

boasts that this is actually a streamlined process, since it used to take 26 weeks and took 487 steps from start to finish!

I have talked about a third problem with many current federal education programs: dollars are earmarked for one and only one purpose, to the exclusion of all other uses. And many times, the distant Washington bureaucrats are designating funds for something that a school district doesn't even need at the time.

I like to use an analogy to explain this problem. If you feel a headache coming on, would you rather be treated by a doctor one mile away from where you live, or a thousand miles away? And if you have to use the doctor a thousand miles away, how good is he or she going to be at prescribing what you need for your headache? It sure would be nicer to see someone close by who could take a look at you in person and make a proper diagnosis.

And what if, when you tell the doctor a thousand miles away that you have a headache, she says to you, "Oh, that's too bad. But today we're running a special on crutches. We are prescribing crutches for people like you all over the country, because we've heard that you may need them." You say, "That's fine, but how is a crutch going to help my headache? Can't I get the money to buy some aspirin?" And the doctor says, "Sorry, but you can only use this money for crutches, not for aspirin, or anything else."

This is exactly what happens with so many of these categorical programs mandated from the federal level. Your local school district has determined that it needs funding for one thing, but the federal government will only release it for another. As a result, schools don't have the flexibility to use their funding for what they know they need to provide the best education possible for their students.

For all the federal programs and dollars committed to education, are we seeing success? I'm afraid not.

I have heard of a recent report from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which noted that even though the United States dedicates one of the largest shares of gross domestic product to education, it has fallen behind other economic powers in high school graduation rates. Only 72 percent of 18-year-old Americans graduated in 1996, trailing all other developed countries.

Our Congressional Research Service has explained why current federal aid programs may not lead to educational improvement. They note that these programs have generally been focused on specific student population groups with special needs, priority subject areas, or specific educational concepts or techniques. CRS reports:

While such "categorical" program structures assure that aid is directed to the priority population or purpose, they may not always be effective—instruction may become fragmented and poorly coordinated; the pro-

liferation of programs may be duplicative; each federally assisted program may affect only a marginal portion of each pupil's instructional time that is poorly coordinated with the remainder of her or his instruction; regulations intended to target aid on particular areas of need may unintentionally limit local ability to engage in comprehensive reforms; or the partial segregation of special needs students, while it helps to guarantee that funds can be clearly associated with each program's intended beneficiaries, may also reinforce tendencies toward tracking pupils by achievement level, and unintentionally contribute to a perpetuation of lower expectations for their performance.

I think the Congressional Research Service makes some valid observations about why our current federal education policy is not generally boosting student achievement and making our children competitive with other nations. CRS says that current federal policy hinders an important element of educational success: local control.

Based upon what we know about the state of our current federal education policy, we must explore how to direct our resources in ways that will stimulate academic success and high achievement. States, school districts, school boards, teachers, and of course, parents, are asking for local control and flexibility to spend federal education dollars in ways they know will work. They know how to incorporate the ingredients of success into the education of their children.

Senator HUTCHINSON's "Dollars to the Classroom Act" will give states and local schools the flexibility that they desperately need. His legislation takes nearly \$3.5 billion from a number of federal education programs, directs the money to the states based upon student population, and requires that at least 95% of it is spent in our children's classrooms. Local school districts may use the funds in ways they believe will be most effective in elevating student achievement.

Under the "Dollars to Classroom Act," parents, teachers, school boards and administrators will have the freedom to use federal dollars for what they need: whether it be to hire more teachers, raise teacher salaries, strengthen reading programs, buy new computers, or provide more one-on-one tutoring.

The bill ensures that federal bureaucracy will be held at bay by forbidding the Secretary of Education from issuing any regulations regarding the type of classroom activities or services that school districts may choose to provide with the federal dollars. Finally, the "Dollars to Classroom Act" calls for ways to streamline regulations and eliminate bureaucracy within major federal education laws.

Mr. President, we need to ensure that more federal education money is sent to the classroom, and that states, schools, and parents have more flexibility in using those funds in the way that will best help students achieve their fullest potential. We must find ways to encourage states and local

schools to be innovative and creative in finding the most successful ways to challenge our students to the highest levels and achievement. Senator HUTCHINSON's "Dollars to the Classroom Act" will help accomplish these goals, and that is why I am pleased to co-sponsor his legislation.

During the coming months, Congress should continue to evaluate our current federal elementary and secondary education programs and make the necessary changes to incorporate the ingredients we know have proven successful in providing the best education possible for our children. We cannot afford to maintain the status quo if it is not working. We owe it to our next generation to provide them what they need to be successful in the 21st Century.●

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 17

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) was added as a cosponsor of S. 17, a bill to increase the availability, affordability, and quality of child care.

S. 136

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. KERREY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 136, a bill to provide for teacher excellence and classroom help.

S. 170

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 170, a bill to permit revocation by members of the clergy of their exemption from Social Security coverage.

S. 285

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 285, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to restore the link between the maximum amount of earnings by blind individuals permitted without demonstrating ability to engage in substantial gainful activity and the exempt amount permitted in determining excess earnings under the earnings test.

S. 311

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. BRYAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 311, a bill to authorize the Disabled Veterans' LIFE Memorial Foundation to establish a memorial in the District of Columbia or its environs, and for other purposes.

S. 323

At the request of Mr. CAMPBELL, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. ALLARD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 323, a bill to redesignate the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument as a national park and establish the Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area, and for other purposes.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 5

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. BUNNING) were added as cosponsors of Senate Concurrent Resolution 5, a concurrent resolution expressing congressional opposition to the unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state and urging the President to assert clearly United States opposition to such a unilateral declaration of statehood.

