we talk about, the little kindergartners and the first graders, they have so much enthusiasm and they are so anxious to learn. Even when they are in that little 0 to 3, 2 and 3-year-old range, they are like little sponges and they are just grabbing information, and they are excited and jumping up and down.

But research has shown, as they get a little bit older, get to that fourth and fifth grade, a lot of times that enthusiasm for some reason goes down. I mean the gentleman from North Carolina having been an educator and the head of education for his State, I would just like to have his comments on that.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman from Maryland is absolutely correct. I have often said that children come to public schools across this country, and certainly in my State, from a number of backgrounds; and they do not all come.

This is where I get frustrated. I used to get frustrated at the State level, and I get frustrated here with some of my colleagues when they want to talk about and start criticizing the schools, because when they start doing that, they are criticizing our children.

My colleagues have to be careful because schools are children and the professionals that are trying to help them. They come from a variety of backgrounds, from a variety of experiences. But all of them do not come in top dollar for the same level of knowledge and experiences when they come to school. So they come, as the gentleman says, at different levels. That teacher understood it.

What the educators are talking about, when they say "I want them to all have As," they are talking about mastery, so they are mastering the

subject. There is a difference in learning and mastering. Most of us can get a bit of knowledge on the computer. If we get training here, all of us have computers in our office, and we have staffs to have mastery. A lot of us just have cursory understanding so we can turn it on and retrieve a little bit of information. If we want to get a little bit further, we have to call and get help.

What those teachers were saying to the principal and to the gentleman, I want all my children to be able to have mastery on this computer. I want them to be able to use it, not just turn it on and call for help. They want to be able to go and get all the data that it has in it.

I have often said that not all of us learn at the same speed. We forget that sometimes. It takes longer for others, and they still get it. If one watches students, if one ever notices, there will be some who we say they are slow. The truth is they are not as interested in school as others. They may not bloom until they get to be sophomores or juniors in high school sometimes. Sometimes it happens even after they leave high school.

There are stories, and I am sure there are Members right here on the floor of this House who would say that they went into the military or went somewhere else and came back. Many times, those who came out of the military, they had 2 or 3 years to adjust. All of a sudden, they came home and realized, "I did not apply myself when I was in school. I really need to settle down and get focused."

Today with a lot of young people who go into youth service corps or something else and leave school, and all of a sudden they say, gosh, "I did not apply myself. I wish somebody would give me a quick kick in the slacks to understand what I needed." That is at that level.

But at the early years, where those youngsters are such sponges, and they really do want to learn. They come with bright eyes. If you watch those little ones, they all have bright eyes. They are ready to learn. They are ready to go.

There is something that we are learning more every day about the brain and how much children can learn and their capacities, and we are doing away with a lot of the myths we used to have, because all children can learn. Let me repeat that again. All children. It makes no difference what their economic, their ethnic, where they come from, or where they are going, all children can learn. They can learn at very high levels. They may have different learning styles.

Dr. Comer has a great program. We used him a number of times in North Carolina. We had a number of his projects in our State. I think he does just a wonderful job in showing that we need to bring the family nurturing the youngsters. Because if a youngster comes in in less than a nurturing background or comes to school hungry, and

if someone tells us the child does not come, I can assure my colleagues they can go any place, most places in this country where they will see a child come in on Monday morning, and I am going to break the stereotype here because a lot of folks think when we are talking about youngsters, we are talking about children from economically deprived backgrounds. It may be children who just have not had a chance to eat, and it may be upper middle class neighborhoods many times, parents who have the resources. They do not take time to eat, and they grab something from school.

Certainly there are those who, after Friday afternoon, who get a regular meal during the week, and Friday is the last really regular warm meal they get until they show back up on Monday morning.

My wife works in the child nutrition program in my home county and has for a number of years. She said one can really tell it when school is out for the summer. A lot of the children are reluctant to leave because they know something is going to be missing. School is a safe haven for them, but it also provides for them a real nurturing environment.

We have had some problems recently in some of our schools. But, by and large, they are loving, caring, nurturing places for people who really make a difference.

We had a program, and I will come back to the question the gentleman raised again in a minute, that we started really in 1992, called Character Education. It was not unique with us. There is nothing really new under the sun. We borrowed a lot of things. We borrowed this from a professor at Vanderbilt and from a number of other folks. But Character Education is about teaching those things that we can all agree on that children ought to know. Rather than add it on as an add-on in the classroom, one really teaches it as an integrated part of the curriculum.

So in 1995 we got a grant, wrote a project, got a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, and it started in Wake, Cumberland and Mecklenburg Counties, our three larger counties. A lot of other counties, Nash County, Johnston County, Harnett and others picked it up.

