

A BIPARTISAN SOLUTION TO EDUCATION CRISIS IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, of the many challenges that our country faces in this new century, there is none greater than education, educating our populace so that we have a skilled workforce and so that everybody has the level of education that they need in today's economy.

When I go around my district and go visit businesses and it does not matter what size or what level of skill they are looking for and I ask them what their greatest challenge is, the answer is always the same, finding employees. This is particularly true certainly of high-skilled jobs, computer, engineers, math, science, but it is also true across the board of just about any level of job that you could need in any business. We are not educating our population to fill the jobs that are available in our country. If we are going to maintain the economic growth that we have enjoyed for the last 7 or 8 years, we are going to have to start doing that.

Increasingly, the battle over education has broken down into an either/or partisan debate that is not benefiting either party or certainly not benefiting the people of this country. On the one side you have people saying that all we need to do is spend more money on public education and the problems will be solved. On the other side, you have people saying all we need to do is privatize the system and it will magically be solved. The truth is that neither answer really works or really applies to the challenge we face in this country.

I rise today to talk about a new solution to this that will bring some of the ideas from both sides and hopefully forge a bipartisan solution to the education crisis that we have in our country. As a member of the New Democrat Coalition, this is something that Members like the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. DOOLEY) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND), myself, and many others have been working on to forge a solution to our education problem that gets away from the old partisan polemic, that gets away from the idea of trying to score political points on education and to actually work towards a solution. And it blends together a couple of very basic ideas. Yes, we need to support public education. Ninety percent of the students in this country, more in most places, are educated in public institutions. They need our support. Anyone who says money does not matter in education is not being realistic.

I do not think you would hear any businessman say that money does not matter in his or her ability to run their business. It matters. But it also matters every little bit as much how you

spend that money. Not only do we need to support public education, we also need to make sure that there is accountability and choice at every level of the education establishment. Right now in K-12 education that really is not true. Either for the students or the employees, whether it is administrators, teachers, principals, students, whatever, we really do not have many methods to measure results, to measure how well our students are doing, how well our teachers are doing, how well our administrators are doing. The people of this country are demanding that accountability. They will support public education, they will support lower class sizes, better school construction, mandatory preschool, a variety of different things but they want to make sure they are getting their money's worth.

What we need to advocate is programs that give parents and students reasonable reason to believe that we are going to have that sort of accountability within our education system. We need to measure results. I understand that nobody is excited about having their results measured. If you show up to work and someone says, "Okay, today we're going to do a 2-week evaluation of how well you're doing at your job." It is not something that anybody is looking forward to nor is it easy to do. I am not advocating that we simply have one multiple choice test fits all. It is a complicated process to evaluate. But some evaluation has to be done.

It is not enough for those of us who advocate public schools to stand up and say, "Well, it's too tough to evaluate. We can't really tell you what schools are working and which ones are not." We need to figure that out.

We also need to give parents choice. Expanding charter schools in this country would give parents realistic public school choice. They could mold and shape their local community school and be invested in it. Those options would help improve public schools. But at the end of the day, we also need to fund schools. If we are going to tell teachers that we are going to hold them more accountable, we are going to have to pay them more. You will not attract people to the teaching profession if they know they are starting out at \$24,000 and topping out at \$50,000 when they have other options.

Another good idea, something that the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DAVIS) has worked on a lot, is the idea of alternative certification, the idea of taking people who have been working in the business world, have developed skills and giving them an alternative method to allow them to teach perhaps for a short period of time to help fill that quality issue. So we are going to have to increase quality through increasing pay and increasing accountability if we are truly going to move forward in education.

In this election year, I ask both parties to step up to this problem. This should not be an issue where we try to

advance an idea or a piece of legislation for the political purpose of making the other party look like either, A, they do not support public schools or, B, they do not support accountability. We need people working together who both support public schools and support accountability and choice. I think that is the majority of this body, frankly. We just need to forge that coalition and work on that so that we can move forward.

Mr. Speaker, one final point. Local control is going to be a critical aspect of this. This cannot be solved from Washington, D.C. Local schools have to make the difference, and we have to empower them to make that difference.

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TRIBUTE TO JUDGE JOSEPH CLEMENS HOWARD, SR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to note the passing from this life on September 16 of a great American. I rise to pay homage to a man of peace, United States District Judge Joseph Clemens Howard, Sr.

Judge Howard served the cause of justice for many years, first on the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City, and later on the United States District Court for the District of Maryland.

Some may think it unusual that I characterize this man who was such a fierce and tenacious fighter for justice as a man of peace. We must never forget, however, what Dr. Martin Luther King taught this Nation when he said, "Peace is more than the absence of war. Peace is the presence of justice."

All too often in this life, we fail to recognize, Mr. Speaker, the greatness of the people around us. Judge Joseph Howard was a man, however, whose elevated stature as a human being, whose intellectual capability and moral character, as well as physical presence, demanded recognition.

As a consequence of that stature, Joe Howard was acknowledged in his own time as both a legal scholar and as a trailblazer for civil rights.

President Jimmy Carter nominated Judge Howard to serve on the United States District Court for the District of Maryland in 1979. That action on the part of President Carter was an historic event.

In recognition of Joe Howard's capabilities and proven accomplishments as a member of the Maryland judiciary, both Maryland Senator Charles Mathias and our Democratic Senator Paul SARBANES strongly supported Judge Howard's nomination. The Senate gave its advice and consent, and on October 25, 1979, Judge Joseph Howard was sworn in as the first African American to ever serve on Maryland's United States District court.

No one who loves justice has ever had cause to regret this historic event.

