

areas such as California work together with the Indian officials to create appropriate public-warning procedures, routine earthquake drills, civilian protection mechanisms, and earthquake-safe foundation structures. We must share the lessons we learned from the devastating Northridge earthquake in California in 1992 to help Gujarat rebuild itself, as well as prepare for such future disasters.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we must focus on creation of a better U.S. rescue response system around the world. The current system, while successful in rebuilding procedures, needs revamping of its international rescue response procedures in the immediate hours after an emergency. Switzerland, the UK, and Israel were on the ground in India within 48 hours to start rescue operations while it took the U.S. Government more than 72 hours to get our first official relief efforts there.

USAID is considering prepositioning resources by setting up ground offices in disaster-prone regions of the world to expedite aid disbursement during calamities. I support setting up such an office in India.

□ 1900

An important thing for us to understand is how vital a strong India is for U.S. interests. With India increasingly showing signs of political strength and stability, and stronger restraint in the resolution of the Kashmir dispute, we must demonstrate that we stand by our friend in their hour of need. Indians are not looking for handouts. They are very strong, resilient people who can and will rebuild Gujarat back. However, we must not leave them alone in coping with this devastating earthquake.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore ask my fellow colleagues to stand strong with me in pushing these recommendations immediately for long-lasting support to India.

MASSIVE IMMIGRATION INTO UNITED STATES MUST BE STOPPED

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

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) was up here a moment ago, and while I was waiting to speak to the House tonight, I listened to his concerns with regard to the black beret issue, and I want to add my voice to his in expressing that concern; and to add one other point that I do not believe he made, and I just recalled it as I was sitting here.

To add insult to injury, the berets are being purchased, being made in China, being purchased from the communist regime in China, and being imposed as the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) said, for political

correctness. I want to add my voice to his in expressing deep concern about this particular proposal.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to bring to the attention of the House a tragic accident that occurred in Colorado just yesterday. It took the lives of 6 Mexican nationals and injured 13 others.

All of these people were in a van. The van was hit by a truck on the highway which hit a patch of ice. The van was transporting these people, Mexican nationals, to jobs in the United States and they were crossing Colorado. This has become an all too common event. We have had 8 or more people killed in Colorado, I know the numbers are expanded by events in other States. Always the same thing. People being transported, people being exploited by others, having money taken from them for the purpose of bringing them to jobs in the United States, transporting them illegally into this country. They are abused many times. They are certainly exploited, and oftentimes they are exploited when they get here, working under conditions that we would not tolerate in any other situation, oftentimes at lower pay. All of this because, of course, some employers, unscrupulous employers, know that they can do that because the employee, being here illegally, is afraid to go and report it for fear of what would happen to them.

The problem that this raises is not just the problem of the tragic toll of human life that occurred in Colorado yesterday, and that is our primary concern this evening. But I think it is important for us to understand that this underscores a much more significant problem that we face as a Nation.

Mr. Speaker, this Nation cannot absorb the number of people that are coming across our borders, both legally and illegally. The immigration into this country over the last 10 years has been extraordinary. Now we are, of course, a Nation of immigrants. I understand that very well. My own grandparents, like everyone else's here in this room, with the exception of Native Americans who might have claim to some other way of being here, the fact is that most of us are here as a result of our grandparents coming in the recent past.

I do not blame for a moment the people who are seeking a better life, the people trying to come here for the purpose of getting a better life for themselves and their families. I do not blame them; I blame the system.

We must begin the debate, although it is a difficult one, we must begin the debate on exactly what this country will look like. How many people are we going to let in here, both legally and illegally. The fact is we are letting them in and I say that, letting them in because essentially there is no border. It is a porous border. People come across almost at will, millions annually. Several million, it is estimated between 1 and 4 million people, no one knows ex-

actly how many end up here, we have a net increase every year of immigration through illegal immigrants of that number.

Mr. Speaker, massive immigration into the United States must be stopped. We must begin at least to debate the costs of this immigration. There are extraordinary financial costs, both for infrastructure development, for schooling, housing, social services, for the incarceration of aliens here who have violated State or local laws. We have to look and see exactly what American businesses may need in terms of both skilled and unskilled workers, and then come up with a plan to deal with it. We must begin the debate.

EDUCATION POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to use most of my time to talk about education, but I think it is important to begin by setting the discussion on education in the proper context, within the proper context of what is developing here in Washington and in the House of Representatives.

Last week we voted, the majority voted, to begin the massive tax cut proposed by the President. This is a massive amount of money to be spent on tax refunds. A tax cut is a kind of expenditure. That is an important item to understand, put in place, because it is part of setting the parameters for any kind of action on education or any other program of the government. All other programs will have to respond to the fact that there is less money available if we have a huge tax cut.

We have tried to set different parameters. Instead of a huge tax cut, the Congressional Black Caucus and the progressive caucus have proposed that at least 10 percent of the surplus be used for education. If we used 10 percent of the surplus for education, we would still have 90 percent left to use for other programs. So we propose that we use another 10 percent for housing, for social programs, for other kinds of programs that are important for human resource development. In other words, invest at least 20 percent in education and human resource development. There would still be 80 percent left of the surplus after that investment was made. So that additional 80 percent, we propose, should be used to pay down the debt and to give a tax cut.

