

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,

DC, to look over applications and to run audits, and each of which requires a corresponding bureaucracy in our States and in our local school districts to ask for the money and to account for how it is spent.

I have proposed, and a majority of the members of the health committee are now proposing, to add to this Federal formula a bill that I call Straight A's to inject what I consider to be some common sense in the way in which we help our schools in Washington, DC.

Straight A's will give to States all across the United States an opportunity to change from a process of accountability to a performance accountability. Instead of spending their time filling out forms to show that they have spent their money exactly as Congress has dictated, a State which elects to come under Straight A's will be able to take one to two dozen of these narrow categorical aid programs, combine them into one, and get rid of all the forms and most of this process accountability on the basis of one's promise. That promise is: Let us do what we think best for our kids, and we will do a better job. Our kids will do better. We will have standardized tests in our States and we will prove they are doing better, because we are allowed to make more of our own decisions or you can cancel the whole thing and take it back. It is as simple as that.

It is the provision of trust in people who are putting their lives and their years into the education of our kids, the people who know our kids' names, rather than a group in the Department of Education in Washington, DC, or in this body which so often seems to feel it can and should act as one nationwide school board.

I have heard a lot from the defenders of the status quo over the course of the last 3 years. One of the first who criticized my earlier proposal said: My gosh, if we let them do that, they will spend all the money on swimming pools. Another said it might be football helmets.

All of them had one common thought: We don't dare let our educators and our school board members make up their minds; They would make mistakes; We know more than they do; We know more than the people in your hometown, Mr. President, in Kansas, or my people in the State of Washington, or the constituents of the Senator from the State of Virginia. Somehow we know the cure for 17,000 school districts across the United States.

The biggest of the present Federal programs is title I, originally passed 35 years ago to narrow the gap between underprivileged children and privileged children. The gap has not narrowed in that 35 years. Is it not time we give some of our States and some of our school districts the opportunity to say they think they can do it better? We think those right on the ground in our schools can do it better than taking di-

rection from the Senate, the House, the White House, and the Department of Education in Washington, DC.

That is the opportunity we 100 Members of the Senate are going to be given very soon, I am convinced, by the action of a committee under the leadership of the distinguished Senator from Vermont, Mr. JEFFORDS, and other dedicated members of that committee. I am disappointed the work they have been doing for the past couple of weeks has not gotten wider publicity and attention than it has received. I am now convinced that committee is going to present the most profound reform, the most hopeful new direction in the field of Federal education policy than we have received in a generation.

All 100 Members are going to have an opportunity to make those changes ourselves. I look forward to that opportunity. I congratulate the committee for the work it has already done.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from Virginia is recognized.

KOSOVO AMENDMENT TO THE FY2000 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Presiding Officer.

I ask unanimous consent to have an amendment appended at the conclusion of my remarks.

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

(See Exhibit 1.)

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, the Presiding Officer is familiar with the matter I bring to the attention of the Senate, and I thank him for his advice and willingness to participate in the undertaking to prepare the amendment which I will now address.

I rise today to advise the Senate of a proposed amendment on Kosovo, a form of which I and other cosponsors intend to offer when the Senate considers the fiscal year 2000 Supplemental Appropriations Act. An experienced group of colleagues have worked together, and we will continue to work together on this legislation. I thank Senators STEVENS, INOUE, ROBERTS, and SNOWE for joining me as cosponsors in this effort.

I inform the Senate about this amendment now so that other colleagues, officials in the administration, and, indeed, our allies and other nations and organizations will have sufficient time to study and provide constructive comment on this legislation prior to the Senate's consideration of the supplemental later this month.

This is a vital issue, as our Presiding Officer knows full well. It is critical to the men and women of our Armed Forces that the U.S. Congress face up to this issue. It is equally critical to the brave troops of other nations serving in Kosovo. It is critical to the future of NATO, and it is critical to future peacekeeping missions.

There are an ever-increasing number of problems in the world today. It is a

far more complex and dangerous place than it was a decade ago or a decade before that. Indeed, as I look back on the cold-war era, there was a certain amount of certainty within which we were able to structure our forces, lay down a strategy, and perform our missions. Today, it is greatly different. The challenges posed to our national leaders, and particularly the men and women of the Armed Forces, have little precedent. Likewise, the diversity of the threats have now proliferated throughout the world. They are less and less nation sponsored, state sponsored; oftentimes, they are just small groups. There are conflicts in ever-increasing numbers, prompted by cultural, ethnic, and religious differences.

As I publicly stated regarding this amendment, my intention in offering this legislation is to ensure that our European allies have stepped up to meet their share in providing the necessary resources and personnel for the civil implementation in Kosovo, the efforts to which we have all pledged as a group of nations to fulfill. Once the military mission was completed, then we committed among ourselves to take the next step to ensure the peace that was given as a consequence of the sacrifices and the professionalism of the men and women who promulgated that combat action for 78 days.

During that period of combat, the United States bore the major share of the military burden for the air war, flying almost 70 percent of the total strike and support forces at a cost of over \$4 billion to the American taxpayer. Many, many aviators and others took high personal risks. We were joined in that combat operation by another seven or eight nations that indeed did fly, willingly and courageously. However, it was the United States only—how well our colleagues know—that had the high-performance aircraft, the guided missiles, that support the transport aircraft. NATO did not have it. Those elements of our military, whether they were in or out of NATO, were brought together to promulgate this successful military operation.

In return, the Europeans then promised to pay the major share of the burdens to secure the peace. So far, they have committed and pledged billions of dollars for this goal. I acknowledge that. They have come in diverse amounts at diverse periods of time, but the problem is not enough money has been put up thus far in a timely fashion to make their way to the Kosovo problems, and then begin to solve those problems.

Why the delay? The troops and the public are entitled to know. As a result, our troops and other troops are having to make up for the shortfalls of failing to provide the police force—something we all agreed upon long before the first shot was fired. The troops today, therefore, are having to make up for those shortfalls by performing basic police functions, such as running