Now, Alphonso is an honor student, captain of the football team, on student govt, and will be attending college soon.

Opponents of D.C. Scholarships represent a narrow, selfish special interest who want to keep the monopoly of failed public school systems. They would have you believe that Private Schools are not a viable option for the poor and downtrodden of the District of Columbia.

While many of the opponents, themselves, send their children to private and parochial bastions of privilege, they would deny even the most modestly priced private education to the children of hard working residents of the District.

Mr. President and my fellow Members, I beseech you to set these children free. Set them free of the uncaring bureaucrats and special interests who rule their lives.

Why should families of limited means be reduced to the edges of financial ruin in order to provide their children with a $2500 private school education, when at the same time the District of Columbia is spending an average of $9000 per student annually and providing, as far as the parents are concerned, virtually nothing in return?

It is heartless for opponents of this bill to rob the children of the District of Columbia of a good education.

Parents know best what is good for their children, and deserve the right to choose where to educate their children.

My fellow members of the House, I urge you to vote with parents and vote in favor of the D.C. Scholarship Bill.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ).

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the so-called Student Opportunity Scholarship Act, another voucher proposal. Vouchers are not the answer to the many problems that confront our schools. It is seen as a panacea but it is a scapegoat to our existing situation. Yes, it might help some of the youngsters that are out there and it might be beneficial, but it is going to be at the expense of all the other youngsters that are out there. In fact, the vouchers take away tax dollars from public schools where our children have the greatest need.

If we are going to commit to helping, we ought to be out there providing the resources that are needed. At this present time there is a press conference out there because there are being cuts right now at teacher training, there are some cuts that are being put out in terms of not allowing sufficient resources to be able to build our classrooms. There are also some proposed cuts that would not allow for construction of schools. There are some cuts that will also have some direct impact in terms of wiring our classrooms. We should be adding additional resources instead of taking existing resources from the youngsters that are now out there, instead of coming up with this program that is only going to be responsible for only impacting a few at the expense of all the rest.

Let us not be fooled into believing that this bill is for the benefit of our students and for our parents. In fact, most parents will not have a say-so in terms of who will be able to get in there. In fact, one of the difficulties about the voucher system is that it does not allow the opportunity for youngsters to participate. If you have any type of difficulties, any kind of handicap, those youngsters will not be included. So yes, it is very exclusive. It is only for those individuals that will be able to get in there, again at the expense of all the others.

Public policy should respect the parental choice but the choice of benefit of all the students, not at the expense of the rest. Let us not abandon our public schools. I would ask and look at what has happened. There is a direct correlation between the proposals and the individuals supporting this proposal and the lack of commitment to fund our particular classrooms out there, lack of commitment to support public education as a whole. That is where it is needed.

Mr. ARMEY. Madam Speaker, I should just like to observe that it is generally advisable when one speaks of a direct correlation to offer empirical data rather than bias and opinion.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA).

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding time. As the previous Member may have talked about, there is a direct correlation that when you send money to Washington, it does not make it back to the child and it does not make it back to the classroom. This current system gobbles up money and it hurts kids and it hurts our public schools and it hurts our children. We have taken a look at it: 760 programs, 39 agencies, $100 billion. It does not work. You send a dollar to Washington for education, maybe 60 to 70 cents actually makes it back to a child in a classroom. Yes, we do not support that kind of a system.

We have gone to 17 States, we have taken a look at what works in education. We have gone to lots of great schools. When you empower parents, when you focus on basic academics, when you get dollars back into the classroom, it works. We are not in the process or the need to focus on a particular system. We need to start taking a look at the kids.

We have been in Cleveland, we have been in Milwaukee, we have been in all the places where education is progressing and where change is taking place. And every place where education is improving, it is moving power to parents and it is moving it to the local level and not moving more of it back to Washington.

This is not the answer to all of the problems we face in education, but it is definitely a step in the right direction. It is a step that we ought to take. And it is a step we ought to take here in Washington, D.C. because it is not an issue of money. We spend roughly $10,000 per child in Washington and we get some of the lowest results of any public school in the country. It is not fair to those kids.

Another few million dollars to improve these schools is not going to make the difference. We need radical change. We need to help the 7,573 students who tried to apply to get these scholarships who are not going to have that opportunity.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN).

Mr. GREEN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia for yielding me this time to speak in opposition to this bill. Let me quote some of my colleagues from the other side.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) said that rhetoric and the destroying of public education is not the intent. I sat on this floor and heard one of my colleagues a few months ago say that public education is a legacy of the Communist revolution. And so maybe that is not the intent of this bill, but it sure gives that intent when you hear some of the rhetoric from the other side.

My colleague from Indiana talked about the Titanic, that nobody would get on the lifeboat. Those of us who saw the Titanic will remember how those gates were closed for those people in steerage. Those 7,500 children may be able to get out and get that lifeboat, but we are leaving thousands and tens of thousands still in steerage with the gates closed and without the opportunity that fixing public education really needs to be done.

Public education is available for everyone. It is irresponsible to have a voucher bill that takes scarce public funds and uses it for private schools, to only educate those few who maybe will make it out of steerage and maybe break down that gate or sneak around that gate, but not break the whole gate down so everyone can have that opportunity. That is what public education is about.

The tuition costs in private schools in the D.C. area is far greater than the value of the vouchers. So we are only going to be able to help those few students, Madam Speaker, who will be able to have their parents to match that, because the tuition is going to be so much more. Again, we are throwing up barriers. We really ought to fix the D.C. schools, and not only fix it for 10 percent of the students.

Madam Speaker, I hope this bill will be defeated.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). The Chair would like to ask those in the gallery to refrain from any audible conversation.

Mr. ARMEY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Madam Speaker, I have here a book that I prepared in anticipation of this

discussion. I have in this book the 20 fallacies that are argued in opposition to the provision of these scholarship opportunities for these children.

Let me begin by extending my compliments to the opposition. Already, before the debate is over, I believe you have covered all 20. There are a few in particular that I want to call attention to for just a moment.

One, I can predicate my remarks by the observation that there is an old adage in psychology that says, ''You always get more of what it is you really don't want.'' Generally that is a sort of a self-inflicted unintentional consequence that just comes from our neurosis.

In this case we have the most fascinating case. There is a test of constitutionality that does in fact also cover civil rights law that was established by the Supreme Court. It is called the lemon test. This bill was carefully written so that it meets the lemon test. That came as a big, big disappointment to the opposition of the bill that were counting on being able to attack the bill on the lemon test, on constitutionality.

The lemon test is three-part. It says if the choice where to use assistance is made by the parents of the students, then it passes the test if that choice is made by the parents of the students, not the government. We pass the test if the program does not create a financial incentive to choose private schools. And we pass the test if it does not involve the government in the school's affairs.

There is a specific provision in the bill on page 25 that says Not School Aid: ''A scholarship under this Act shall be considered assistance to the student and shall not be considered assistance to an eligible institution.'' The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) appeared before the Committee on Rules yesterday and asked for a rule that would allow him to amend the bill to drop that. When queried by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY) as to why he would want to do such a thing, which would of course make it subject to unconstitutionality under the test, his response was, and I quote, that his provision would offer an additional attack on the constitutionality because it would be essentially funding parochial schools.

□ 1345

I appreciate the dedication of the opposition, and I appreciate the Committee on Rules that quite wisely did not allow the amendment to be put in order for no reason other than to afford the opportunity to realize their worst dreams so they could kill the opportunity for the children.