Tax cuts make a lot of sense. I am in favor of a tax cut, but the tax cut should be targeted, the tax cut should not be extravagant, and the tax cut should not jeopardize our budgeting process for the next 10 years. It should not throw us into a deficit. It should not throw us into a situation where, in

order to balance the budget, we are forced to cut more and more programs. Education would be one of the programs that we would be forced to cut.

Let me just start by saying also that it is an early hour. It is only 10 after 7, and I assume that large numbers of elementary school students and high school students are awake. I hope a few are listening, because on past occasions when I have had the opportunity to address the House early, I always send a special message to the children of America, to the students of America.

All students out there, whether they go to public school or private school, although the great majority, more than 53 million children go to public schools, it is important for all young people to understand the kind of America we are going to live in; the kind of Nation that they are going to grow up in and provide the leadership in and begin their families in. That Nation will be determined mostly by the degree to which we address the problems related to education.

It is not new. I think H. G. Wells said something, I am not sure I am quoting correctly, but Civilization is a race between education and chaos, or something similar to that. I would certainly endorse that idea. We live in a world where things are more and more complicated. And we want it that way, because as things get more complicated, we increase productivity. An individual worker can do so much more and groups can do so much more when we have highly automated systems. When we apply the digital science related to computers or mass communication, all of that creates the kind of better world that we want to make and are already in the process of making.

It is what I call a cyber-civilization; a civilization that is going to be far more productive, and we can contemplate being able to actually meet the needs of all of the 6 billion people in the world. The capacity to do that is there if we fully develop the resources and educate all the people who can be educated. It is important we begin to apply the benefits of our technology, the benefits of our cyber-civilization on a widespread basis, whether that means the more efficient production of drugs that allow people to get better health care or whether it means new methods in education, automated methods, or methods using distance learning, making it possible to teach more people faster in all parts of the world.

There is great possibility out there. It is a great new world that we are moving into. So it is important that the pupils, young people, students understand what we have at stake here. We are at a critical point where we have the resources now to do what is necessary to make a world-class education system, an education system which is fitted for the challenge that we face in this coming cyber-civilization.

We have an education system now which is still lagging and very much

mired in the old needs of an industrialized economy, when we did not have to educate everybody to the maximum degree because there was work available in the factories for people who did not know anything about computers or did not know math. Large numbers of people, in fact the vast majority 50 years ago, of the people who went to school, did not graduate from school. Most of them did not get past the 8th grade. But now we have a need for a highly educated population, and we need to think that way, we need to budget that way, we need more than the rhetoric of people who say they support education. We need to spend dollars the way we spend them on an activity like defense.

We recognize that modern defense units or the modern defense systems that we have decided we need cost far more money than the old cavalry with the rifles and the wagons or the canons. Common sense says that these things cost much more money. But when it comes to education, we do not want to make the decision that we need to invest heavily in maximizing the kind of physical facilities we have; buildings, laboratories, and computers. We need to maximize that now. At this point where we have a huge budget surplus, now is the time to take those steps.

Young people have to wake up and communicate with all the people in decision-making positions that they want the resources available right now to be used to invest in education. We certainly do not want to stagnate. We certainly do not want to go backwards. Young people need to tell their mayors that; tell their legislators in the State legislatures, tell their city council people and their Congress people and their Senators and the people in the White House that they do not want to go backwards and they do not want to stagnate.

□ 1915

I apologize for even mentioning the word backwards, because that is what I am going to have to spend a little bit of time talking about. We are about to go backwards instead of going forward. We are about to go backward instead of stagnating. It is a terrible thing we stood still, but we are about to go backwards, and I want you to understand how serious that is. It is your world that is at stake. So take some action. As young people, take some action.

I remember standing here on the floor at about this time, when I was able to get a 7 o'clock hour, and I invited all of you to take a drink, a toast with me. I said, young people of America, students, come out there, get a glass of milk and drink a toast, because we have just made a basic breakthrough on getting Federal funds for construction. We made a basic breakthrough on getting Federal funds for construction.

It was not much, but we got agreement in the budget for \$1.2 billion to be

used for school renovations and building repairs. I wanted to celebrate that, so we drank a toast with a glass of milk, of fruit juice or whatever you have.

I also remember congratulating the students of America for coming to our aid when we rallied to stop the rollback and the destruction of the e-rate. Remember the e-rate?

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CANTOR). Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to persons outside the Chamber.

The gentleman may proceed.

Mr. OWENS. Is the Speaker saying that I cannot talk to the students of America?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would advise that and the gentleman must address his remarks to the Chair and not to persons outside the Chamber.

The gentleman may proceed.

Mr. OWENS. So for all who are listening, no matter where you are, it is important to note the fact that we celebrated. We celebrated the fact that students, teachers, librarians, all over the country came to the aid of those of us in Congress who were fighting to maintain and expand the e-rate.