But what we do in that process is the community goes through a meeting with parents, and the community says here is some of the basic issues; in this case, this two, four, six, eight, nine issues that they agreed on in Nash County. I think Wake is about the same. Trustworthiness. Most folks will not disagree with that. Respect, responsibility, caring, fairness, citizenship, perseverance, courage, self-discipline.

They teach this every single day in some part of the curriculum in every single school. My colleagues say, well, why is that important? When we get bogged down in arguments of whether

or not we ought to have prayer in school and all these other issues, that tends to be divisive. This is not divisive. We can agree on these, on all those issues.

If we look at those issues, those really are the kinds of issues that build communities, that build respect, that make a school what it ought to be.

In the process of putting this in, what we have found in some of our schools, I visited a school down in Johnston County, in Selma. I went in and talked with a principal. He said, "Oh, yeah, it is working." He said, "Our dropouts went down like 48 percent. The number of suspensions were down, in half." But he said, "The significant thing was children have more respect for one another, for their teachers. And what we saw was our academic scores went up."

So why would that happen? Very simply. We look at those issues. We are building trustworthiness. Pretty soon we have respect one for another. Children get to talk about those things in the classroom as a part of math, as a part of algebra or science or whatever they are doing.

So all of those things start to fit. Pretty soon, we find out that we are back to some of the things we used to do years ago in our schools, that we sort of bumped out, and now it is catching on in other places.

But we will be talking about some of these and having an opportunity, as my colleagues well know, in the weeks to come we will talk about the education budget that will come up. There will be those that say we do not need the Department of Education. We do not need those monies over there.

I am here to tell my colleagues, having been a former superintendent of school at the State level, that was a grant, and every penny of the money went to local schools, and it made a difference.

Now after we have been a pilot, we are putting it in in all of our schools, and it will now be used across the country, and the Department has become a clearinghouse.

Those are the kind of things that really make a difference. We take those sponges and start feeding them good stuff like this, along with a rich curriculum, and encourage them and reward them, pretty soon we start seeing the pressure that used to build that is not there, but the learning environment goes up. But it takes a long time to make a change.

Some people want to, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) and I understand this, that many times we want to pass legislation and have instant results. Last time I checked, about the only thing that is instant we can get is coffee and tea and those things we buy that are instant.

Children take a while to grow and to really make major changes in education. It really takes 8 to 10 years because it takes a child about 12 to 13 years to get through school.

□ 2215

Mr. CUMMINGS. I want to thank the gentleman for what he just talked about. When the gentleman presented that list, those are also the things that build character. That is what character is all about, when we look at that list, trustworthiness and respect.

But that leads me to something else also. We have, certainly in the last few weeks, this Congress and our Nation have become very, very upset about what happened in Littleton, Colorado, and what happened in Conyers, Georgia; and I think all of us have been searching for answers, as parents first and legislators second, trying to search our souls to try to figure out how can we bring a peace and a needed tranquility to our schools so that our children can learn and feel safe in school.

And one of the things that I guess has truly impressed me is a school in my district called Walbrook Senior High School. Walbrook is an inner city school and had had quite a few problems. They brought in a principal, a fellow named Andrey Bundley, Dr. Andrey Bundley; he is about 38 years old. And while other schools were putting up metal detectors, he was taking them down, and he did it with the very kind of things the gentleman just talked about.

What he said was, look, young people, let us create an environment of safety. This is before all of these events just happened or came about. But he said, I want to create an environment of safety, and he talked about the very things that the gentleman has there. He just said, we are going to be responsible for each other, we are going to respect each other, we are going to trust each other. He said, there is no such thing as a snitch because what we want to do is create an environment where we all feel safe.

So what I have done, taking a note from the gentleman's own notebook, I have created what I call the U-Turn Award. This is an award that we are presenting to schools that have been able to turn their schools around. And we are going to be presenting it on June 1 to Walbrook and to their principal, Dr. Bundley.

When I walk through that school, and the gentleman and I talked about this a little earlier, a person can walk through a school and in 30 seconds to a minute they can tell a lot about the principal. And when I walk through that school now, all the children are in their classes or they are moving peacefully through the halls. They are very respectful of each other.

Dr. Bundley, on my last visit, just stopped some students in the hall and he said, what kind of school do we have here, and they said we have a school where we respect each other. As Pollyanna-ish as it may sound, the fact is that is what it should be all about, reminding our young people.

And these kids are a little older now, because we are talking about high school, but reminding them that, as he

says, if we all want a safe school, then we are all going to make sure we create an environment of safety and we are all part of that environment. The students have as much say as the principal has to say.