As my colleagues know, I do not mind being dedicated, but I do think they ought to be more creative and a little less transparent in that we passed the constitutionality test.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I would like to refer the gentleman from Texas to the Wisconsin decision and to the Ohio decision. In both of those decisions the court said they were applying the lemon test, and in both of those decisions the court said the publicly funded vouchers of the precise kind at issue here did not meet the lemon test.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York City (Mr. MEEKS) specifically from Queens, New York.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia for yielding this time to me.

As indicated, I represent the Sixth Congressional District in Queens, New York, and I succeeded a man who I respect, who is my friend, who I think has done a great deal, the Reverend Floyd Flake. However, on this issue he was incorrect. On this issue dealing with school vouchers, the individuals that I represent in the Sixth Congressional District overwhelmingly believe in public education and are against school vouchers.

Madam Speaker, I think the reason that that occurs is, I can testify to, because of the fact that I am a product of public education, I have two daughters who are now attending public schools, that, in fact, all children can learn. And I think from the debate that I have heard here today I have not heard anyone say that only a few children can learn, but they are talking about children and their ability to learn so that we can have a better tomorrow. And if, in fact, we concede that all children can learn, then it seems to me it should be our responsibility to make sure that they all have that opportunity, and in order to do that the answer is very easy.

We must make sure that public schools are there to educate all and that those, whether it is religious purposes or et cetera, want their kids to go to a different school, they are going to a different school not because they do not have the ability to learn in a public school but because they choose to go to a religious or private school.

So, therefore, I think it is our task and our mission and our jobs to make sure that everybody in public education has an opportunity to learn, not just a few. We should not have just a few good public high schools or a few good public junior high schools or a few good public elementary schools; every one should be. We should set a standard so we can make sure that all of the public schools reach that standard, and that standard is this.

It seems simple that we found that where there are smaller class sizes, where we have educated teachers, where we made sure that there is opportunities for the young people to enhance their environment, for example, junior varsity sports and all, math and science courses and all, we then improve the educations of our children.

Madam Speaker, I am against and I oppose this bill, S. 1502; and I thank the gentlewoman for having yielded me the time.

Mr. ARMEY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, one quick note, again, on this constitutionality issue that is very intriguing. Of course, when this bill is signed into law, if it is tested in the courts it will be in the Federal courts and go under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. And the good news is their bad news. It will not be tested before the Wisconsin State Supreme Court.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) my good friend.

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Speaker, I have only one reluctance in speaking, and that is to disagree with the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) who I consider one of the most capable, talented, passionate, intelligent and effective Members in Congress. And so that is my only reluctance because I believe passionately in the D.C. Student Opportunities Scholarship Program. I believe passionately that, as a Member of Congress in charge of and having responsibilities for the District of Columbia, we need to do something to stir it up a little bit to start to see how we can make positive changes.

A few years ago, I opposed school vouchers, and I remember having changed my decision because I began to realize that was a false position. And I came back to my office where the NEA was meeting with my staff, and they were very serious. And my staff was very serious. And I asked, ''What's going on?''

One of the individuals from the NEA and some members from the CEA in Connecticut said, ''Well, we came by to tell your staff member that we can no longer support you for Congress because of your decision to support vouchers.''

My response to that individual was I know that is the case, and that is why it took me 3 years longer than it should have to do the right thing and make up my mind that we need a demonstration voucher program.

I view this more as a scholarship program in D.C. It is only impacting 2,000 students, who are randomly chosen. It is going to give students the opportunity and parents the opportunity to apply for a grant of $3,200 to send their child to another school if they want. We are going to see how parents react and what parents want in D.C. Then we will know how to redesign the public school system and provide the extra resources which D.C. will need in order to improve its system.

So I congratulate the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) on this bill. It is a modest bill, which offers a demonstration program. As a pilot program it only goes to a few, but the students are chosen randomly. It is not taking the best and the brightest out of the system.

Madam Speaker, I just hope dearly that this legislation passes. I am happy

the Senate passed it, and I hope the President has the good sense to try this demonstration scholarship program.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Replying to the distinguished majority leader's view of who would decide this matter and what might be decided, I quote first from the Wisconsin court:

> Nonetheless, we accept the State's premise that, in reviewing the program, we may and perhaps must consult the United States Supreme Court cases applying the primary effect test. This test is the second of three parts of the lemon test.

Quoting also the Ohio court:

> While it is clear that Section 7, Article I of the Ohio Constitution provides a source of protection against State funding of sectarian schools independent of the Establishment Cause, the case law construing this section indicates that its protection against State funding of sectarian institutions is essentially coextensive with that afforded by the Establishment Clause.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia for her leadership and, hoping that if my time goes over she will yield me an additional 30 seconds, I rise in opposition to this legislation.

I was hoping my good friend from Texas was holding up, rather than the 20 fallacies of the D.C. voucher bill, I was wishing he was holding up the Bible that says, ''Do unto thy neighbors like you would have your neighbor do unto you.'' Or the 23rd Psalm in the book that we read frequently that says, the Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He is making the schoolchildren of the District of Columbia want.

This is a misguided proposition dealing with school vouchers. It is to suggest that school vouchers equal excellence in education. If the schoolchildren in Washington, D.C., are really our concern, we should fund math and science and reading programs to provide them with the kinds of tools they need. Vouchers say that private school buildings are better than public school buildings. That is all it is about.

The tomfoolery of thinking that the private voucher is going to educate a child is absolutely wrong. Four years of vouchers in Milwaukee suggests that vouchers do nothing more than public schools. In fact, there is no evidence that vouchers will help educate a child. It takes $12,000 to educate a child in a private school here in Washington, D.C. The vouchers are for $33,200. The number of children that can participate is 2,000. In fact, we have 77,000 children in the District of Columbia, 77,000 children.

Do my colleagues know what that means? Two thousand children are spending $45 million of the American tax dollars.

This is clearly tomfoolery, and I believe that we should go to the heart of the matter, create an atmosphere for all children in America to live and to learn. And if our opposition says that public schools are equal to communism, then we know we are going the wrong direction.

I believe the American public wants good education for their children. The D.C. voucher system is an unfair system pointed at people that cannot help themselves. Let us do the right thing and vote for public school education so that all of the children of America can rise high in the sun.

Madam Speaker, I hope we read the Bible. The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Mr. ARMEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 additional minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. RIGGS) my good friend.

Mr. RIGGS. Madam Speaker, I certainly am not asserting that continuation of our public schools is equivalent to maintaining a Communist authoritarian system of government. I will say that the District of Columbia public schools has too many individuals involved in the operation of those schools who are neglectful, and there is just simply too much malfeasance and even corruption in the District of Columbia government, and every Member serving in this body knows that.

Secondly, with respect to the argument that there is not enough funding here to provide enough scholarships, the fact of the matter is that we now have a lottery conducted yesterday that would grant over a thousand privately funded scholarships. This legislation would fund another 2,000 some odd scholarships a year. So, all of a sudden, we can take that argument and stand it on its ear.

I mean, are they actually arguing that, because we cannot serve all, we should not serve some? Would they support a program that would allow every low-income family in the District of Columbia to have a scholarship for their children?

I also want to bring up special education here in a moment, but I need to confer with the majority leader if I can do that.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I will not abide reckless charges on the floor, and the thing I want to say is that there is no corruption in the D.C. Public schools or anywhere else. I think there is, and we have asked for investigations. But when the gentleman rises on the floor to allege what everybody knows, I challenge him to cite me an instance, and if he cannot, then I tell him, and he did not yield to me, and so I shall not yield to him, but I tell him this much:

This Member will not accept his reckless charges on this floor or his stereotypes, and until he is willing to turn over to this Member an example of such charges I ask him to keep his charges to himself.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD).