What is the e-rate? The e-rate is a special fund created as a result of actions in the Telecommunications Act of 1996. When we passed the Telecommunications Act of 1996, a provision was put in the Act which called upon the telecommunications industry to provide free or very low-cost services to all schools and libraries in America. Private schools, public schools, all schools were to be included and have been included in the e-rate process—and libraries.

The development of the procedures and the standards for doing this under William Kennard were magnificent. They determined that, instead of providing it free, they could not go that far, there was a lot of pressure on them from industry, they did determine that funds could be made available not through the Treasury of the United States or any other government but through the industry itself. The funds could be made available to allow for a discount program where every school and library in America would at least get a 15 percent discount on their telecommunications services. They could apply and, as a result of the e-rate, the initial wiring of the library or the initial process of gearing up the schools, that could be funded and the cost of that could be covered up to 15 percent in any school.

However, for the schools that had the poorest populations, those schools could get a discount in proportion to the number of children who were poor, up to a 90 percent discount. We have a lot of our formulas in the Federal Government based on poverty, especially when it comes to education.

The biggest program that the Federal Government has is Title I, Title I for

elementary and secondary education. Title I is based, the distribution of it, is based primarily on poverty. Poverty is measured by the number of students in each school who qualify for the free lunch program. The forms and the investigations that are conducted at the time that they decide how many youngsters will get free lunches through the Department of Agriculture, that form is used again and again as a basis for deciding how many children are poor in the school.

So the e-rate is based on a sound formula, and the poorest schools could get up to 90 percent discounts. That means that for every \$1 they spent on their telecommunications services, or on the initial wiring of the school, they would only have to pay 10 cents. The other 90 cents would be paid out of the e-rate fund.

This caught on. It spread. Numerous, numerous schools and libraries are reaping the benefit of the e-rate. So we celebrated that.

Everybody who was listening at that time, especially young people, I invited to join me in celebrating the fact that the e-rate did go into effect, was beaten down, lawsuits were threatened, all kinds of things happened, but it went into effect because the outcry from the young people, the students and the teachers and the families out there, the working families was so great until they acquiesced and they supported chairman Kennard, the chairman of the FCC, and we instituted the e-rate. It has been highly successful.

But let me warn you tonight that we are about to go backwards. The e-rate is threatened, is jeopardized. We have a situation now where the e-rate may be folded into the regular budget. The President's budget, the President's education plan is proposing that we have the e-rate funded through the regular budget, that we combine that with some other programs. Now, that would be a great step backwards, because the e-rate now is funded through funds that come out of the telecommunications industry and any placing of it in the budget means you jeopardize the funds because you are competing with the other funds in the budget.

We did a lot to fight for the e-rate. It is time to rise up and let your legislators know, people who are in this room, Members of Congress listening, you must understand that it is jeopardized by this new move; and, therefore, we should take action to let it be known we will not sit still and allow the e-rate to be taken away.

The other item that is being jeopardized is the one we celebrated, the \$1.2 billion in construction funds. The Federal Government has not appropriated money for school construction in the last 50 years. The Federal Government, the Title I programs, all the Elementary and Secondary Education Assistance Act stayed away from school construction. It is most unfortunate because a study by the National Education Association showed that we

need about \$320 billion to bring the infrastructure of the schools, the laboratories, the physical infrastructure of public education in America, just to bring it up to a point where it can take care of the present students, would be about \$320 billion. They have suffered so greatly from neglect.

If you leave it all to the local governments, you leave it all to the State governments, they are not doing as much as they should do and could do, but certainly the Federal Government which has had large amounts of money coming from the local level. All money originates at the local level. All politics is local. All taxes is local. It comes from us. It is not a matter of Washington giving us back something that belongs to Washington. It is our money, and it should come back for the needs that are clearly articulated.

If ever there was a need that was clear, it is school construction. Yet we have not over the last 50 years appropriated any money for school construction.

We finally made a breakthrough. As a result of a tremendous effort we put forth, President Clinton insisted that there be some money for school construction in the last budget. During the negotiation they reached a compromise figure of \$1.2 billion. I had proposed \$10 billion per year for 10 years. So you can see there is a great difference between what is the need, which is \$320 billion over many years, and what I proposed, which was \$10 billion over 10 years, which would be \$100 billion, and the actual compromise. We start with \$1.2 billion.

But we celebrated. We celebrated because of the fact that it was a breakthrough. We had broken through the barrier. And now the Federal Government, according to the budget that we completed last December, and it is important to go over this education budget now because it was completed so late in the year. Most people do not know what we finally came out with, and I will talk about that a little bit later, but we did come out with \$1.2 billion. Now that is jeopardized.

That \$1.2 billion would provide new grants to make urgently needed repairs and renovations in the schools. We are talking about items which relate to the health and safety of young people. Now the new administration is saying they will not go forward and spend this money for the purposes for which it was negotiated last time. They are going to fold it into some other programs, and we will not have any school construction, any infrastructure initiative. That is a great step backwards, and it needs the help of everybody to cry out and let it be known, let it be known that this is an outrage. It is going backwards, it is counterproductive, and it runs counter to the vision that has been expressed by the new administration.