And then what he found was that a lot of these children, while their homes may not have been like that, when they got these lessons, acquired these lessons at school, he found them taking them into their homes. Because the parents would say, I am surprised, Johnny always talks about this trustworthiness and this responsibility.

What they discovered was that once they began to do that and they took down the metal detectors, they discovered that by having that type of responsibility, that trustworthiness, that looking out for each other, that that is sort of valuing the family, the family of the school, and it felt good. It felt good that they could sit in that classroom.

And the next thing that happened was, other people were recognizing it. And that is one of the most important things about this recognition that the gentleman talked about.

When I was in school, we felt so proud of our school. And one of the reasons we felt so proud was we always had people coming in, the Mayor would come in sometimes, the Congressmen would come in and would recognize what we did. So that creates a certain pride, and that is why when the gentleman talks about the awards that he gives, I think that is so special and so important. Because by coming in there and saying, look, gang, you are really doing a great job and I recognize you; and even tonight, the gentleman mentioning the schools that he has mentioned, and my mentioning the schools that I have mentioned, that word will get out. And I guarantee that somebody will be on a P.A. system tomorrow morning saying, guess what, in the Congress of the United States of America our school was mentioned or our school was highlighted.

But something else will happen, too, and that is that there will be other schools that will say, "Well, the next time I see Congressman ETHERIDGE standing up, I'm hoping that he will talk about what we did."

And something else will happen through this dialogue, and that is, other Members of Congress and other State and local officials will look at this and say, well, hey, maybe we can do some of these same things.

Because truly we all have to work together to make our schools work. So I take this moment to congratulate Walbrook Senior High School for what they have done. And, again, it is just so interesting that when the gentleman mentioned that list of items just a moment ago, it is the same list, almost identical to the very things that Dr. Bundley at Walbrook talked about.

I yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. I thank the gentleman. And the truth is, like I said

earlier, there is nothing really new. You sort of borrow ideas and you redo them, but this came from people that had worked somewhere else, so we put it in, expanded it and made it work.

The gentleman talked about his schools, and I talked about Anderson Creek, I have been to, and Broadway, and the other schools in Lee County and up in Wake, but we are going to get a chance in this Congress in the next few weeks to show what kind of mettle we are made of, too. Because as the gentleman knows, we introduced a bill last week to create 30,000 more counselors to put in our schools across this country, that are badly needed, and 10,000 more resource officers to be out there to assist and help these young people in these areas where it is needed.

Because certainly in our middle and high schools there are not enough counselors to meet with them and counsel and help them with all the assessments. The others that are out there are doing all the paperwork. That is just one little piece; it will not solve all the problems, but it will sure help.

I trust before this Congress adjourns that we will also have a chance to deal with the issue all across America that we are all facing, in rural and inner cities and certainly in our growing communities, and that is this issue of school construction, an issue we can do something about it. I have a bill on it, the gentleman from New York (Mr. Rangel) does, a number of others do, and I trust we will pass something on that.

There are great needs. There is no question about it. And as an example, in Wake County, one of the counties I represent, they have grown 29.9 percent since 1990. And every county that touches it has grown in double digits. A small rural county, 29.7, adjacent to it. They cannot run fast enough to keep up. They are passing bond issues and they still cannot keep up. And I think it is time, if we really believe what we say up here and we really believe education is important, I happen to believe it is one of the most important things beyond our national defense that we have to put out, we are going to have to step up to the plate and take care of that issue.

We can do it on a one-time basis through the tax code to really help these States and localities meet the needs. Because as the gentleman well knows, over the next 10 years we will see some of the fastest growth at our high school levels in the history of this country, because we are going to see the "baby boom echo," as they are calling it. The baby boomers are having children, and that growth is going to come, and we have an obligation, I think, to help meet that need.

I would yield to the gentleman.

Mr. CUMMINGS. As the gentleman was talking about school construction, one of the things that we recently did in my district, we had to get new computers, and so we decided to take our

old computers and give them to one of our public schools. And the amazing thing about this situation is, when we gave those computers, we did not know how bad off that school was.

The school had 1,600 students and they had 260 kindergartners. And the interesting thing, out of that 260 kindergarten children, they had one computer. One computer. And what the principal and the teachers would do, they were very innovative and they were able to rotate those 260 kids around one computer.

Now, what we did in our district is, just last week, we gave nine computers. And we were able to clean them up and get them to these kindergartners and these first graders. But I wish the gentleman could have seen how excited they were about those computers. And one of the things that we said during our press conference was that we were encouraging other businesses and other government agencies, before they just toss those computers away, to look at our schools.