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Madam Speaker, I thank the leader of this great debate, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for her leadership on this issue.

I urge my colleagues to oppose S. 1502, the so-called D.C. Opportunities Scholarship. Scholarships are generally awarded to one on the premise of their merits and their deeds. This is not a scholarship bill, it is a voucher; and a voucher is a voucher is a voucher, despite attempts to put a pretty face on a bad bill.

I really do not have to stand and speak for the people of California, my State, because they have already spoken and they have said no to vouchers, and so have many other States. School vouchers drain taxpayers' dollars from public schools into private and religious schools. This hurts the vast majority of children who are left behind in public schools.

Americans oppose transferring taxpayer dollars from public to private education by a 54 to 39 percent margin. We need to provide more resources for options that are making a positive difference in public schools like charter schools which is showing great promise in my State of California.

□ 1400

Democrats believe that we should improve public schools. Vouchers are not the solution to improve public education. This Congress should be passing legislation that affirms that quality public education should be the inalienable right of every child in America. Vote ''no'' on this private voucher; vote ''no'' on this bill.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose S. 1502, the ''so-called'' D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Act. Scholarships are generally awarded on one's own merits and deeds. This is not a scholarship bill. It's a voucher, AND a voucher IS a voucher, IS a voucher—despite attempts to put a pretty name on a bad bill.

I really don't have to stand and speak for California, MY STATE, because the people of California have already spoken—no to vouchers! And so have many other states.

School vouchers drain taxpayers dollars from public schools into private and religious schools. This hurts the vast majority of children, who are left behind in the public schools.

Americans oppose transferring taxpayer dollars from public into private education by a 54–39% margin.

We need to provide more resources for options that are making a positive difference in public schools, like charter schools—which are showing great promise in my state of California.

Democrats believe that we should be improving public schools. How are we improving public schools when you leave 76,000 students behind.

This DC voucher plan provides only a few DC public school students (2,000) with vouchers—while providing no answers for 76,000 students.

The DC public schools need to be improved—not abandoned.

Yet Republicans now want to use Washington, DC as a laboratory for their ''social experiments'' with a concept that has been resoundingly rejected by voters all over the country.

Vouchers are not the solution to improve public school education. This Congress should be passing legislation that affirms that quality public school education should be the inalienable right of every child in America.

Vote ''no'' on private vouchers—Vote ''no'' on this bill .

Mr. ARMEY. Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH).

Mr. HAYWORTH. Madam Speaker, I thank the distinguished majority leader for yielding me this time.

There is a simple realization that confronts us today in this chamber, and that is, despite the very concerted efforts of some very dedicated people, the schools of the District of Columbia, this Nation's seat of government, for which this body bears ultimate constitutional responsibility, those schools are in crisis. And for the parents of the District of Columbia and for their children, this simple notion should reign supreme.

In this land of the free, those parents should have the freedom to choose which school they believe to be best for their children, and this tool of scholarships is something needed in terms of educational triage for a system that sadly has failed the citizens of the District of Columbia, has failed the students of the District of Columbia. That is why we stand here today in the well of this House to reaffirm the notion of freedom and choice.

Imagine if your child had to go to a school daily where there were unsafe conditions, where someone could not learn; and it is for the children we make this pledge and we make this vote, and that is why I am pleased to support the legislation of the gentleman from Texas.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. TIERNEY), who is also a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. TIERNEY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me the time. Madam Speaker, public funds are entrusted basically for the use of the greatest, broadest public good, not for selected use or discrimination or to put forward for 3 percent of the people. That seems to make a second privileged class, those that are already fortunate enough and wealthy enough to be able to afford a private education, and now 3 percent of other formerly public school children are going to have the privilege of going where others are not.

It does not address the issue; it does not address the issue that was just spoken to by our good friend from Arizona, schools that may not be as good as the good public schools that we do have, and we do have good public schools. The answer is to make sure that all of our public schools are as good as they can be, as good as those that are already good; to fix those broken schools to make sure the curriculum works, to make sure that every child that attends public school has good teachers; to make sure that we measure their progress, and to make sure that everybody has the opportunity to move up the economic ladder in this country and have hope and have a good life.

Vouchers do not improve schools. They draw away the source of money that could improve schools. They are not fair. They do not provide an opportunity for every student that wants to move to a private school. They target some and give them an opportunity to move, possibly, but there are not enough private schools to deal with having this be a fair program, and there are not enough dollars being put in to let every child go to the private school that he or she may want to go to.

There is no way that I could foresee the majority appropriating enough money to give $3,200 to each of the 50 million plus public school children to have this be a fair program. If we want to fix the public schools, and that is what the majority wants to do, why do we not see some evidence of that? Every opportunity that we have to fix the public schools, and there is no Federal role in the public school system in the local communities.

Mr. ARMEY. Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to yield 1 minute to my good friend, the gentleman from from California (Mr. ROGAN).

Mr. ROGAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, in northern California some time ago, a young boy was sent to a high school, Gompers High School. He was the son of a convicted felon and an alcoholic. On his first day of school he was told by the assistant dean, All you need to do is show up for homeroom. We do not care if you show up the rest of the day. He was confused. He asked at the end of the meeting why that was so important, and he was told, Because at homeroom is where we take attendance, and that is where our money comes from, and as long as we get our money, we do not care if you show up the rest of the day.

I know that story well, Madam Speaker, because that young boy was me.

There are many children who are going into buildings just like Gompers Continuation School. These buildings have the word ''school'' on top of them, but they are not giving an education. We are condemning the poorest people in the poorest neighborhoods to a lifetime of pain instead of the promise of education.

Let us give the children of Washington, D.C. who are least able to afford to have a decent education and have a chance for a real future the opportunity to have what every single child of a Member of Congress has: a good education for a good future.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR), the State whose voters rejected vouchers twice.

Mr. FARR of California. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, one thing we all have in common in our districts is we all have roads, and we all have schools. If people been watching the debate on the floor, they would know that we committed ourselves to fixing the roads in America. We did that just a couple of weeks ago by passing BESTEA: $219 billion we are going to put into the road system in America. But when it comes to fixing schools, we put zero, zip, none, no money into fixing schools, not a drop of Federal dollars. We have educational programs, but far less spent on that than we do on roads. So if we want to fix schools like we fix roads, we need to spend some more money.

Now, my colleagues do not suggest that in the road problem that we give vouchers for fixing the roads, but that is what my colleagues are suggesting here. It will not fix our educational system without a commitment of funds. If we were to give the same commitment to education that we just gave to roads, we would appropriate this year $219 billion. That is how we fix education.

Mr. ARMEY. Madam Speaker, could I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) has 9 minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) has 7 minutes remaining.

Mr. ARMEY. Madam Speaker, I wonder if I might inquire of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia how many speakers she has remaining?

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, at this time it looks like around three.

Mr. ARMEY. Madam Speaker, I believe I have the right to close debate?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct.

Mr. ARMEY. That being the case, since I have two speakers, three at the most, perhaps it would be advisable if the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia might want to go ahead and yield to one of her speakers.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, the discussion here during this floor debate today may be focused on a proposal of private school vouchers in the District of Columbia, but it has larger ramifications throughout the country.