You cannot have improvements in education if the basic vessel, the basic structure, the infrastructure, the con-

crete, the bricks and the mortar, if that is crumbling around you, many of the other things that are being proposed begin to look ridiculous. And it certainly looks ridiculous through the eyes of young people. You tell young people you care about education and you are going to do everything to guarantee that they get the best opportunities available and they look out of their eyes and see that there is a crumbling building there, there is a coal-burning furnace in the school threatening their health, exacerbating asthma conditions, the roof leaks and all the rooms on the top floor of the school have crumbling walls because of the leaking roof, windows that needed replacement now have wood pasted over, there is plastic on the windows because you need to stop the draft from coming in. They can see how much is the value of education, how much value these adults who are making decisions are placing on education if they send us into these kinds of conditions.

There are trailers in the school yards that were temporary trailers 25 years ago. I remember the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ) stating on the floor of the House that she had gone back to visit one of her old schools, junior high schools, and the same trailers that were there when she was there are still there in the school yard. However, when they were put there, they were supposed to be temporary, for 2 or 3 years.

The same thing is true in most of our big cities and in many rural communities. The trailers have become not a temporary emergency solution but they are there permanently because that is what adult decisionmakers—that is the value they have placed on education.

No amount of vision statements and no amount of rhetoric can get past the common sense of our young people who look and see with their eyes that there is something wrong with this commitment. There is a commitment to take us into the 21st century with the best possible opportunities for education, and yet there are only a handful of computers in the classroom, if it is lucky enough to be wired and have computers. The library has books that are 30 years old, some of them geography and history books.

I am not going to go through that litany. I have gone through it many times before. But the thing is, here we are with a new administration and we are looking forward to one area where there could be bipartisan cooperation, one area where both parties would respond to the overwhelming desire of the American people to see that there is some improvement in education. That is an overwhelming desire that has been expressed again and again in the polls. The polls for the last 5 years have consistently placed education as one of the top five priorities. In the last 2 years it has been the number one priority.

So why are we discussing a proposal to roll back progress and refuse to

spend the tiny \$1.2 billion that was appropriated on December 18 of last year for school repairs and renovations? Why are we contemplating that? What kind of madness is this? They were also going to reduce class sizes.

I have a summary of the December 18 budget, and I am going to take a few minutes to just go through it because it came out so late until very few people have had a chance to see it. Most citizens in the country do not know the difference between this year's budget and last year's budget because last year's budget came out so late.

□ 1930

However, we did make some progress last year. It is important to note and understand, all players, whether they are decision-makers here in Congress or students out there in school, and they have to understand that they made a big breakthrough last year with a \$6.5 billion increase. Education expenditures were increased last year by \$6.5 billion. That is quite an achievement. That is quite an achievement, as my colleagues know. It is not nearly as much as I think we should have had. We could spend that much on school construction alone using the surplus, but it is a great step forward using none of the surplus. This was in the regular budgeting process. Why is it the case? Because both Republicans and Democrats understand that the polls show that the American people want improvements in education, and they can read the polls and understand that they must show some movement forward.

Now we have had a movement forward in an area like reducing class sizes. We had the third installment in reducing class sizes in grades one to three. This is a nationwide program, trying to bring down the average in the classroom to 18 students in the first three grades.

We increased that program by \$323 million last year. There was a plus of \$323 million, and that increase added approximately 8,000 new highly qualified teachers to the already 29,000 that were there before. The total appropriation for reducing class sizes went from \$1.3 billion to \$1.6 billion in the December 18 budget. Mr. Speaker, 8,000 new qualified teachers will be added to the already 29,000 that have been hired under this program. The administration that went out previously, of course, as my colleagues know, was shooting for a goal of 100,000. 100,000 new teachers over 7 years to reduce class sizes in the early grades.

Now, we are being told that this program too, the Class Size Reduction Program, will be altered and phased out, combined with some other program; and that is a step backwards also.

We expanded after-school opportunities in this budget of December 18, last year's budget. The 21st Century Community Learning Centers that provide after school learning programs in drug-

free environments, and also some support for lifelong learning for the parents of the students who are involved, went from \$453,000 million to \$845 million. That was an increase of \$392 million. The program was almost doubled. It is now in a position to provide for 650,000 additional school-age youngsters as a result of the increase. So we have something like 1.3 million youngsters being served by the total program. Everybody has applauded the after-school programs, the 21st Century Community Learning Centers as being successful. Everybody has said, this is what we need: longer school days, some help for kids on the weekend and also summer school help. Unfortunately, this amount of money only serves a tiny percentage of the youngsters who are eligible and who need the help, but it is there. Now we have been told that that, too, may be altered.

So I do not want to belabor the point. The point is that we have heard that the new administration places education as a top priority, but the actions that have started already show that we are going to have to look very closely.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats are looking for an opportunity to cooperate. We are looking for an opportunity to make bipartisanship a reality. The one place where there is a clear opportunity is in education; and, therefore, it is particularly disturbing that these proposed roll-backs of good programs, the wiping out of the construction program totally, these proposals are being made at this point because it is going to create a roadblock to any possible bipartisan cooperation for the benefit of the children of America.

