

schools, districts and states accountable for graduation rates and dropouts so that all students are graduating with a high school diploma and improving their life outcomes.

By holding schools, districts and states accountable for graduation rates and dropouts, we also improve America's position as a leader in the global economy. According to the 2008 Department of Labor report entitled "America's Dynamic Workforce," by 2016 almost 90 percent of the fastest growing and best paying jobs in the United States will require at least some postsecondary education. Yet, an estimated 3.5 million Americans ages 16 to 25 are not enrolled in school and do not have a high school diploma. Attaining a high school diploma is a student's first step toward becoming an educated member of the American workforce. An American workforce that lacks a considerable number of high school graduates—and a considerable number of college graduates—will eventually diminish our nation's global competitiveness. The major advantage America has in the global economy is an educated workforce. We can't allow—or afford—any of our nation's high students to dropout and not reach their full potential.

Until recently, federal policy did not place enough importance on graduating the nation's high school students. In October 2008, the U.S. Department of Education released regulations that did much to correct the lack of attention to graduation rates in the federal accountability system; the regulations require a uniform graduation rate calculation and improvement in graduation rates over time. Though these regulations are a laudable step in the right direction, they do not go far enough in setting consistent, high graduation rate goals and aggressive, attainable graduation rate growth targets. Without clear guidance and meaningful accountability, most secondary schools can continue to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) by making negligible annual improvement in graduation rates and can do so with a consistent, or even growing, graduation gap. In fact, under current law even a so called "dropout factory" can make AYP.

The Every Student Counts Act will bring meaningful accountability to America's high schools by requiring a consistent and accurate calculation of graduation rates across all fifty states to ensure comparability and transparency. The legislation builds on the National Governors Association's Graduation Rate Compact, which was signed by all 50 of the nation's governors in 2005. Under the Every Student Counts Act, graduation rates become a significant factor in determining AYP in addition to test scores. Moreover, the Every Student Counts Act would require high schools to have aggressive, attainable and uniform annual growth requirements as part of AYP. This will ensure consistent increases to graduation rates for all students by meeting annual, research-based benchmarks with the long-term goal of reaching a 90 percent graduation rate. The bill would also require the disaggregation of graduation data by subgroup to make certain that schools are held accountable for increasing the graduation rate for all of our students and require that school improvement activities focus on closing any achievement gaps.

Recognizing that some small numbers of students take longer than four years to graduate, the bill will give credit to schools, school

districts and states for graduating these students while maintaining the primacy of graduating the great preponderance of all students in four years. The Every Student Counts Act will provide incentives for schools, districts and states to create programs to serve students who have already dropped out and are over-age or under credited. Some credit has to be given to those who get a GED and also those who take more than one or two years and maybe even three years longer than others to graduate. If no credit is given, the school system has no incentive to continue these important programs.

Some states have already taken the initiative to implement reforms similar to those included in the Every Student Counts Act. I am proud to say that my home state of Virginia is one of them. For example, since 2008 Virginia has been using the "Virginia On-Time Graduation Rate" calculation, a flexible graduation rate calculation that accurately measures the number of students from a freshman class who graduate four years later. In addition, Virginia will start using a "Graduation and Completion Index" in addition to standardized test scores in order to determine the accreditation ratings of high schools in the Commonwealth. High schools must earn a score of 85 on the "Graduation and Completion Index" to receive full accreditation from the state. The requirement will go into effect during the 2011–2012 school year. Reforms like these have had and will have a positive impact on Virginia's graduation rate and should be implemented nationwide.

Thus far, 24 national and state organizations support the Every Student Counts Act, including the Alliance for Excellent Education, America's Promise Alliance, American Association of University Women, American School Counselor Association, Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, Council of Administrators of Special Education, First Focus, Knowledge Alliance, Learning Disabilities Association of America, League of United Latin American Citizens, National Association of School Psychologists, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium, National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, National Collaboration for Youth, National Council of La Raza, National Council for Learning Disabilities, National Indian Education Association, National PTA, Project GRAD, Public Education Network, School Social Work Association of America, Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC), Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, United Way Worldwide, and Youth Service America. This list is expected to grow.