For example, in my home State of New Jersey, Governor Whitman has proposed implementing a private school voucher program in our State. Of course, this proposal has drawn considerable criticism from both Republicans and Democrats in the New Jersey State Legislature. Therefore, it is not clear if Governor Whitman will go ahead with her plan. But what we do here sends a message to the rest of the country, and we hope that we do not send the wrong message.

On a larger level, it disturbs me that proposals of vouchers have been used as an attempt to gain support in low-income communities. Basically, they have billed vouchers as a way to level the playing field for poor students who cannot afford private school, and they believe that they will win points in urban districts. However, they do not tell parents and students that the funds will be taken out of the public school system, therefore making a bad system even worse. They fail to inform them that students will not be protected by civil rights laws because they do not apply to private schools. While touting these vouchers as a saving grace for urban students, they do not provide the assurance that special education laws are adhered to in the schools.

So I ask that we defeat this proposal, and let us support and strengthen the public school system in this country.

Mr. ARMEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. COX), the Chairman of the Republican Policy Committee.

Mr. COX of California. Madam Speaker, I thank the majority leader for yielding me this time and thank him for bringing this to the floor for the kids. That is what this is about. It is not about legality, it is not about technicality, it is about whether these kids are going to get a chance.

The truth is, they need a chance. Last year for the first time District students, for which Congress is responsible, we are not responsible as the mayor of any city in the country, but we are responsible for D.C., and the kids for which we are responsible, in this Chamber right here, took the Stanford 9 achievement test for the first time. This test is used across the country, has been since 1923. Millions of kids have taken it, but the District schools never took it before, and here is what we found out.

In reading, 15 percent of the first-graders tested ranked below basic. That means that they did not have even the minimum skills necessary to go to the second grade. That was not all that far off the national average; it was a few points ahead of the national average, but that was for first-graders.

What we found is that the longer these kids stayed in the D.C. system, the worse it got for them, who are just like the other kids around the rest of the country. Forty-one percent of the second-graders tested below basic, compared to 15 percent the year before. By the time they were in tenth grade, 53 percent were below basic. That means they could not go on to the next grade because they could not read. The same thing happened in math. By the tenth grade, 89 percent of D.C. kids are below basic in math.

We already spend over $9,000 per pupil. That is the fourth highest in the Nation. Money is not the problem; the system is the problem. Let us not put the system ahead of the kids, let us put the kids first. This is our chance to do it. If we turn our backs on these kids now, it is their future, but we can do something to help them, and this is our opportunity to help them. I thank the majority leader for giving us this opportunity on the floor. Now, let us just do it.

Madam Speaker, I include the following for the RECORD.

HOW D.C.'S SCHOOLS CAN LEAD THE NATION

(By Rep. Christopher Cox)

Every parent knows that early education is essential to a child's future. But new reading and math achievement tests in the District of Columbia show that D.C.'s public schools are failing an entire generation of students. D.C. students have the same potential as every American child, yet the more time they spend in D.C. schools, the more poorly they do compared to other American children.

Today, just as the District of Columbia is poised to reap the benefits of tremendous economic growth, its young people may not be able to take advantage of unprecedented opportunities. Good jobs are plentiful, and the unemployment rate in the region is one of the lowest in the nation. It is imperative that children growing up in the Nation's capital receive the kind of education that will permit them to take advantage of these opportunities.

Congress is constitutionally responsible for the District of Columbia. If a national education policy is ever to be taken seriously, then Congress must first show it can achieve results in this modestly-sized city by the Potomac.

D.C. IN THE 1990S: AWASH WITH OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW GRADUATES

The District of Columbia is one of the wealthiest regions in the nation. Despite a population of only 500,000, the District has a gross economic product of almost $50 billion, with nearly two-thirds coming from non-governmental sources such as services, finance, insurance and real estate, and transportation and utilities. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, District residents' per capita personal income was $34,129 in 1996—higher than any state in the union, and almost $10,000 above the national average. The District also compares favorably to other metropolitan areas. D.C. metropolitan-area average annual pay is ninth in the country, behind such lucrative locales as New York, San Francisco, and the wealthy suburbs of New Jersey. Furthermore, the District is expected to remain wealthy area for the foreseeable future: its gross economic product is projected to increase at least 20% by 2025.

Today's students will benefit from these job opportunities only if they learn the skills employers will need in the years to come. Already, the region suffers from a shortage of skilled workers. The unemployment rate in the D.C. metropolitan area was only 3.9% in 1996, significantly below the so-called ''natural'' unemployment rate of 5.5%. The District itself, however, suffers from unemployment well above the natural rate, indicating that District residents, many of them products of the D.C. schools, are unable to satisfy employers—even in one of the nation's best markets for job seekers.

In the 21st century, the D.C. economy will be even more dependent on knowledge-based workers. Unfortunately, knowledge-based workers will need two basic skills—reading and math—that D.C. schools are failing to provide to their students.

RECENT TEST RESULTS FROM D.C. SCHOOLS

Last year, for the first time, District students took the Stanford 9 math and reading achievement tests—the nation's best-known achievement test. The Stanford 9 is a privately owned and operated test used by school systems across the country. It is the ninth version of the exam, which millions of American schoolchildren have taken since it was created in 1923. Stanford takes great care to ensure that the test is not biased in any way, including having a panel of prominent minority-group educators review the test. The results show that D.C. students' scores, upon entering the D.C. public schools, are roughly comparable to average student scores nationwide. The longer students remain in District public schools, however, the more their scores fall below both their initial levels of achievement and the national average. In fact, in the highest grades tested, the number of D.C. students who lack basic skills was twice the national average in reading, and one and a half times the national average in math.

Reading

Fifteen percent of the first-graders tested ranked ''below basic'' for reading on the Stanford 9 test. This means they had little or no mastery of the skills needed to enter second grade. This figure is roughly comparable to the national average of 12%. But the number of students ''below basic'' grew dramatically as children continued in the D.C. schools: 41% of the second graders tested ranked ''below basic,'' and 53% of tenth graders tested were ''below basic.''

Math

Thirty-seven percent of the third graders tested (the youngest students to take the math test) ranked ''below basic'' in math. The next level tested in math, the sixth grade, showed 55% ''below basic''—an increase of 33% after three years in D.C. public schools. By the tenth grade, a staggering 89% were ''below basic'' in math. Another 8% ranked as ''basic''—possessing only partial mastery of the most rudimentary math skills. Only three percent of District tenth graders were either proficient or advanced in math.

Many of the individual schools are far worse than even these dismal overall scores. At no less than 22 D.C. public schools, over 90% of the students rank ''below basic'' in math. At three of these schools, 100% of the students tested ranked ''below basic.'' Not one student at any of these schools showed any of the math skills needed for their grades.

Worse, as the Washington Post reported on January 8, 1998, these results do not include ''almost 4,000 tests that could not be scored because so few answers were filled out.'' This is 10% of the reading tests that were scored, and a quarter of the math tests that were scored. In other words, 4,000 D.C. students lacked the skills needed to fail the test. They were all below zero.

THE SOLUTION: EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, FOR THE KIDS

The D.C. public schools must change if their graduates are to succeed in life. And Congress—which bears the constitutional responsibility for the governance of the District—must help.

Already, Congress and the American people have been generous with tax dollars: according to the most recent Department of Education figures, the District spends $9,335 per pupil, the fourth highest in the nation. This year, it will cost more than one-half billion dollars to run the District's public education system. Clearly, money alone is not enough.