The hiring and retaining of qualified teachers, we increased that by \$150 million; the total program is \$485 million. We are doing in that program one of the things that has been pinpointed as a major need. We need more qualified teachers; we need more certified teachers. That program would do it. The Eisenhower National Activities Program is a complement to that. Preparing teachers for use of technology, that program was increased from \$75 million to \$125 million.

Mr. Speaker, we have been on target in education leadership. Some of the leadership, or most of the leadership, came from the previous administration; and certainly, as a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce for 18 years, I have seen these proposals introduced year after year, finally brought them to fruition; and we did make some real headway in the budget that passed last year. But the problem is, and the question is, are we really going to sincerely and seriously go forward and build on what exists already, like the e-rate and the school construction program, and the after-school program.

We had a program-funding increase for extra help in the basics, helping disadvantaged students learn the basics and achieve high studies. That is under

title I. That program was increased by \$569 million, and disadvantaged students can be helped as a result of that increase.

Now, that is in harmony with what President Bush has proposed. We have the President's proposals in outline form. We do not have a bill yet. We cannot talk about a budget with clear sections; but we do have an outline, and one of the things he stresses in his outline is that he wants to focus on the pupils who have the greatest needs. The first dollars should be focused on the pupils that have the greatest needs, and any increase in the budget should go in that direction. So I am glad to report that there is one area where I heartily agree with the administration. Let us do that. Let us focus where the greatest need is and target the Federal funds in that direction.

The unfortunate thing is that the administration will have to deal with the members on the Committee on Education and the Workforce who are on the majority. Their thinking in the past few years has gone in the opposite direction. The Republican majority of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and the Republican majority in the House as a whole, has consistently insisted that the existing funds be utilized in a broader way. They want greater flexibility. They want to take the dollars that do exist and spread them out to more schools, not the poorest schools; but some schools that have less poverty and some schools that have almost no poverty would be eligible for the funding if we had the flexibility that they talk about.

Going even further beyond just flexibility, the members of the President's party here in Congress are proposing block grants. Block grants mean that we take the dollars and we give them to the States with minimum guidelines and the States then proceed to do what they feel is best. The problem with giving States that kind of authority is that the States have a constitutional responsibility for education. Every State has in their constitution a clear statement of responsibility for the education of all of the children of the State. If they had done their job in accordance with their constitutions all of these years, the Federal Government would not need to be engaged in this problem of education at all. We would not have to be trying to catch up, trying to maintain high standards of education.

So, Mr. Speaker, because it was clearly demonstrated in World War II, if not before, that education is a matter of national security, we cannot afford to have an uneducated, ill-informed population and expect to be able to defend ourselves in war, even a less complicated war, such as World War II. Now, with high-tech weapons and an atmosphere which requires much more learning to deal with a much more complex peacetime economy and also to deal with any defense

efforts, we know we need an educated population; it is a matter of national security. It is not something we can afford to leave to the States, even though the Federal Government is only responsible at this point for a very tiny percentage.

Our expenditures, Federal expenditures for education, are still less than 8 percent of the total. States and localities are still spending 92 percent to 93 percent of the total education budget, higher education, elementary and secondary education, et cetera. We should be going toward 25 percent. We should understand that the number one item in terms of the defense of the country, in terms of competitiveness of our economy in a global economy, is our being able to compete. In terms of the greatness of the Nation, the future of the Nation, education is a number one priority. We ought to be spending at least 25 percent of the expenditure for education. The Federal expenditure should be 25 percent, not 8 percent or 7 percent.

We have other items that were in the budget last year that I just want to note. Gear-Up and TRIO are programs for helping poor students get ready for college. We understand that it is great to graduate from high school, and one of our first targets was getting everybody to graduate from high school, and we have improved greatly over the years in getting rid of a large percentage of high school dropouts. But beyond that, if one does not go to college, there is a limited future; there is a limited amount you are going to earn in terms of income; there is a limited amount of help one is going to be able to provide for the economy in general, and one's own family; there is a limited contribution that one is going to be able to make to society if one does not go on to college and fully develop one's capacities.

So Gear-Up and TRIO are very important. The TRIO program has been in existence for some years. It has proven itself, and I am happy to see they have an \$85 million increase. It has moved from \$645 million to \$730 million in the December 18 budget last year. What is going to happen this year I do not know, but I hope that the administration this year will have the good sense to follow the leadership of the Republican Congresses over the past few years who have increased the program and not cut it. TRIO would help 765,000 disadvantaged students, 40,000 more than they do now as a result of the increases that we provided last year. It is a magnificent program, and we certainly do not want to see an attempt to roll back the clock on that.

Pell grants we increased from \$3,300 to \$3,750 per student last year, a total increase overall from \$7.6 billion to \$8.7 billion, an increase of \$1.1 billion for Pell grants. That allowed a \$450 increase in the Pell grant over what it was before; but Pell grants are consistently behind inflation, way behind the cost of a college education, and Pell

grants to our poorest students need to be greatly increased. I hope that there will be no rollback on Pell grants in the coming development of the administration's education budget.