I have been taught that a true leader stands up for what is right, whatever adversity that may bring, hanging on to his principles until the rest of the world catches up. This is how I will always remember Judge Joseph Howard.

He cleared the path and set the standards of excellence and principle for all of us who followed him into the law. Those of us who were blessed to know Judge Howard understand that the principles he fought to advance are far from being secured. We will carry on in the certain knowledge that a man who loved humanity has chartered our course and won the opening argument.

Judge Howard used to remind us that justice must always seek to improve the human condition. He quoted Eleanor Roosevelt's words so often:

Human rights must begin in small places close to home. They are the world of the individual person, where every man, woman and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity and equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere.

Judge Howard understood the fundamental truth in Eleanor Roosevelt's words. That conviction was the source of his greatness.

Judge Howard's funeral last Friday was one of those brief moments when everyone, both black and white, became one heart and one mind. Baltimore came together last Friday to pay respect to the life of a man who taught us lasting lessons about the seeds of justice within the human spirit.

"There was a fury about Judge Joseph Howard, a sense of justice that lay at the center of his soul," recalled District Court Chief Judge J. Frederick Motz. "At the same time, he was a man of compassion to all, whatever their station in life."

Maryland's Chief Judge, Robert Bell, concurred, observing, "Joe Howard was a man who built bridges so that those who followed could cross to opportunity on the other side."

What touched me most deeply, Mr. Speaker, though, was the honesty and the candor with which those of us who spoke addressed the struggles in Joe Howard's life. We talked openly about how in 1968 as a young man and Assistant State's Attorney, Joe Howard had gone against the legal establishment of that time, challenging racial disparities in sentencing and pushing for a higher level of equity.

We remembered how the system attempted to punish Joe Howard's pursuit of justice during his campaign for a seat on the Supreme Bench. In a free society, the seeds of justice can take hold and grow only in the shared soil of our respect for ourselves and each other as human beings.

So, my colleagues and friends, I rise not to mourn the death of Joseph Clemens Howard, but to celebrate the life of a man who exemplified "equal justice under the law."

To the beloved ones in Judge Howard's life, his wife, Gwendolyn Lynn

Howard; his son, Joseph; his brother, Lawrence; and the entire Howard family, we simply say thank you for sharing with us the life of a great man. Judge Joseph Clemens Howard was beloved by all who loved justice, and he will be sorely missed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. CLAYTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

INJURED COLD WAR VETERANS DESERVE ASSISTANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise during this unusual period of the day when we should be busy at work moving our appropriation bills on this floor in the full light of the public to talk and plead about an issue that should be resolved through the appropriations process and the defense authorization bill that is moving both through this body and the other body, and it concerns Americans who worked, who fought on behalf of this country's Cold War efforts, working in the nuclear industry, the beryllium industry, the gaseous diffusion industry, and who are now dying or have died because of illnesses contracted as a part of their working life.

We have tried to bring that issue to bear in the current bills being worked on in the back rooms here somewhere. We have been told that those provisions have now been dropped from the bill.

I am here this afternoon to say, pay attention to what I am saying, because these Americans are veterans, just like those who fought on foreign soil or defended us here at home.

It is terrible to be a Member of Congress and to have someone walk into your office on a breathing machine and say to you, "Congresswoman KAPTUR, I worked in the beryllium industry, and I am dying, and I cannot get workman's compensation, I cannot get decent health benefits for myself, and what is going to happen to my family after my life is over?"

I stand here today in memory of Galen Lemke, just one of hundreds of people, patriotic Americans, who served, worked every day, and produced the weaponry that now has made America the premier military and economic power on the Earth. I would plead with the Defense conferees to listen to them, to care for their lives and their families, and to do what is right, what is just.

The Department of Energy, under the leadership of Secretary Bill Richardson, has produced a piece of legislation that covers most, but not all, of the

workers who worked in the nuclear industry, the gaseous diffusion industry, and the beryllium industry.

We have a bipartisan effort here in the House comprised of people like the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) of Ohio, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. UDALL), myself, and, in the other body, several Members, including two Senators from my home state of Ohio, who are very supportive of this legislation.

There is absolutely no reason that this Congress cannot help these Americans, who are truly deserving of our respect, and, behind that respect, placing the kind of assistance they need in the most difficult moments of their lives.

If the American people were sitting here, they would vote on this 100 percent. They would not leave out one of those families. Yet we are poised to move bills through here which cast them aside. That is truly wrong, when we know it is a discrete number of workers, we know who they are, we know how they have suffered, and we have this time, this year, in the beginning of the year 2000, to put the unfinished business of the 20th century behind us and to take care of these families, as we properly should.

So I would say to the defense conferees, to the conferees on the appropriations bill, there is no better time than now. Do what is right, do what is in the interest of America, and treat these families like the true American patriots and veterans that they are. Include these beryllium workers, gaseous diffusion workers and nuclear workers in a compensation bill that is no different than any other Federal compensation program that exists.

I would say to Secretary Richardson, thank you; and I would say to the Secretary of Defense, where are you? Where are you lobbying on behalf of people who helped this country win the Cold War?

Please conferees, do not do this to Americans who truly deserve the support of the American people.

"THE REST OF THE STORY" ON THE BUDGET SURPLUS

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

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, we will be taking this hour, I will be joined by many of my fellow Democrats, Blue Dogs, and perhaps several others today, to talk about the budget, to talk about debt reduction, and, as Paul Harvey says quite often, to talk about "the rest of the story," that which we are not hearing in much of the rhetoric that is going on today.

The first point I want to make is that through August 31, 2000, there has been no surplus, other than trust fund surpluses. You would not believe that with