Instead, both Houses of Congress have separately passed the District of Columbia Student Opportunity Scholarship Act of 1997. This measure, which passed the House as part of the 1997 D.C. appropriations package, has already been introduced as freestanding legislation by Majority Leader Dick Armey (H.R. 1797). The bill will provide tuition scholarships to about 2,000 low-income students in the District of Columbia to enable them to attend the school of their choice, as well as providing extra tutoring assistance for 2,000 public-school students.

D.C. parents clearly want better opportunities for their children than the D.C. public schools provide. The non-profit Washington Scholarship Fund announced that it would provide 1,000 new scholarships to enable low-income District children to attend the private or religious school of their parents' choice. As of the January 31, 1998 application deadline, 7,573 children had applied for the 1,000 scholarships. According to House Majority Leader Dick Armey, ''This response is the strongest evidence yet that parents are frustrated by their lack of access to the best possible education for their children.''[1]

Research from school systems that offer educational choice demonstrates that giving parents the opportunity to choose their children's schools improves learning, and test scores, for children throughout the entire system. Data from Milwaukee, for example, show clear increases in reading and math scores—so much so that, according to a recent study, ''If similar success could be achieved for all minority students nationwide, it could close the gap separating white and minority test scores by somewhere between one-third and one-half.'' And parental choice provides competition that can help reduce costs in public and private schools alike, resulting in better deduction that is also more affordable. New York City's Catholic schools, for example, educate students at approximately one-third the cost of the city's public schools.

According to Samuel Stanley, Vice President for Research of the Buckeye Institute for Public Policy Solutions, ''Several studies of public school competition with other public and private schools have found competition improves public school performance. We need to create similar markets for students within school districts to provide the right incentives for using current resources productively and efficiently.''[2]

Brian Bennett, Director of School Operations for the School Futures Research Foundation, agrees: ''The most striking example of the competitive change that can result is no doubt found in Albany, New York, where a most generous philanthropist, Virginia Gilder, offered a $2,000 scholarship to every child in one of the city's lowest performing schools—and one-sixth of the student body left. Changes then instituted by the local board were dramatic—the principal of the old school was ousted, nine new teachers where brought in, two assistant principals were added, and the school received investments in books, equipment, and teacher training that had been neglected for years. Competition works to improve the education of all children.''[3] As Peter M. Flanigan, the investment banker who founded the Student/Sponsor Partnership in New York, put it, ''The alternative to a crushing monopoly is competition. When a monopoly faces real competition it always reacts by improving itself.''[4]

The D.C. Student Opportunities Scholarship Act will enable D.C. students to succeed in the expanding economy in which they live. While President Clinton promised to veto the Opportunity Scholarship Act, even if it meant killing all funding for the District, these latest D.C. test scores show the status quo is unacceptable. We can no longer trap thousands of students in schools that fail to prepare them for the marvelous opportunities at their very doorstep. Mr. Clinton owes it to the children of America's capital city to sign the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Act the moment it reaches his desk.

The following are the results of Washington D.C. students' spring 1997 Stanford 9 Achievement Test in reading and math. (Excerpt from The Washington Post, October 30, 1997)

Grade level	DC public schools below basic (percent)	National average (percent)
Reading:		
1	15	12
2	41	25
3	41	25
4	45	24
5	36	22
6	31	21
8	34	22
10	53	26
Math:		
3	37	11
6	55	43
8	72	42
10	89	61
11	53	36

Note: The reading test covers areas such as sounds and letters, word reading, reading vocabulary, sentence reading, and reading comprehension depending on the students' grade level. The mathematics portion of the test focuses on problem solving and math procedures.

The test was given for the first time to D.C. school students in May 1997. It was not administered to children in all grade levels because it was a part of a pilot program administered by the school district. This year, every D.C. student in grades 1–11 will take both the mathematics and reading portions of this exam.

FOOTNOTES

[1] The evidence in other cities is just as stark. In New York City, 23,000 families applied for 1,000 private scholarships for grades 1–5 at private schools of their choice. Peter Flanigan, Founder, Student/Sponsor Partnerships, Testimony before the House Education and the Workplace Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, Education at a Crossroads Field Hearing, May 5, 1997.

[2] Samuel Staley, Testimony before the House Education and the Workforce Oversight and Investigations Committee, Federal Education Programs Evaluation—Field Hearing on Public School Choice, May 27, 1997.

[3] Brian Bennett, Testimony before the House Education and the Workforce Committee Early Childhood, Youth and Families Subcommittee on School Choice in D.C., March 12, 1998.

[4] Flanigan Testimony.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER).

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

I do not think any one of us could say that the public school system in the United States in many areas of the country is not in serious trouble. I do not think many of us would disagree that whatever happens, the public school system in the United States has to be helped and made better.

It is somewhat tragic to me when I hear this debate, because I know that everybody is well-meaning, and I really believe that all of the Members of this Congress want to do the best they can for the children of the United States. But the fact of the matter is that at a cost of a voucher of $3,200, it seems to me that what you are doing is dangling out to poor parents by telling them that their public school is no good is sort of a pie-in-the-sky idea, because I don't know of any private schools, many of them, that would be able to pay the tuition of $3,200.

How much better it would be for every child in the country if the public school system was brought up to standard. We have an obligation for that.

□ 1415

When this country was settled, the first thing the settlers did in every community was to build a church and build a school, understanding that it was their personal obligation to educate their children. We need to dedicate ourselves today not to ways to getting around the public school system, but to dedicating ourselves to making it be what it ought to be.

If we are going to be able to compete in the next century, every child in this country needs the best education it can get. No child should be left behind. Instead of offering out the notion that somehow they are all going to go to some exclusive school for $3,200, let us pledge ourselves to see what we have to do to rebuild these schools, to rededicate ourselves to the idea that the public school system is the backbone of our democracy.

Mr. ARMEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. RIGGS).

Mr. RIGGS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), the majority leader, for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, I just want to point out how absurd the arguments are in opposition to this, because the District of Columbia is already relying extensively on private schools. This is the Washington Post, April 28, and I quote, ''The District of Columbia, which is under court order to test and place students with special needs, is spending more than $40,000 a pupil,'' you heard me right, $40,000 a kid in some cases, ''to pay tuition, transportation and other costs of private schools because the city lacks a sound special education program. More and more parents are insisting that their children be classified as having special needs because it is a way out of the District of Columbia public schools.''

Madam Speaker, I would say to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the ongoing audit of the District of Columbia public schools recently found that the District of Columbia had failed to pay the private schooling costs of thousands of children with learning disabilities and special needs, amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars in unpaid bills. I submit that that is concrete evidence of neglect, incompetence and mismanagement.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Footnotes at end of article.

Madam Speaker, I would remind the gentleman that the District of Columbia is under a Control Board because of its dire financial condition, and the Congress of the United States bears a heavy responsibility for that.

May I also indicate to the gentleman that we love our private schools. We love our religious schools. Because of them, many residents who would otherwise move out stay here. If, in fact, the competition from private schools was sufficient to help bring up public schools, then the District of Columbia would be among the most excellent in the world.

Let me be clear, I am not now and never shall be an apologist for the public schools of the District of Columbia, although I attended these same schools and got a good education during the years when the Congress of the United States required that they be segregated under law.

At the same time, I shall not abandon these schools. Nor will I require or expect that any parent or any child remain in the D.C. public schools until they are brought up to par. I renew my challenge to the majority to let us raise private money for private schools together, particularly because most of these schools will necessarily be religious schools that cannot be publicly funded under the Constitution of the United States.