We do have some information which shows that there are problems. I said before that the present administration is proposing to zero-out school modernization, the construction program; they are going to do something else with that, put it into technology and special education. That is most unfortunate. About 1,000 schools that could be renovated will not be renovated.

The new budget eliminates the class-size reduction initiative; I mentioned that that is on the chopping block. The class-size initiative has already helped schools hire 37,000 teachers and provide smaller classes to 2 million children. That will be a great loss if it is rolled back. The Pell grant increase that we passed last year, it was a 14 percent increase in Pell grants. The increase that is being proposed by the present administration, not through its budget, because we do not have the full budget, but through its outlines and discussions, is about 4 percent. Instead of 14 percent, they talk about a 4 percent increase in Pell grants.

Minority-serving higher education institutions have certainly benefited greatly over the past 6 years. We have had bipartisan cooperation in the funding of the minority-serving institutions. There are three categories, Historically Black Colleges and Universities and the Hispanic-serving institutions, as well as the tribally controlled colleges. They have had increases over the last 6 years. We have gotten about a 25 percent annual increase over the last 3 years under the previous administration. They have been well served. We think that they have a key role to play in improving education in America. Minority-serving institutions will be producing most of the teachers. A large percentage of the qualified teachers that we need in our schools will come from Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, and tribally controlled colleges.

□ 1945

As Members know, we have a controversy here over the fact that the Committee on Education and the Workforce has already chosen, in its structure and formatting for business in the next 2 years, they have structured the committee so that there is a Subcommittee for 21st Century Competitiveness.

That subcommittee is very much on target. They call it that, and that is a new concept where at the core of the Subcommittee of 21st Century Competitiveness are the programs that fund our higher education institutions. That is at the core. There are other programs that are related to technology, development and research, a number of things related to competitiveness. But certainly at the core is

the funding for higher education institutions.

For some reason that we are not clear on, the majority Republicans on the Committee on Education and the Workforce chose to take these minority-serving institutions, the historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, and the tribally-controlled colleges, and put them in another committee; not in the subcommittee, but in another subcommittee. Instead of the Subcommittee for 21st Century Competitiveness being the committee where all higher education institutions are placed, they chose to put the minority institutions in a subcommittee called the Subcommittee on Special Education.

The Subcommittee on Special Education is a committee which has a large number of other programs related to higher education, and many not related to education. That is where we fund the programs for adoptions, programs for child abuse education and prevention, programs for domestic abuse and prevention, juvenile delinquency prevention. Why do we put the minority-serving higher education institutions in a subcommittee which mainly deals with social problems?

All of those social problems are important and they need to be confronted, but why do we take the minority-serving institutions out of the mainstream discussion of what it takes to remain competitive in the coming 21st century? They are not going to be there when we discuss new authorizations, new appropriations to meet the competitive world of the cyber civilization I talked about at the beginning of my discourse this evening.

If we are going to have a new approach to how we go into the 21st century, how we meet the competition of the 21st century, how we meet global competition, then we certainly do not want to leave out the minority-serving institutions when we are making those plans and having that discussion.

Members of the Committee on Education and the Workforce have decided that we protest. I offered an amendment to correct this oversight. We thought it was an oversight and that if we brought it to the attention of the majority, it would be corrected.

We spent about 3 hours debating the issue. It just so happens that on the Committee on Education and the Workforce, among the Democrats on the committee there are four people who are African Americans, there are three people who are Hispanic-Americans, there are two Asian-Americans, and there is one Native American. Probably few committees have that kind of concentration of minorities.

We all expressed outrage and fear, because we know what separation does. We have lived with separate but equal doctrines for too long to not know what eventually happens when we separate out things. They do not remain

equal. The weaker party in the separation is going to be neglected, abandoned, and in very subtle ways, probably, very subtle ways, the minority-serving institutions will find themselves outside the parameters of a full and moving discussion about what it takes to be competitive in the 21st century. They will be outside the parameters of a discussion about how higher education institutions must operate and relate to the crisis in elementary and secondary education. They will be outside of a serious discussion on the relationship between corporations, industry, and higher education institutions if they are out of the loop in terms of the way the committee is structured.

We have protested. All the Democratic members of the Committee on Education and the Workforce have refused to accept their assignments on subcommittees. There is an ongoing dialogue, and we hope that this will be resolved, but it is an example of a blunder that, when we add to the other kinds of proposals that are being made, the zeroing out of the construction appropriation, the rollback of the class size reductions, when we add all of these blunders and new backward moves, including the threat to the e-rate, danger signals must be sent forth. We must send up flares. We must get involved in reexamining what are the possibilities of bipartisan cooperation, what are the dangers to the progress that we have made.

Everybody has to get involved in making certain that their voices are heard and that education, which has clearly been indicated to be the top priority of the American voters, not be given a public relations job. We do not want a public relations program. Many speeches are made about improving education, but the substance of what has to be done in terms of the way legislation is set forth and the way the budget is developed, that substance is not there.

We do not want to fool the American people. We do not want a public relations gimmick instead of real improvements in education.