In order to truly ensure that all children have access to a quality education, it is imperative that we take steps to immediately end America's dropout crisis. We must ensure not only that graduation rates increase, but that earning a high school diploma is a meaningful accomplishment. We must use the indicators of student achievement and graduation to know which high schools are doing their job. Those who are must be recognized and supported. Those that are not must be identified and improvements made.

I hope that with the Every Student Counts Act we can make greater strides nationally toward graduating more of America's students and preparing them to succeed in college, the

workforce, the military, and ultimately in life. I ask my colleagues to join me in passing this bill and seeing to it that it is quickly enacted into law to ensure—at a minimum—that every child becomes a high school graduate.

ENERGY TAX PREVENTION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 6, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 910) to amend the Clean Air Act to prohibit the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency from promulgating any regulation concerning, taking action relating to, or taking into consideration the emission of a greenhouse gas to address climate change, and for other purposes:

Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey. Mr. Chair, I rise today to voice my opposition to the Upton-Inhofe bill.

Clean air should be a priority that we all can agree on, but some in Washington, D.C. are playing dangerous games with public health. Today, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Upton-Inhofe bill, an extreme measure that will eliminate the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) authority to address carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, fluorinated gases and other harmful emissions. This legislation, which I opposed, reverses EPA's scientific finding that these pollutants are harmful to public health and the environment. The bill means that even with strong state-level environmental regulations New Jersey will suffer. Since the movement of air pollution isn't restricted by state borders, wind currents from neighboring states will push harmful pollution into the air that we breathe here at home.

As a father and a strong advocate for the environment, I am proud of New Jersey's leadership in keeping our air clean. In New Jersey, we've implemented laws to reduce toxic emissions and mercury pollution from power plants, increase clean energy from solar power, and speed up production of offshore wind along the Atlantic seaboard. These regulations improve the quality of the air we breathe, but we should still be doing more and New Jersey cannot do it alone. Federal regulation of dangerous pollutants is necessary to make sure that states with tough emissions standards aren't unfairly subject to dirty air from neighboring states that have lenient emission laws. Some in Washington, D.C. may want to secure an extreme ideological "victory" by undermining the EPA, but the families, children, and elderly in New Jersey cannot afford the consequences of the Upton-Inhofe bill.

For many New Jerseyans, the impact of this bill could be deadly. For example, in the Ninth Congressional District—which includes sections of Bergen, Hudson, and Passaic Counties—there are an estimated 80,000 people, including nearly 20,000 children, who live with asthma. Lower air quality standards will lead to more pollutants in our air and raise the risk of life-threatening asthma attacks. In fact, the National Institute of Health estimates that

5,000 asthma-related deaths occur each year in the United States. And those who suffer from asthma are just one group who will face drastic consequences from the Upton-Inhofe bill. Fully enforcing the Clean Air Act and a strong EPA will improve the lives of countless Americans (including New Jerseyans)—especially those who already have compromised health.

The Upton-Inhofe bill is harmful to New Jersey and our entire nation. Specifically, this legislation would weaken the Clean Air Act, overturn the Supreme Court ruling that gave the EPA authority to regulate dangerous air pollutants, and derail efforts to move toward energy independence by reducing emissions from cars and trucks. It is for these reasons and many others that health advocacy and environmental groups—from the American Lung Association and the Union of Concerned Scientists to Environment New Jersey and the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America—oppose this harmful legislation. In opposition to the Clean Air Act and the EPA, and supporting the Upton-Inhofe bill, are groups like big oil companies and billion-dollar corporations with vested interests in avoiding the costs of cleaning up the environmental messes they make. I and many of my constituents and people throughout our state choose to stand with those who want to keep New Jersey's air clean, not those who put profit over public health.

There is a clear path forward to keeping our air clean in New Jersey. With the strengthening of the Clean Air Act in 1970, our country took a stand for the quality of our health, our air and our future. The EPA is planning to update the Clean Air Act to implement long-overdue federal limits on soot, smog, mercury, and carbon pollution. This solution makes sense—the Clean Air Act has proven to be one of the greatest tools we have to cost-effectively protect the health of Americans and our environment. We must stand up against efforts to weaken the Clean Air Act and work with the EPA to implement strong limits on pollution to protect the air we all breathe in New Jersey and throughout our country.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF STANFORD SETTLEMENT NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 7, 2011

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Stanford Settlement Neighborhood Center's 75th anniversary. It is a great pleasure to recognize the Center's dedication to providing social services to the people of Sacramento. As the staff, supporters and beneficiaries of the Stanford Settlement Neighborhood Center celebrate this historic milestone, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring their leadership in the Sacramento community.