Madam Speaker, Christ said, ''Render under Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's.'' Public money belongs in public schools.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ARMEY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Madam Speaker, at the beginning of this debate, I said there were two great beneficiaries of school choice. The first institutional beneficiary is public schools, because it is because of school choice that public schools find the incentive to improve themselves.

We know that works. We saw it work in Albany, New York, when Virginia Gilder, the philanthropist, found the worst school in the city, offered $2,000 scholarships to the parents of each child to move their child to a school of their choice. One-sixth of the parents took that offer up. They moved their children.

It so startled the school district that, as The Washington Post reported, the school board ousted the principal, brought in nine new teachers, added two assistant principals, invested in books, equipment, and teacher training after years of neglect.

Madam Speaker, competition works. We all agreed we should break up AT&T because if there were a monopoly on the block it would not be innovative or responsive, it would not meet the needs of the consumers. Why would Members think a public monopoly is any more benevolent than a private monopoly? We are breaking up the monopoly so they can have the incentive to compete.

But that is not where the heart lies. The heart lies with the children. And let me tell my colleagues, I know these kids, I spend time with these kids. This is not an abstraction with me.

I think of poor little David, 9 years old. His mother is on drugs. His father only shows up once and a while to use the little guy. He found himself with an opportunity to attend one of these schools by a scholarship through the Washington Scholarship Fund, and he gets his own little 9-year-old self up out of bed every day and gets himself to school because at school he is loved and he learns.

David was not the cream of the crop. He tested below grade level, and the school reached out and took him, as they did five children in Anacostia that we know. All tested below grade level. But the schools took them, nurtured them, taught them, and they are all doing just fine now.

We have got little William who is now a freshman who has turned his entire life around. This boy was headed for big trouble. But he got out of the school in which he felt trapped, that expected so little of him that he gave so little to himself, and now he has turned his little life around.

And then there is Kenny. Kenny had a bad start of it. He got an opportunity. Kenny will now go to high school at the best school in D.C. based on the merit of his work.

I said at the beginning we are dedicated to improving the schools. We cannot improve the schools if we keep giving the schools everything they ask for and never make demands on them and never hold them accountable.

City government in D.C. cannot hold these schools accountable. It cannot hold itself accountable. The Federal Government cannot hold it accountable. If the parents hold the schools accountable, the schools will improve for the children. This is about the children. Let me just say: Have a heart.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the distinguished gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) the minority leader.

(Mr. GEPHARDT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEPHARDT. Madam Speaker, I deeply appreciate the comments that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), the Majority Leader, just made. I take very seriously the idea that he says that Republican Members of the House are concerned about the children and concerned about education. I accept that completely.

I believe Members, all Members of this House want to improve the education and the upbringing of all of our children. That is a very important beginning agreement. We have a disagreement, obviously, about the role of vouchers and whether or not to take some of the money that we are spending on public education to give to vouchers that can be used in private and other schools. But we ought to build on our agreement rather than suffering from this ongoing disagreement.

All of us want the children of the District of Columbia and every other jurisdiction in the country to succeed, to learn, to have proper values, to be productive, healthy citizens. That must be our number one goal. We believe that vouchers do not advance us toward that goal. Our concern, which is sincere and heartfelt, is that the children that are left behind will do worse, worse as a result of this legislation. Seventy-six thousand youngsters will not have the benefit of the vouchers. The 7,000 who get them may do better; they may not do better. But the 76,000 that are left behind will be hurt.

Madam Speaker, what we should be talking about today are the kinds of things that the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia has brought forward, creative ideas to improve public education. And I take seriously what the majority leader has said about accountability. We should be for accountability.

I put in legislation I call ''Reward for Results.'' It says that Federal aid, at least part of Federal aid, ought to be conditioned upon a school achieving results. We should be able to find out if children can read, write and compute at certain ages. And we should, in my view, be willing to condition part of Federal aid on them being able to achieve those conclusions.

What I would hope we could have here is a discussion between the parties on creative ideas to fix the public schools that do not work; to realize that most of the public schools do work and do a very good job, but the ones that do not, we cannot afford that result.

So, I hope Members will vote against this idea of vouchers. I hope we will meet again and talk about creative ideas to fix the public schools, to make them accountable, to get the results that we need, to make sure that every child is a productive citizen.

I am heartened by what the Majority Leader has said today. I think we can find an agreement. I do not think this is it. I urge Members to vote against this bill. I wish the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia had the ability to bring her motion to recommit today, and I hope that if we could defeat this bill we could come back with a bipartisan agreement on education that would move us in the right direction.

Mr. ARMEY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) for his comments. I always appreciate his participation in the debate.

Madam Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGRICH), Speaker of the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. EMERSON). The Speaker of the House is recognized for 3½ minutes.

Mr. GINGRICH. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr.

ARMEY), my friend, for yielding me this time, and I thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), the minority leader, for his comments.

Let me say first, I would be very excited to help establish a bipartisan task force on reforming public education. I would be very excited to establish a special task force on public education for D.C. I would be very willing to establish a bipartisan task force to look at military dependent schools, which I am a product of. I would be very willing to work on a bipartisan basis to help Indian schools achieve national levels.

Those are the three school systems, by the way, that are specifically Federal: military dependent schools, Indian schools, and the District of Columbia. We have the relationship to D.C. that a State legislature would have to local schools.

Madam Speaker, I am very willing as a product of public schools, as somebody whose children went to public school, I have actually lived my career in a public school. I used to teach in a public high school. I am committed to public education and I will be glad to work on reform.

But that is not what is here today. And it is interesting how whatever is here is not what is right, because what is right is not here, so Members have to vote ''no'' today because today it actually helps somebody; but if they vote ''no'' today, later they can vote ''yes,'' as long as they do not vote ''yes'' today.

What is here today is real simple. And I must say to all of my friends on the left, I do not understand how they can walk the streets, look the children in the eye and cheat them. I do not understand how they can meet with the parents and tell them no.

We met yesterday with Ted Forstmann, who does not live in D.C. Ted Forstmann is a very successful American who loves this country, so he has taken his own personal money and he created a thousand scholarships because he despaired of this Congress. And he offered a thousand children a scholarship out of the goodness of his own heart in D.C. alone.

□ 1430

But he had a condition. These are not free scholarships. You have to come up with $500 for your child to get that scholarship. There are 8,000 applications in the District of Columbia. You can talk about home rule, but the children who are trapped in the failed system spoke with their application; 8,000 children applied.

That meant that welfare mothers and mothers at minimum wage, families in public housing were saying, we love our child so much, and we are so frightened for our child's future that we will scrape together our $500 so that our child has an alternative. Without any effort, 8,000 applied. They believe that, next year, there will be 25,000 applications.

We are seeing the same thing in New York. We are seeing it in Cleveland. But we are not the State Legislature of New York. We are not the State Legislature of Ohio. We are the U.S. Congress, and this is the national capital.

If you have it in your heart to turn to that child, those other 7,000, and say to them, no, I know your parents think your life may be destroyed, I know you may end up not learning how to read, I know you may end up a drug addict, I know you may end up a victim of violence, but, no, I want to take care of the teachers' union, and stay where you are, if you can live with yourself and vote no, fine; but then, later on, when you see one of those children and there is another accidental death, there is another accidental drug overdose, there is another statistic on welfare, do not look to this side of the aisle and say, oh, why does that child not have an education.

Some of you say 7,000 is not enough. Fine. We are prepared to move 70,000. We will move 70,000 vouchers if you want to give every child in this District a chance.

You say to us, well, we are taking money from public education. Every one of you knows that is not true. Every one of you knows that is just plain not accurate. This system actually leaves $4,000 more back behind so that, on a per capita basis, there is actually more money for the children who stay in public schools.