Democratic education proposals are proposals for making real investments in education. Whereas President Bush proposed \$1.6 billion for elementary and secondary budget programs increase, our program, as reflected in the Excellence and Accountability in Education Act, this is an act that is already been introduced. We have a piece of legislation already introduced. The Excellence and Accountability in Education Act, introduced by the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), and has all of the other Democratic members of the Committee on Education and the Workforce as cosponsors, proposes a \$9.7 billion increase. So \$1.6 billion increase is proposed by the President, we propose \$9.7 billion, and we lay out where the money should go.

The Excellence and Accountability in Education Act is H.R. 340, a comprehensive K through 12 education reform bill. It would hold schools accountable to high standards, and place particular emphasis on closing the achievement gap between different groups of children.

Schools that continue to fail after 3 years, under our act, and we are in harmony with the President on that one, would receive special help and be subject to changes in terms of their students being able to make choices and go to other public choice schools, or the schools might be closed and converted to charter schools.

Unlike the majority, we oppose any movement toward vouchers. This was a clear disagreement in the past and remains a clear disagreement between the two parties. We are not in favor of the wasteful, cumbersome approach to improving education through giving families vouchers.

We propose to double the Title I funds over a 5-year period. Do Members want to know where our great increase will go? We will double the Title I funds, and those are the funds that are targeted to the disadvantaged areas and the schools that need help the most, the failing schools.

We are in harmony with the President on that one. He wants to target additional resources to the schools that need it most. We are not in harmony with the amount. We propose to double the Title I funding in order to do that, and not to have the small increment that he proposes.

We propose to institute strong accountability for results and actions. The Title I schools will be held accountable. Administrations and local education agencies and the States will be held accountable. We are in agreement with the President on that. But each one of these schools must have the resources they need to provide the opportunity to learn. Opportunity-to-learn standards must be met.

These are the standards that Governors and bureaucrats do not like to talk about, but if we are going to judge schools and declare that they have failed, before we make a judgment that they have failed, provide them with the money they need to provide a decent physical infrastructure. Provide them the money they need for libraries, for gyms, for teachers, for certified teachers. They have to meet certain standards themselves before they hold the students and schools to standards. Both the State governments and the Federal government must not run away, as they have been, from opportunity-to-learn standards coming first.

Teacher quality must be strengthened. We all agree on that. We must understand that the context in which we go forward to improve our schools is greater than the programs that relate to education. I started by saying I want to set the discussion of education in the proper context. I talked about the tax bill and how, in the context of a

huge tax cut, we can look forward to only rhetoric for education because there will be no money for the kinds of increases that we need. In the context of a big tax cut, most social programs, most human investment programs, will suffer greatly. So the tax cut needs to be whittled down to size.

I am in favor of a tax cut. Generally the Democrats are in favor of tax cuts. They want smaller tax cuts. They want tax cuts targeted toward the middle class and the working families. They want tax cuts which reach down and even get people who supposedly do not pay taxes.

People who are working and pay Social Security, they have Social Security taken out and Medicare funding taken out, they are paying taxes. It is a payroll tax. Any time we are forced to give money to the government, it is a tax. It is not an option. We cannot voluntarily say, we will pay this fee, or not. It comes out of our paychecks. So Social Security funding means those people need help, too.

The greatest-percentage increases in taxing over the last 20 years have been an increase in the Social Security and related payroll taxes. They have gone up more than anything else. So we want the tax cut, one aimed at the middle class; we want a tax cut aimed at working class families; we want a tax cut to get to the people at the very bottom; but we do not want such a huge tax cut that there is no money for human investment, or that there is no money for education, in particular.

We want those parameters to be understood: Stop the reckless tax cut or there will be nothing left for education. Let that message go out: Stop the war on working-class families. Working-class families are the families that use the public school system.

When we talk about education, we are talking about the fact that the primary means for upward mobility in America has been the public school system, the primary means of upward mobility; public schools, public libraries. Check the biography or autobiography of any great American who rose from poverty to success and they will tell us about schools and libraries that were free to them and were quality schools in terms of the kinds of help they provided. That is a story that is repeated over and over again, so working families will suffer if we do not improve America's schools.

The majority party, the Republicans, should understand that they are declaring war on working families when they roll back the clock on the items related to improvement of education. They roll back the clock on e-rate, and that means that working families will not have access to computers, working families will not have access to the Internet that is provided at a great discount through the e-rate.

If we take away the school or class size reduction program, it means that working-class families will be crowded

into classrooms of up to 30 and 35 students, and will not have the kind of attention which students in the first to third grade need. Studies have shown over and over again that the attention children get at a very early age and the class size is very important. So they are attacking working families when they take away that benefit or zero out construction and do not provide decent schools for them.

The attack on working families continues in other ways. The context is important, because the way children go to school, the families they come from, the conditions in the home are all-important in terms of their ability to relate to their schooling. Whereas I do not believe in blaming the homes and parents for all the problems that children have in learning, as some people do often, but understand that the stability in the home, whether or not they have decent health care, are important in terms of the way the child comes to school and is able to take advantage of the opportunities there.

□ 2000

The minimum wage that we have ignored is not an attack on working families when we do not even allow it on the floor; we do not raise the minimum wage from \$5.15 an hour as we proposed in the last Congress to \$6.15 an hour; we are attacking working families.

