

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, last September, I toured Daniel Boone School in Chicago to see firsthand its overcrowded conditions. Boone School has an enrollment of 1,100 students, 300 more than the school can reasonably accommodate.

Classes were being held in hallways, and students were learning in make-shift classrooms like the teachers' lounge and cafeteria. Three different classes were being taught in the same room at the same time.

Last week, I returned to Boone School; and I am sad to report that nothing has changed. Classes are still being held in hallways and teachers' lounges. But what moved me most was the seventh grade girl who stood up and looked me in the eye and said, "You came last September, how come nothing is changed; and when will we see improvements in our school." That is a legitimate and tough question.

Boone School, however, is not alone. Eighty-nine percent of Illinois schools are in need of repair, rebuilding, or upgrade. How can we expect to deliver the best quality education to our students when they are learning about gravity from falling ceiling tiles. It is just unacceptable to send our children to 19th century schools when we go into the 21st century.

Yesterday, a study released by the NEA shows that it costs \$322 billion to repair and modernize American schools. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4094, America's Better Classroom Act of 2000.

#### BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER TREATMENT ACT

(Mr. OSE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the leadership for agreeing to bring the Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act to the House floor before Mother's Day. This legislation is vital to provide treatment for low-income, uninsured working women who are diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer. Giving States the option to provide Medicaid coverage for these women if they are found to have cancer through the Center for Disease Control's early detection program will help save thousands of lives.

The program currently provides screening for breast cancer, but it does not provide funding for treatment options for these women. The harsh reality is they will die because they have no options. This must change.

The funding for H.R. 1070 was included in the budget resolution and has overwhelming support from my friends on both sides of the aisle with nearly 300 cosponsors.

Again, I want to thank the leadership for bringing this critical piece of legislation to the House floor before Mother's Day.

#### INTERNATIONAL CHILD ABDUCTION

(Mr. LAMPSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the House and talk about an intolerable situation, that is, the abduction of 10,000 American children to foreign countries. I am asking my colleagues to focus on these children and to help pass legislation that will bring them home. Today I will tell the story of an American parent, Kenneth Roche, to illustrate the problem.

In 1991, a U.S. court granted Kenneth a divorce from his German wife, and granted both parents joint legal custody, with physical custody going to the mother and generous access rights for Kenneth. The court also ordered that the child must not be removed from Massachusetts unless authorized by the court.

In 1993, Kenneth's ex-wife took the child to Germany, and the United States issued an arrest warrant, granted him temporary custody, and ordered the immediate return of the child. Both a lower court and a higher court in Germany has ordered the return of the child, but the mother has refused to comply and the courts refused to enforce their own orders.

Kenneth Roche has not seen his child since 1993 and does not know where he is. Mr. Speaker, American parents and children should not be separated like this. The effects on both are painful and devastating. I ask this House to join me and help bring our children home.

#### HAPPY 50TH ANNIVERSARY TO JACK AND NORMA QUINN

(Mr. QUINN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to take a personal prerogative of the House and ask the indulgence of my colleagues. I want to join other Quinn clan members from Buffalo and Hamburg and Blasdell, New York in honoring and wishing my parents, Jack and Norma Quinn, happy 50th anniversary this Saturday, May 6.

I have to be clear that I represent only five sons, five great daughter-in-laws, 13 grandchildren, and one great granddaughter, but I have a chance to do it here that they might not have. We offer congratulations of course and thanks.

Mr. Speaker, if I could quote the Chaplain this morning who said, "that we are a reflection of Your love in this world." I think I would want our parents to know that we, too, are a reflection of their love in this world.

We congratulate them on 50 years of wedded bliss and thank them for all the sacrifices they made for us.

#### CONGRESS MUST PASS SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

(Mr. ETHERIDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge and congratulate the Quinns.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the more than 53 million children across this country that right now are attending school in our Nation's classrooms. That is more students than at the height of the Baby Boom and there will be more next year.

Unfortunately, too many of our children are stuffed into trailers, closets, cramped bathrooms, overcrowded and substandard facilities. Our schools are literally bursting at the seams.

For more than 2 years, I tried to pass my school construction bill to provide tax credits to help local communities build quality schools for our children. But the Republican leadership has refused to allow this essential legislation to pass. The same Republican leadership that has tried to eliminate the Department of Education, slash school lunches, refuses to pass this modest bill to build just a few schools for our children.

This same leadership has constantly pushed private school vouchers, block grants, and even antipublic school bills that have suffered from time to time.

Fortunately, Mr. Speaker, a bipartisan group of Members have come together to support a common sense compromise to school construction legislation. The Johnson-Rangel bill will pay the interest on about \$24.8 billion worth of school construction bonds across this country. I urge my colleagues to support it.

#### EDUCATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN A STATE AND LOCAL PRIORITY

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to talk about education a little bit, because if one looks at the record on education, Republican versus Democrat leadership, it is not even close.

Republicans have put far more resources into education, far more flexibility for local teachers, far more money into the special Individuals with Disability Education Act, far more money into school lunch program.

I hope that some of these Democrats will actually read the bill. They will see if they want to measure their money. They have lost.

Now, this proposal to construct new schools is great if one is in Chicago or New York City where one has not kept up with one's education or here in Washington, D.C. where one's roofs are leaking. Do my colleagues know why? Because the cities and States have not made the investment into education.