SENATE RESOLUTION 33—DESIGNATING MAY 1999 AS NATIONAL MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. CLELAND, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. ALLARD) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 33

Whereas the freedom and security that United States citizens enjoy today are results of the vigilant commitment of the United States Armed Forces in preserving the freedom and security;

Whereas it is appropriate to promote national awareness of the sacrifices that members of the United States Armed Forces have made in the past and continue to make every day in order to support the Constitution and to preserve the freedoms and liberties that enrich the Nation;

Whereas it is important to preserve and foster the honor and respect that the United States Armed Forces deserve for vital service on behalf of the United States;

Whereas it is appropriate to emphasize the importance of the United States Armed Forces to all persons in the United States;

Whereas it is important to instill in the youth in the United States the significance of the contributions that members of the United States Armed Forces have made in securing and protecting the freedoms that United States citizens enjoy today;

Whereas it is appropriate to underscore the vital support and encouragement that families of members of the United States Armed Forces lend to the strength and commitment of those members;

Whereas it is important to inspire greater love for the United States and encourage greater support for the role of the United States Armed Forces in maintaining the superiority of the United States as a nation and in contributing to world peace;

Whereas it is appropriate to recognize the importance of maintaining a strong, equipped, well-educated, well-trained military for the United States to safeguard freedoms, humanitarianism, and peacekeeping efforts around the world;

Whereas it is important to give greater recognition for the dedication and sacrifices that individuals who serve in the United States Armed Forces have made and continue to make on behalf of the United States;

Whereas it is appropriate to display the proper honor and pride United States citizens feel towards members of the United States Armed Forces for their service;

Whereas it is important to reflect upon the sacrifices made by members of the United States Armed Forces and to show appreciation for such service;

Whereas it is appropriate to recognize, honor, and encourage the dedication and

commitment of members of the United States Armed Forces in serving the United States; and

Whereas it is important to acknowledge the contributions of the many individuals who have served in the United States Armed Forces since inception of the Armed Forces: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates May 1999 as "National Military Appreciation Month"; and

(2) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to recognize and honor the dedication and commitment of the members of the United States Armed Forces and to observe the month with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

• Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I rise today to submit legislation, cosponsored by Senators WARNER and LEVIN and other members of the Armed Services Committee, to designate May 1999 as National Military Appreciation Month. I would like to emphasize at the outset the role of the United Services Organization, the USO, in approaching me to ask that I submit this resolution. I am honored that an organization so central to the quality of the lives of our service personnel for so many decades chose me as the one to carry this legislation forward.

Last week, I joined with a number of my colleagues on the Armed Services Committee to report to the Senate S. 4, the Soldiers', Sailors', Airmen's, and Marines' Bill of Rights of 1999. That legislation addresses areas identified by the Joint Chiefs of Staff as their highest priorities in resolving the growing readiness problems afflicting the Armed Forces. By restoring the retirement system that existed prior to 1986 and taking concrete measures to close the pay gap and remove military families from the rolls of those eligible for food stamps, I am confident that S. 4 will go a long way toward alleviating the retention and recruitment problems that have contributed so much to the recent decline in military readiness.

It is out of concern for the welfare of the men and women who wear the uniform of our nation's armed forces that S. 4 was passed so early in the legislative year by the Armed Services Committee. It is out of a sense of pride in those same men and women that I offer this resolution designating May as National Military Appreciation Month.

During May 1999, we will observe Victory in Europe Day, Military Spouse Day, Armed Forces Day, and, most importantly, Memorial Day. It is appropriate that, with our armed forces currently operating in Bosnia, Macedonia, Haiti, and the Persian Gulf, and conducting routine peacetime activities too numerous to list in support of U.S. foreign policy in virtually every part of the globe, that the nation dedicate that month to remind itself of the contribution these individuals make to the preservation of a way of life increasingly taken for granted.

It has become almost platitudinous to point out the increased burden placed on a smaller military since the

dissolution of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. Our military forces are being sent into harm's way more often than during any period since the Vietnam War, with additional deployments contemplated as I speak. Strong economic growth and low unemployment have reduced the incentive on the part of many young people to enlist in the Armed Forces, thereby further diminishing the percentage of Americans exposed to military Service. By designating May 1999 as National Military Appreciation Month, it is my hope that the country will be more inclined to reflect on the sacrifices of so many throughout our history and today, and to better understand why we in Congress are acting so hastily to address quality of life issues affecting our service personnel and their families. My good friend, DUNCAN HUNTER, has offered companion legislation in the House of Representatives, and I look forward to speedy passage of this bill in the weeks ahead. •

• Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my friend Senator MCCAIN in submitting this resolution designating May 1999 as "National Military Appreciation Month." Senator MCCAIN is one of the great champions in the Senate of the men and women who serve in our armed forces. It is a privilege to join him in sponsoring this resolution.

Day after day, our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines continue to demonstrate a high degree of excellence and commitment. No matter what we ask of them, they always respond in the most professional manner imaginable. We have asked them to serve in combat operations, in peacekeeping missions, and in humanitarian relief efforts. We have deployed them around the world to stand in the face of aggression. They make tremendous personal sacrifices to serve their nation.

The most recent example of the excellence and professionalism of our forces was Operation Desert Fox. Over 40,000 troops deployed from bases around the world in response to Saddam Hussain's flagrant defiance of UN authorized inspections. Without a single U.S. or British casualty, our troops flew more than 600 aircraft sorties, 300 of them a night. Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines all participated in this flawless operation. This same excellence has been demonstrated in Bosnia, Korea, Central America, and every other place where our members serve.

Our troops are, quite simply, the best. They are the best trained, best equipped, best disciplined and most highly skilled and motivated military force in the world. They deserve the recognition of a grateful Nation. This resolution calls on all Americans to recognize and honor their dedication and service. It is the least we can do. •