Mr. Speaker, the biggest attack on working families probably is the refusal to recognize that the floor of wages in America ought to at least be \$6.15 an hour and not \$5.15 an hour, which is now more than 3 years old, that floor in terms of minimum wage.

The majority party would not even let it be discussed. Working families on minimum wage, a family of four, is in dire poverty even if you increase it to \$6.15. It is a tiny percentage of what they need in terms of survival, but the minimum that we could do is to accept the Democratic proposals of a 50 cent increase over a 2-year period which would raise the minimum wage. If we refuse to do that, that is an attack on working families, the families of the pupils who go to our public schools.

When we gut the health and safety rules to protect workers, as we did last week, in context, working families have to understand that what was done on the floor of this House last Wednesday, the vote to repeal the ergonomics standards was an attack on working families.

Ergonomics is a big word. People do not want to deal with it. They stop listening when you mention it. So I will just say, ergonomics is all about ending the pain, the pain that is related to doing something with your muscles and your fibers over and over again. Ergonomics is a matter of taking steps to prevent, to prevent injuries that often incapacitate people.

Ergonomics is not just about the guy who was out there lifting in the warehouse, lifting heavy loads and he gets his problem with his back. Ergonomics

is about the secretaries and the clerks who type all the time or the people who sit in front of computers and may get eyestrain.

There are ways to prevent carpal tunnel syndrome, another one of those big words. Carpal tunnel syndrome is simply you have repeated something so often and you use your fingers and your wrists in a certain way until it wears out and it is painful to do it. And beyond being painful, you reach the point where you cannot do it any more.

Mr. Speaker, a person who earns his or her living by typing the motion over and over again can find themselves at a point where they do not have a way to earn a living, because of the fact that they can no longer use their wrists and their hands and their arms. It is as incapacitating as if you were on a construction job and some big load fell on your head. They are very real.

Every Member of Congress has had exposure, I am sure, to people with carpal tunnel syndrome, because we have lots of people in that category who do that kind of work up here. Nothing new. Yet we voted last week to make war on the workers by removing a standard which required that employers take preventive measures to minimize the risk of people getting incapacitated as a result of repeated use, using certain muscles and fibers. We eliminated it with one stroke under what is called the Congressional Review Act.

One of the first achievements of the Gingrich Congress, and it is no more, we do not have the ergonomics standard. It took 10 years. It took 10 years to reach the point where we issued some standards which said you should do things a certain way to protect the health of people, their muscles and their fibers from this kind of strain. And in one day, it was voted out of existence and is no more.

We declared war on the working families of America in another way. The war comes from different directions. It is a war sometime of neglect and abandonment, but that is still war. It is sometimes a war of a denial, denying the minimum wage increase, but it is still war.

These are the families from which the children who go to our public schools come, and we cannot have improvements in education while the attacks are being made on their livelihood in a manner in which their homes are able to exist free of incapacitation, health problems and deprivation.

We think that what happened last week with the wiping out of the ergonomics standard through the Congressional Review Act is just a beginning, that the war on working families is going to continue in many ways.

We are going to be gutting overtime pay again for workers. That has come up in the previous Congress, of course, and it failed to get through because the President at that time threatened to veto it. There is no veto power to prevent excesses. There is no veto power

on extreme mix. We are waiting for the attack to go forward.

We warn everybody listening to begin to make decisions about how we are going to deal with an attempt to gut overtime pay for workers. We had a bill on the floor, as my colleagues recall, those of my colleagues who have been in Congress for some time, a bill on the floor which said that overtime pay should no longer have to be given in cash.

The Fair Labor Standards Act requires that after you reach a certain point, 40 hours, you must pay workers in cash for the overtime. Workers who are not in that category, there are exempt workers, as we all know, but those who are in that category must be paid in cash.

We had a bill which says the Fair Worker Labor Standards Act, that section would be repealed and employers could at their own discretion give workers time off, time off to compensate for your working overtime. The time off would come at the discretion of the employer.

The majority party would gut overtime pay by expanding exemptions to overtime requirements by excluding employee bonuses from overtime pay, and this latter provision creates huge loopholes for employers, allows them to exempt certain portions of employee pay as exempt from overtime coverage.

We can look forward to more of this kind of attack on working families. They are going to discourage all new health and safety laws. They are going to discourage the National Labor Relations Board from functioning in a fair and equitable way.

There will be bills to discourage union organizing. All of those bills fall within the parameter of my committee. We must understand how they all interrelate to the war on working families.

NIGHTSIDE CHAT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CANTOR). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. McINNIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of different subjects that I would like to address tonight.

Let me begin, first of all, by thanking all of my colleagues for their support for the successful passing of the legislation, the willing seller, willing buyer legislation for our national trails.

The specific trail that I focus really on a lot in the State of Colorado is the Continental Divide Trail. It is kind of ironic that years ago a piece of legislation was amended to put in place that a property owner who wishes to sell their land, a private property owner who wishes to sell their land to a trails committee or to the government for a trail like the Continental Divide Trail was prohibited from doing so even though the seller wanted to sell.