

to buy back later, makes good sense because the price will be lower later and we can replenish the reserve. That needs to be put in place now.

Some have argued that we shouldn't use the reserve except for national emergencies. When oil is at \$34 a barrel, when gas prices are headed towards \$2 per gallon, when major companies in America lose dramatic parts of their value because of the price of oil, and when the economic expansion that has made this country smile from one coast to the other for so many years is in jeopardy, to me that is an emergency. If for some reason some in the administration have doubt about whether they have the legal ability to sell the reserve—I believe they do—we can easily in this body pass legislation that Senator COLLINS and I have sponsored which makes it clear that they do.

No one is looking to go back to \$10-per-barrel oil. But oil trading over \$30 per barrel is clearly going to affect our economic growth and severely impact the global economy.

We have a perfect tool to reduce the inordinate power of OPEC and protect our economy. That tool is the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. It is high time we used it.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GORTON). The clerk will call the roll.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FITZGERALD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROVIDING FOR A CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF THE SENATE

Mr. FITZGERALD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 94, the adjournment resolution, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Con. Res. 94), providing for conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. FITZGERALD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 94) was agreed to, as follows:

S. CON. RES. 94

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That when the Senate recesses or adjourns at the close of business on Thursday, March 9, 2000, or Friday,

March 10, 2000, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until noon on Monday, March 20, 2000, or until such time on that day as may be specified by its Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until noon on the second day after Members are notified to reassemble pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. The Majority Leader of the Senate, after consultation with the Minority Leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the Senate to reassemble whenever, in their opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

Mr. FITZGERALD. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. FITZGERALD, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. BAYH, pertaining to the introduction of S. 2233 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

MANDATES AND THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, in 1975, Congress passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which was designed to ensure that all students with disabilities would receive the educational services they needed in order to attend "mainstream" schools. This legislation has been effective in increasing access to quality education for disabled students all across the nation.

In my state of Ohio, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act has meant so much to thousands and thousands of young men and women over the last 25 years. It has opened up whole new worlds and shown them that their disabilities cannot bind the limitless possibilities that are provided by the gift of education.

IDEA has helped students like John Hook, from Elgin High School in Marion, Ohio. IDEA has given John's school the resources to hire a special education teacher who is able to help John with his reading and writing.

Before IDEA, students with learning disabilities like John might have dropped out, but now, many are thriving. And because of the help he's received and his hard work, John is on his school's honor roll and is "on track" for college.

IDEA has also been a tremendous help to Todd Carson, an 18 year old student from Highland High School in Highland Local School District outside Medina, Ohio. Todd has Cerebral Palsy and is confined to a wheelchair. Todd is unable to write and he cannot use a keyboard to communicate.

Through IDEA, Highland District was able to purchase a speech recognition program called "Dragon Dictate" which can be used to control a word processor. This has been like a ray of

sunshine for Todd. Now, Todd has the ability to take class notes and write papers. Dragon Dictate also lets him use the Internet and send e-mail. This program has been a big difference for Todd, allowing him to read, write and participate in class.

I am pleased with what we've been able to do with IDEA in Ohio. Before its passage, there were close to 25,000 children who were institutionalized in Ohio because of conditions like Cerebral Palsy and autism. Now, according to the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities, there are no kids institutionalized in Ohio. IDEA is a big factor in this success because instead of being hidden-away and forgotten about, these kids are in school—learning and thriving—preparing to add their contributions to society.

However, even with all the success of IDEA, the thousands and thousands it has benefitted, there is a startling reality to this program that no longer can be ignored: IDEA is crushing our schools financially.

Many of our state and local governments have found that the costs of serving handicapped students are typically 20% to 50% higher than the average amount spent per pupil. This, in itself, is not the problem; state and local governments understand that students with disabilities require different, and many times, expensive needs.

Congress, too, understood the expense involved when it passed IDEA, promising that the federal government would pay up to 40% of the costs associated with the program.

Congress said, we think IDEA is so needed as a national priority, that we will pay up to 40% of the costs.

The problem rests in the fact that the federal government has not provided nearly as much funding as they told state and local leaders they would provide, and which our children need. Indeed, in fiscal year 2000, the federal government only provides enough funds to cover 12.6% of the educational costs for each handicapped child, not the 40% it promised.

As in past years, our State and local governments will be forced to pay the leftover costs. That is what is going to happen. They are going to have to pay that leftover cost.

Because the Federal Government has not lived up to its expectations, IDEA amounts to a huge unfunded mandate. When I was Governor of Ohio, I fought hard for passage of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act so that circumstances such as this could be avoided.

I was one of only a handful of State and local leaders who lobbied Congress to pass legislation that would provide relief to our State and local governments. I felt so strongly about this that in 1995 I asked Senator Dole to make unfunded mandate relief legislation S. 1. I was privileged to be in the Rose Garden 5 years ago this month when the President signed S. 1 into

law. I will never forget the President saying how opposed he was to unfunded mandates since he had been a Governor for a number of years and had seen the effects of such unfunded mandates.

Unfortunately, the President has done nothing—nothing—to address one of the most costly unfunded mandates; that is, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The President's fiscal year 2000 budget contains \$40.1 billion in discretionary education funding. That is more than a 37-percent increase over the fiscal year 2000 discretionary education total, including advanced funding, and nearly double the \$21.1 billion in discretionary education spending allocated by the Federal Government in 1991—just 10 years ago.