This is designed by Mr. ARMEY so the public school child who stays in public school has more resources because he only offers $3,200 maximum; whereas, the current system pays somewhere between $7,800 and $10,000, depending on whether or not you believe any of the records.

So more money for the current child who stays in public school is a yes vote for the Armey motion. Direct, immediate help for several thousand children is a yes vote. But if you can live with saying no when 7,000 additional children have spoken by applying, when their parents have spoken, when they are crying out to this Congress, save our child from drugs, save our child from violence, save our child from illiteracy, save our child from ignorance, then let the burden of conscience be on those who take care of the teachers' unions but cheat the children. Vote yes for this bill.

Ms. KILPATRICK. Madam Speaker, as a former public school teacher, concerned citizen, parent and Member of Congress, I am fully aware of the value of a quality education. One of the first speeches that I made on the floor of the House emphasized the importance of education in preventing crime and providing a skilled and capable work force. Therefore, it troubles me deeply to discover that there is a real, enthusiastic, and empirical effort to denigrate and erode the federal commitment to the public schools of our nation via school vouchers. I am emphatically opposed to school vouchers based on the fact that vouchers do not work, only benefit those students who receive vouchers, and is often taxpayer support of private or religious institutions.

Initial results from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the showcase city for the voucher program, has been marginal, at best. In these fiscally conservative times, taxpayers deserve to get the most for their tax dollars as possible. Marginal programs will not suffice. Also, these voucher schools, more often than not, do not accept children with physical challenges or remedial needs, and get to pick and choose among the best and the brightest to attend their institutions. Our public schools accept all children, regardless of previous educational success or failure, financial standing, or physical ability.

I am also distressed by the fact that the D.C. voucher bill provides a select group of students (2,000) with vouchers, while leaving the other 76,000 students in under-funded public schools. No one would argue that there is no room for improvement in D.C. public schools. However, the implementation of vouchers constitutes the abandonment of D.C. schools and abandonment is not the answer. Congress needs to be encouraging efforts all across the city to make schools safer, improve teaching, raise educational standards and provide more teachers in D.C. classrooms.

Finally, I am leery of this legislation's potential to encroach upon our First Amendment freedoms. Our Constitution was forged based on the clear principle providing for the separation of church and state. This legislation, which would allow the use taxpayer funds to support private and religious institutions, is clearly the entanglement of federal funds in religious matters.

Excellence in education begins with our public schools. School vouchers would take vitally-needed funds from our public schools to private and parochial institutions. Of course, our public schools need reform. The price of reform should not be borne on the backs of our poor children and families, who cannot afford the high price of vouchers. We need to get serious about reforming and supporting public schools, not abandoning them in favor of a plan that does not work—school vouchers.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to this poorly conceived proposal for school vouchers. The test of who you are and where you stand is what you do, not what you say.

The Republicans say that they are for public education for all, but what do they do? They propose a plan that will only benefit a few, and the few are not the students. The few are those who would put profits in their pockets through a voucher system for private schools that are not likely to open their doors to all.

A private school by definition is ''exclusive,'' ''inaccessible,'' ''restricted,'' ''off limits'' to most, available only to some. How, then, can we appropriately use public funds to finance the education of some at the expense of most?

They say the plan promotes choice. But, what they do is provide a choice for only 2,000 students, and do nothing for the remaining 76,000 students. Is that choice?

They say they are for competition. They say that this voucher plan will give poor students the same access to good schools that wealthy students have. But, what they do is provide a maximum voucher of a mere $3,200. That won't get any poor student into any private school in Washington, D.C.

They say they want to help the D.C. school system. But, what they are really doing is trying to go through the back door and establish a school voucher program nationwide, something they could not do through the front door. A nationwide voucher program will hurt students from the rural communities I represent.

Draining public funds from rural public schools, expecting those students to go to private schools usually located great distances way is not only a myth, it is a total deception.

Madam Speaker, there are ways to help our public schools, and they do need help.

This week, Democrats unveiled an agenda for ''first class'' public schools. That agenda includes making sure that all of our students have an early start and an even start, achieving the basics by age six. In includes producing well trained teachers and relief from crumbling and overcrowded school, while adequately equipping classrooms.

That agenda includes support for local plans to renew neighborhood, public schools and the adoption of rigorous standards of performance. And, it includes real parental choice for public schools.

Madam Speaker, there is no right to public education. That is what the courts have said. But, the courts have also said, when you provide education to some, you must provide it to all.

In America, for many, many years, we have had, as a national policy, the promise of providing public education, not just for the few, but for the many. This voucher plan does not provide education for all.

Vote no, and send this plan back where it belongs.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I find it disheartening that President Clinton, and others opposing this legislation, would rather protect a public education system that is failing to educate the District's children, than do what is best for the families of our nation's capitol.

I read Monday in Congressional Quarterly's Daily Monitor that one of the bill's opponents has called the voucher plan, quote, ''an election-year charade'' which is, quote, ''irrelevant * * * to the pressing needs of District schoolkids.''

Let me remind my colleagues that this proposal was introduced in a non-election year (last June) as a bi-partisan, bi-cameral bill. This is not an election year ''charade'', and it is not a Republican or conservative issue. If it were, we would not have the support of leading liberals in the Democratic party such as Senators JOSEPH LIEBERMAN, MARY LANDRIEU, BOB KERREY, and former Representative Floyd Flake.

That this legislation is ''irrelevant'' to the pressing needs of District schoolkids could not be further from reality. It is because the ''pressing'' needs of District schoolkids have continued to go ill-addressed, and the city's children continue to fall behind, that the need for this legislation is so desperately needed now.

Two years ago, in 1996, the Financial Control Board reported that, ''The deplorable record of the District's public schools * * * has left one of the city's most important public responsibilities in a state of crisis, creating an emergency which can no longer be ignored or excused.''

That was two years ago! How many more years must District families wait out this state of ''emergency''? How many more years must children fall behind in school, increasing their risks of failure in adulthood because of a substandard education?

So many District families cannot afford anything but the current poor quality of education in the cities' public school system. Vouchers would give these families a chance to choose a school which can provide a better education—without taking a single dime from the existing public school budget—while reforms in the public school system are being implemented.

Studies show that similar voucher efforts in Cleveland and Milwaukee are having dramatic positive effects on reading and math skills. This legislation could be part of the answer to this week's devastating news about the low reading and math scores of this city's schoolchildren. Again, it is only part of the solution. We must at the same time show leadership and support for efforts to improve the infrastructure and quality of education in the public school system of our nation's capitol.

We all know that there is no magic bullet. Most reform efforts will take time. However, this voucher program could provide some immediate relief to families who do not have a choice with regard to their child's education.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle—please join me in support of this important legislation. Your vote for this bill is a vote to put DC's parents immediately on the road to providing a better education for their children, thus a better and brighter future for their children.

Mr. COSTELLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to S. 1502, the District of Columbia Student Opportunity Scholarship Act. The passage of this bill will not correct the problems we have in our education system. Taking money from our public school system will only further hurt our school children.

This legislation is another attempt by the Republican-led Congress to undermine the integrity of our public school system. S. 1502 diverts limited tax dollars to nonpublic education. We already spend too little on our children's future. I cannot in good conscience support a bill that will further erode millions of children's opportunities for a quality education.