Over the last 75 years, the Stanford Settlement Neighborhood Center has provided

neighborhood outreach, emergency assistance, children's programs, a teen center, and senior services to all those in need of their help. Their work in the neighborhood helps residents connect to the community by hosting meetings with city officials, publishing a newsletter, and providing a wide range of programs, such as the Free Income Tax Assistance Program. Other programs, like the Emergency Assistance Program helps individuals and families with the immediate emergency assistance, such as food and crisis intervention. The Center's Children's Program consists of after school activities, a summer day camp, as well as supportive services for schools and families.

The Stanford Settlement Neighborhood Center has also grown to include the Carl R. Hansen Teen Center, and is geared towards students in middle and high school. The services they provide encourage children to stay in school, build healthy relationships, and achieve their academic goals. The Sister Jeanne Felion Senior Center provides many services to seniors and offers them with a place to socialize and stay active.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to the Stanford Settlement Neighborhood Center, and their outstanding commitment to providing social services to all people, both young and old. The past 75 years have been tremendously successful and I am sure they will continue to enjoy success in the future. While the Stanford Settlement Neighborhood Center's staff, supporters, and friends gather together to celebrate the organization's 75th anniversary, I ask all my colleagues to once again join me in honoring their outstanding work throughout Sacramento.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 7, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today our national debt is \$14,259,761,986,879.66.

On January 6th, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$3,621,336,240,585.80 since then.

This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

HONORING PETE SCHENKEL

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 7, 2011

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Pete Schenkel, recipient of the 82nd Annual Linz Award. Given each year, the Linz Award is be-

stowed upon individuals or couples for outstanding work in the community or humanitarian efforts.

In addition to his distinguished career with Dean Foods, Mr. Schenkel has been greatly involved in assisting the Dallas community. He has been particularly active in the areas of civic involvement, health care and public safety.

Mr. Schenkel was a leader in securing the Cotton Bowl as the location for the annual Red River Rivalry game between the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Oklahoma. Mr. Schenkel worked to raise millions of dollars for the renovation of the Cotton Bowl ensuring that this historic football game remains in Dallas for years to come.

Mr. Schenkel has been immensely involved in local law enforcement and helped launch the Dallas Blue Foundation over 20 years ago. The Dallas Blue Foundation assists families of Dallas police officers killed or wounded in the line of duty. He also played a role in raising funds to provide rewards for tips in solving major crimes.

Assisting the Dallas community in healthcare access and advocacy, Mr. Schenkel has served as a board member and former chairman of the Methodist Hospital System Foundation. During his 20 years of service he has supported programs in emergency, cardiology, orthopedics and neurology. A recipient of the 2010 Norman Brinker Humanitarian Award, Pete Schenkel and his wife Pat are renowned for providing outstanding work and leadership in the healthcare field.

Amongst many other recognitions, Mr. Schenkel serves as a member of the Dallas Citizens Council, and Cotton Bowl Athletic Association and Salesman Club. He also formerly served as chair of the Dallas/Ft. Worth International Airport Board, and as former chair of the State Fair of Texas Board.

Pete Schenkel has made an immeasurable impact on Dallas, and made our community a better place. He is an outstanding citizen of our community and this recognition is immensely well deserved.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 7, 2011

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I was on medical leave and missed votes on March 16–17, 2011. Had I been able to, I would have voted “no” on rollcall vote No. 181; “aye” on rollcall vote No. 182; “aye” on rollcall vote No. 183; “aye” on rollcall vote No. 184; “aye” on rollcall vote No. 185; “aye” on rollcall vote No. 186; “no” on rollcall vote No. 188, final passage of the NSP Termination Act; “no” on rollcall vote No. 189; “no” on rollcall vote No. 190; “aye” on rollcall vote No. 191; “no” on rollcall vote No. 192 prohibiting funding for National Public Radio; and “aye” on rollcall vote No. 193 directing the President to remove the United States Armed Forces from Afghanistan.