When a school has a total of 1,600 kids and one computer in this day and age, that is not very good. I look at my office, and we do not even hire folks unless they are pretty efficient and effective with regard to using a computer. And I mention that only because I thought about the fact that my office had gotten EPA a few months ago to give some computers, but the school was so ill-equipped and so old that they did not even have the proper electrical circuits to use the computers.

So that goes back to what the gentleman was saying, and I yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. That is absolutely true. And that is why when we talk about school construction and renovation, and I should have added renovation to it, and someone says, well, the building I went to was fine, they are not even being honest with themselves when they say that, because the truth is, if there is a building and it is not wired for computers, it has to be done.

Now, there is a program that we did in North Carolina, and a lot of States have done it, where the community actually goes in and helps rewire the buildings. And that is all well and good, but those computers need to be networked. They need stations in the classroom. And if we do not allow children that access, it makes no difference where they come from, whether the inner cities or rural areas, that becomes, in my mind, one of the real problems we have in this country.

There might be those who would say to that, we do not really need the computers, we need to teach them to read and write. Well, give students a computer, and they will learn to write. People tell me, we do not have computers; we cannot write. Today, with computers and sending e-mail, people are doing more writing today than they have ever done in their lives. There are fewer clerical positions and more managers are using that.

So my point is that for children, when we put the computers in a kindergarten classroom, the students just start to shine. They absolutely shine. And the point the gentleman made about donating his computers, I gave mine, we gave some of ours out of our office a couple of weeks ago, and I would encourage other Members of Congress to do so. All they have to do is get permission. They can do it when they buy new ones.

There are a lot of them out there. But I would hope they would turn them over pretty quickly so they can get good equipment and not get worn-out equipment. Because the last thing schools need is old, worn-out equipment. They all upgrade them.

I will share this story with the gentleman, because there is a program going on, and actually this Congress helped fund it last time, though I was not aware of it, but we have a couple of schools that actually take the computers, they get the internal parts from one of the, I am not sure which computer firm they get it from, and they actually rebuild the computers so they are up to date with the new standards and all the speed of the new computers. And they are letting the young people do it in school as part of their vocational classes.

So when that youngster comes out of school, not only can they operate a computer, they can help build one. And they have a job as a technician available to them just like that, and they make good money.

So there are things we can do to help if we will be creative and innovative.

And there is no question that if we have just one computer to even 25 children, that is not enough. We tried to put them in North Carolina, 1 to 50, and we realized that would not work. Then we upped it to 1 in 25. But really they should have five in a classroom, where there are no more than 25 students. Then when they start working in stations, there is tremendous results. The teacher can work in other areas while that child is working on computers.

The gentleman has been in classrooms, as I have, I am sure; and especially if there are enough computers, they are over there just working at it, going to it, just doing all those things. And the neat thing about a computer is, what the child is doing can be instantly assessed. They get instant feedback, and that is so important.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And they love it. They actually love it.

I assume we are beginning to run out of time here.

Mr. Speaker, how much time do we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TANCREDO). The gentleman has 18 minutes remaining.

Mr. CUMMINGS. As I was listening to the gentleman, I was thinking about how great this country is and how blessed we are to be here, and I could not help but think about all the things

that the gentleman and I have talked about tonight. And the gentleman said something to me earlier that just really touched me.

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My colleague said that what we need to do is make sure we talk about the positives. So often I think what happens is that we hear the negative stories and we do not hear the positives.

Right now probably tonight all over this country and for the next two or three weeks young people are going to be marching down aisles of auditoriums and some of them will have graduation in churches. And these young people have achieved a lot.

I look at some of the students in my district, the graduation I just attended. A young man had cancer throughout his last 3 years of high school, and he is graduating with honors. Then I think of a young lady whose mother had died of AIDS, and she took care of her brothers and sisters for 2 or 3 years and now is graduating with a very, very high average, over 92 average. I really think that, and that is why I say my colleague is absolutely right, we have to look at all the wonderful things that our children are doing.

As I have said to many audiences in my district, these are the children that come from our womb. They are the children that have our blood running through their veins. And if we do not lift up our children, who are we going to lift up, I mean if we really think about it? I think that we, as a Congress, have to continue to find innovative ways to lift our children up so that they can be the best that they can be.

Every time I see a group of children come here to the Capitol, and I saw my colleague talking to a group just in the last week or so, I look at those children and I ask myself, Where will they be 5 years from now? Where will they be 10 years from now? Will they be sitting in the Congress? Will they be teachers? Will they be lawyers? Will they be doctors? Or will they have dropped out?