Think about that for a moment. The President is looking to increase federal education discretionary spending so that it will have grown by almost 100% in ten years. And that's at a time when inflation will have grown only 20.7% during the same ten years. That's incredible!

What's even more incredible is what we're doing to our states and localities. Of the discretionary total for fiscal year 2000, we allocated \$4.9 billion for IDEA. If we had funded IDEA at the 40% level that Congress had promised in 1975, we would have allocated \$15.7 billion in fiscal year 2000. In essence, we have passed along a \$10.8 billion mandate on our state and local governments.

Think about it—a \$10.8 billion mandate.

For anyone who thinks about it, they are asking, What does that mean? That is more than we spent on the entire budget for the Department of the Interior. Think of it.

When our Nation's Governors were in Washington recently for the annual Governors' Association winter meeting, one of their more prominent issues—I would say the most prominent issue they brought up with Congress and the President—was the need to fully fund IDEA.

The Governors made it patently clear that if the Federal Government paid their 40-percent share of IDEA, it would free up \$10.8 billion across America and would allow them to better respond to the education needs in their respective States.

They also pointed out that many of them were building schools, hiring teachers, and doing most of the things Washington wants to do with that \$10.8 billion that should have gone to the States to fund IDEA.

With the help of the Ohio School Boards Association and the Buckeye Association of School Administrators, I am contacting superintendents of education, leaders from urban, suburban, and rural districts in every part of Ohio—I have a letter going out to all of them—asking them about their experience with the fiscal impact of IDEA and their advice on what would be the best way the Federal Government could be a better partner.

The main question I have asked Ohio's educators is: What will help you more—fully funding the Federal commitment to IDEA, or funding at the Federal level programs that, by their very nature, are the responsibility of our State and local governments, such as hiring new teachers, building new schools, and a host of other programs that may or may not be needed in school districts across America?

I am going to be reporting back later this spring with the results of that survey. In the meantime, I believe it is incumbent on the Senate, as it considers the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, to find money to fully fund IDEA. This body for sure should not support expensive new Federal education programs until IDEA is fully funded.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I ask unanimous consent that a copy of my letter to Ohio's education leaders be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

FEBRUARY 28, 2000.

DEAR OHIO EDUCATION LEADER: I am writing to ask for your input concerning the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). As you know, IDEA was passed in 1975 to ensure that handicapped students receive the educational services that they need to attend mainstream schools. This legislation has been successful in increasing access to quality education for Ohio's disabled students and for young people throughout the nation. However, many educators have contacted me about the funding of IDEA and the ability of school officials to discipline students under the Act.

Act the Senate prepares to debate the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, many educational issues, including IDEA, will be examined. As such, I am interested in your experience. Is the funding your school district receives from the federal government inadequate to help you meet your obligations under the Act? As you may know, the federal government has not lived up to its promise to provide up to 40 percent of the costs of special education under the Act nationally. Are the costs to your district of complying with disability legislation affecting your ability to pay for your other programs and responsibilities? Secondly, I have heard from educators about the difficulty they have maintaining discipline in classrooms while complying with the requirements of IDEA. Has this been a challenge for your schools?

As we work to improve our laws, any insights you have into the impact of federal regulations concerning the education of disabled students on school in Ohio or input into improving IDEA would be appreciated.

Finally, in light of the President Clinton's continued emphasis on federal involvement in education, traditionally a state and local responsibility, I am interested in your thoughts on whether your district would benefit more from the President's new education proposals or if you would be better off if Congress met its obligations under IDEA—freeing money for you to fund your own priorities.

Thank you for your valuable input. I strongly believe that working together we can make a difference for Ohio's young people.

Sincerely,

GEORGE V. VOINOVICH,
U.S. Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). The Senator from Washington.

EDUCATION

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, during the course of the last 2 weeks, the health committee has been dealing with the vitally important subject of education and has been engaged over a period of many hours in the writing of a bill extending the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of the United States. That writing process, in my view, has been highly constructive. It has also been ignored by the press of the United States and, therefore, by most of the people of the United States. It does not deserve that fate.

Education is a vitally important subject, and the Federal role in education, a role that has increased markedly over the course of the last several decades, is at a crossroads in the course of that debate—a debate which I hope next month will proceed to the floor of the Senate.

This is truly a defining moment in our history in Congress. We have an opportunity to greatly improve and change the direction of Federal Government funding for schools all across the United States of America. We get this opportunity only once every 4 to 6 years, when the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act comes before us.

I am convinced we will do that job best by listening to our constituents who have an immediate concern with education—an immediate concern because they are the parents of our public school students, an immediate concern because they are teachers in our schools, and an immediate concern because they are principals or elected school board members in those schools; in other words, people whose lives revolve around the education of the next generation of American young people.

I am going to try to do my part during the course of the recess over the next 10 days by once again spending a considerable amount of my time visiting schools in the State of Washington in Bellingham, Mount Vernon, Spokane, and Colfax, carrying on a tradition I have used increasingly over the course of the last 3 or 4 or 5 years.

What I found during those visits is that each school is different from every other school. They are united only in the concern of the people who work in those schools for the future of our children. Some of those schools need more teachers. Some need teachers who are better paid to compete with outside opportunities. Some need more classroom space. Some need better teaching for the teachers. Others need more computers. But different as those needs are, present Federal policy says here is what you must do with the money we provide you in literally dozens and perhaps hundreds of different narrow categorical functions, each of which requires a bureaucracy in Washington,