Why should my South Georgia school districts be penalized? They have raised taxes locally. They have done the right thing. They have been responsible. They built new school systems. Why should they be penalized to subsidize Chicago and New York City school systems. It is ridiculous.

Education has always been a State and local priority. We do not need to federalize it and have Uncle Sam in the Department of Education knowing best.

#### EDUCATION

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, this education problem is not only a big city problem in spite of the comments of the previous speaker. Yesterday, the National Education Association estimated the country's construction needs at over \$300 billion. This includes basic necessities, a desk in a classroom rather than in a broom closet, plumbing that works, computers capable of reaching the Internet.

My State, the State of Ohio, rural, urban, suburban, is home to one of the greatest needs, ranked 49th in the country for infrastructure, in spite of local effort and State effort. Ohio faces a \$25 billion bill to provide children a safe and healthy learning environment.

The State recently committed to spending \$10 billion over 26 years to do just that. Unfortunately, that is just not enough. In my district, Elyria High School is over 70 years old and does not qualify for any State funds. The children of Elyria, as are other places across the country, simply cannot wait any longer. If we work together, they will not have to.

I am cosponsor of the America's Better Classroom Act by providing zero-interest bonds, it would leverage local and Federal resources to begin to take care of this national disgrace.

Only a unified front can fix this problems. I urge my colleagues to support it.

#### TAX FREEDOM DAY

(Mr. HEFLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, Americans love to celebrate landmarks and anniversaries: Christmas day, Independence Day, New Year's Day. But yesterday was one of my personal favorites, Tax Freedom Day. That is the day when hard-working Americans have finally paid their tax burdens and can begin earning for themselves and their families.

This chart illustrates when that day is over the years. I invite Members to use this opportunity to reflect on the problems with our current tax system. First, it is cumbersome. Our Tax Code exceeds 2.8 million words, more than War and Peace and the Bible combined.

It is unfair. It discriminates against married couples, the elderly, even the dead. It is discouraging. It punishes investing and saving and steals profits from healthy businesses and confuses a large majority of Americans trying to decipher its complicated forms.

Today, I encourage my colleagues to support reform and tax reduction measures that will truly provide tax freedom for hard-working Americans.

#### EDUCATION

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, education must be our Nation's number one priority. Our children are 25 percent of the population, but they are 100 percent of our future. If we act now to strengthen our education system, our children and our country will be prepared for the economic and growth challenges of the future.

The Democrats' Safe and Successful Schools Act of 2000 would give teachers, parents, and students the tools they need for success.

As Democratic legislation proposes, investing in modernizing schools; hiring new, qualified teachers; and providing safe after-school programs for children will, indeed, take us into the new millennium and truly help our children and their future.

Let us not play politics with our children's future. Let us work together to support the Safe Schools Act and show our children that they are our number one priority.

The Republicans have proposed what they would call reforms, but, Mr. Speaker, closing troubled schools, doling out vouchers is not the answer. Investing in our education system is.

#### PERMANENT NORMAL TRADE RELATIONS TO CHINA

(Mr. KNOLLENBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, later this month, Members of the House will be casting their votes on one of the most important trade issues that we have faced in recent years. I am referring, of course, to extend permanent normal trade relations to China.

The United States and the international community have been working together with China for decades to bring China into the WTO. For the first time in history, the doors of China's economy will be opened up to international commerce and competition.

Congress will be faced with a simple choice then. If Congress passes PNTR, we will allow U.S. companies to freely participate in the nearly \$4 billion Chinese economy. However, if we do not pass PNTR, American products and American workers will be denied this opportunity.

Faced with these options, I think the choice is clear. I urge my colleagues to avoid the temptation to give in to the protectionist forces inside our country and instead support free trade and progress in China.

#### HONORING MERITORIOUS SERVICE OF VIETNAM VETERANS

(Mr. STUPAK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, the Vietnam conflict began from 1964 and ended 25 years ago on April 30, 1975. During that time, over 3.4 million U.S. American military personnel served in southeastern Asia.

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Our veterans served in the rice paddies of the Delta, in the jungle of the Central Highlands, on river patrols of the Mekong River, and from air bases in the Pacific. Brave Americans went halfway around the world to help an embattled country and to perform the duty that we asked of them.

Many Vietnam veterans were not sufficiently acknowledged for their service to the country in those contentious times. For some, the war is still not over; some of our veterans have not recovered from their wounds, and families will not forget their loss. The war ended 25 years ago, but the event of those days remain deep in our collective memory.

It is never too late to express our appreciation. Recently, Congress passed House Concurrent Resolution 228 honoring members of the armed forces and Federal civilian employees who served during the Vietnam era. This resolution acknowledges the significance of the fall of South Vietnam and the importance of the events of April 30, 1975, as a benchmark in American history and an indelible memory for those who so honorably served.

I am pleased that Congress has so recognized and commended the meritorious service of our Vietnam veterans. Let there be no doubt that this country does indeed respect, appreciate, and honor the personal commitment and sacrifice of our Vietnam veterans for their service to this Nation.

#### ELIAN AND RELIGIOUS VALUES

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, for those persons who say that Elian must be returned to his biological father at all cost, I submit these other arguments.

Let us point out that his real father, if he goes back to Cuba, will be Castro. In a Communist state, the government controls the state and controls the lives of the people. Those are the facts.