And I know that we as adults have a tremendous responsibility to do everything in our power to make their lives the very best that they can be. Because when we really think about it, if it were not for adults that gave us the guidance, we would not be standing here right now. If it were not for the teachers that taught us to read and write and do arithmetic, we would not be here right now.

So I think we have to continue to say to ourselves, look, it is not enough to talk, but to go out there and do the kinds of things that my colleague and I have talked about this evening. And again, I applaud my colleague for all the wonderful things that he has done and I thank him for sharing this evening with me and sharing these ideas. Because I am going to take a lot of the ideas that my colleague just talked about now, and I have got to tell him, I might not give him the cred-

it for them when I take them, but I am going to use them. But I want to thank him for his leadership.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for his help and for being here this evening.

Let me close and say to my colleagues that this thing of education is no one has a lock on all that needs to be done. We have thousands of teachers across this country who every day go into those classrooms and fight the battle of ignorance day after day. They do it without a great deal of pay, but they deserve forever our gratitude and our thanks.

The children who will soon be following us as doctors and lawyers and teachers and preachers and, as I told a group that graduated the other night, if they slip up, they might become politicians and become congressmen and governors, but the truth is they are great youngsters and we have an obligation to be better role models. We really do.

Because most of them, most of them, are great youngsters. We hear about those problems. And I think we have an obligation to make sure that we honor those who do well and encourage those who want to do better and challenge those that slip up. And I think if we will do that, they will do better, we will be prouder of them. And that means that we have an obligation here to make sure that we shepherd the resources we have, that we do fund the education budget to the extent that we can and stretch it a little bit when we have to. Because there are a lot of places in this country where, as my colleague has pointed out, there are not enough computers. We can help.

The school buildings are not as safe as they ought to be, 50- and 60-year-old buildings that are not air-conditioned, that are not wired well. We can do better. In our Nation, in having the boom time we are having today, if we cannot fix them today and provide those resources for a good environment for children to learn, if we tell a child school is important and then he rides by a \$40- or \$50-million prison to go to a \$3-million school, he has already figured out what is important in that community.

We can do something about that. We can make that school an attractive, inviting place to go if it is well-lighted. And lighting is important if we are talking about learning.

So let me thank my colleague for joining me this evening in this special order.

DRUG CRISIS IN AMERICA

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

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, again tonight I come to the floor to discuss this serious situation in our Nation relating to the problem of illegal narcotics.

I was pleased in January to assume responsibility to chair the House Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources, which deals with formulating our national drug policy.

I know that on the front pages of tomorrow's newspapers the stories of China sabotage and I know that illegally obtained intelligence, the fundraising scandals, money that poured into our country through illegal foreign contributions, sabotage of our intelligence, information relating to missile technology are serious problems and will be splashed across the headlines tomorrow.

I know what the headlines have been for the past several weeks since Columbine and Atlanta that the Nation's attention, the Congress' attention, has been riveted on the question of school violence. And we all are saddened by these great tragedies.

But let me say tonight, and I have said it before, that for every instance of school violence, if we took all the instances of school violence and death in Paducah, Kentucky; Jonesboro, Arkansas; and Columbine and we added up all of those tragic deaths the last several years, we would still have a small figure of 30 or 40 individuals maybe maximum; and, unfortunately, I hate to use this analogy, but unfortunately, we have a Columbine times three or four every single day in the United States as a result of the use of illegal narcotics.

The effects of illegal narcotics on our society are dramatic and costly. They are indeed costly to over 1.8 million Americans, almost 2 million Americans who are behind bars. Estimates are that some 60 to 70 percent of those incarcerated in our prisons and jails and penitentiaries are there because of a drug-related offense.

I might say they are not there for casual use of drugs. They are there because they have committed a crime while under the influence of illegal narcotics, they are there because they have committed a felony, robbery, they have been trafficking and selling illegal narcotics. And they are the victims of illegal narcotics. But we have nearly 2 million Americans behind bars.

The cost that this Congress will be considering in a few more weeks to fund the anti-narcotics effort is probably in the range of \$18 billion. That is the direct cost that we will look at funding because of, again, the problems created by illegal drugs.

That is only the tip of the iceberg. We spend somewhere in the neighborhood of a quarter of a trillion dollars a year in the tremendous cost of social, economic, welfare support, judicial systems, incarceration, all these costs to our society because of the illegal narcotics problem.

Again, the tragedy is just immense. And again, we have the equivalent of a Columbine times three or four every single day. The sad part about all this is that many of these tragic deaths are