Madam Speaker, there are approximately 46 million children in our nation's public schools. By the year 2006, a projected 3 million more students will be enrolled in public schools. In sharp contrast, only 11 percent of children attend private schools. It is bad public policy to abandon our federal commitment to public education. What will happen to students left behind in public schools when their resources are given away?

Is this really the best use of federal dollars? Instead of siphoning money into private and parochial schools, I believe we should focus on fixing the problems in our public schools so that all school children will benefit. We should rebuild our educational foundation to make our public schools a safe haven for learning. It is shameful that today we debate ways to put more children in private schools rather than working on improving our public schools. A free public school education for all Americans is one of the basic tenets of our nation. We must not abandon this principle.

Studies have indicated that the controversial Cleveland voucher program produces no academic gains for voucher students compared to their peers in public schools in any academic subject—reading, math, social studies or science. Moreover, serious accountability problems have been found in many areas including verifying the voucher recipients' income level, residence or eligibility. An independent audit discovered $1.9 million worth of misspent Ohio tax dollars. We don't want these same problems in the District of Columbia and we don't want them in our states.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

Mrs. MORELLA. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the District of Columbia Student Opportunity Scholarship Act.

I have always been a staunch believer that matters of education policy should be decided by the local school board and local elected officials. Consequently, on matters regarding school vouchers, Congress should allow the District to make up its own mind, . . . just as every other locality in the country is able to choose for itself. The people of the District of Columbia should be deciding themselves whether or not they want vouchers. Vouchers should not be imposed upon the citizens of D.C. by members who are elected from other jurisdictions throughout the United States.

I am opposed to allowing public funds to be used for private and parochial schools. Such funding has been successfully challenged as violating the Constitutional mandate calling for the separation of Church and State. Moreover, there is little evidence that voucher plans increase student achievement, and the schools that are left behind are weakened by the loss of the most committed parents and students.

On September 30th of last year, a front page Washington Post story found that there are not even 2,000 spaces available in private schools in the local region. In addition, the majority of private schools in the area charge much more than $3,200.

This is a bad bill if we are concerned about high standards for all of the children in the District of Columbia public schools. It's just a ''quick-fix'' solution to address the needs of underserved children in the District. Moreover, official studies of the Milwaukee and Cleveland voucher programs have said that voucher students have not made academic gains. The 1998 study of the Cleveland program, by the Ohio State Department of Education, found no achievement gains for voucher students in the Cleveland public schools.

There are better ways to spend the $7 million Congress would use to allow but a few children in the District to attend public and parochial schools. The D.C. public schools could use $1 million to buy new textbooks for every 3rd, 4th and 5th grader. The District could use $3.5 million for 70 after-school programs based in public schools, to help 7,000 children who would otherwise be ''home alone'' when school ends each day.

Madam Speaker, this bill would divert scarce tax dollars from D.C.'s public schools and shift taxpayer dollars into schools that are not accountable to the community. I am opposed to imposing school vouchers on the citizens of the District of Columbia, and I urge my colleagues to vote ''No'' on the District of Columbia Student Opportunity Scholarship Act.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to express my strong and unequivocable opposition to the bill which is before us today. Vouchers are not only bad policy but in this instance have clearly become the political tool

of the Republican leadership to bash the public school system of the District of Columbia and this country to play on the fears of our nation's parents.

Vouchers have received a significant amount of attention over the past few weeks as we have seen a major push by the Republican leadership to politically capitalize on the education of our children. We have heard our Republican colleagues use words like ''scholarships'' instead of vouchers to portray the message which their pollsters have said is so vital. I am pleased to see so much effort being put into ensuring that this message is not being lost.

I have never been one to craft my views or modify my position just because the latest questionable accurate poll has produced certain conclusions. Instead, we should be concentrating on proposals and ideas that will increase the quality of education in this country rather than destroy it.

Regardless, as I am sure it does not come as a surprise to any which have followed this issue, I am adamantly opposed to any use of public tax dollars for any voucher-like proposal, including the provisions included in this bill authorizing vouchers to be used in the District of Columbia. Not only do these provisions raise some very serious constitutional questions, but they will do little to help only a few students while greatly benefiting those whose interests are entrenched in private schools.

In fact, Representative ARMY himself has admitted that this bill will provide vouchers for only 2000 D.C. children. Last time I checked this would not come close to helping the more than 80,000 school age children which reside in the District. We cannot and should not ignore the problems of today's educational system while attempting to capitalize on political rhetoric. We should give time to the District's new chief academic officer, Arlene Ackerman, who has led positive reforms in Seattle, Washington schools, and can and will do the same in the District.

The Republicans have sought to use D.C. vouchers as the answers to our Capital City's problems in its school system. This is wrong. Any proposal which invites the idea of providing private school vouchers dismantles an educational system which guarantees access for all by leaving ''choice'' in the hands of private school admissions officers.

In addition to the destruction of equality in the most basic opportunity—the opportunity to learn—there is not one research study, despite what some of our witnesses may say today, which accurately provides evidence that vouchers improve student learning. Because of this lack of evidence, I see little reason to establish any type of Federal voucher program, including one in the District of Columbia.

We have seen the existing voucher programs in Milwaukee and Cleveland provide no improvement in student achievement levels despite the fact that they have been in operation, at least in the case of Milwaukee, for over six years. In addition to the complete lack of a policy basis for enacting any type of private school voucher proposal, the American people have spoken repeatedly that they have no interest in such programs. Over 20 States, including the District of Columbia, have held referenda on this issue and the citizens of all 20 States have rejected voucher programs.

Our goal as public policy makers should be to construct broad policy which will improve the educational results of all of our children—not a select few. One of the most deeply rooted values in this country has been that all children are guaranteed access to an education. The public school system has been the institution in this country which has provided this opportunity. Yes, there are problems in our public schools, problems which deserve and need our attention. All of us in Congress realize that the District has a great share of problems in its public school system.

However, we should not look for quick fixes to a situation which deserves careful consideration. As I said at a recent hearing in the Education and Workforce Committee on this subject, those who support vouchers want to abandon our public schools and the vast majority of children who would remain in what is already an underfunded system. Those of us in Congress need to show leadership in combating the problems that face us as elected leaders—not run away from them.

Only by working within the public school system, both in the District and throughout the Nation, can we build upon the successes and learn from our failures in our attempts to educate our Nation's children.

In closing, I would urge members not to support this ill-conceived and politically motivated bill. Now is not the time to go back on our educational commitments to our children.

Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to S. 1502, the District of Columbia School Vouchers Act—yet another attempt by the majority to drain resources from the already needy DC School system in order to pay for an already rejected experiment.

Madam Speaker, there is no question that DC public schools have problems. This isn't some new startling revelation; there isn't a public school system in the country that doesn't have problems. It is true that there are schools in DC which, for whatever reason, are not adequately serving the students attending them. But, my colleagues, the answer to this problem and the problems plaguing public schools in New York, Chicago or Los Angeles is assuredly not vouchers. Providing a $3,200 subsidy to private and parochial schools would do nothing but drain $45 million dollars in federal funds that would otherwise be available for public schools nationwide.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle say that they are justified in proposing this bill by pointing to the fact that DC parents would welcome this kind of assistance. This also isn't news. What poor family, which have to send their children to an unsafe, run-down, decrepid school, that doesn't have enough teachers or books, wouldn't welcome assistance to send their children to a clean safe well-run private school. But, the cruel political irony of this and other school voucher proposals is that it would provide help to a small number of public school students and do nothing for the majority of students that do not get vouchers and have to remain in their poor run down schools. What does my Republican colleagues propose to help them?

Madam Speaker, we all know that vouchers isn't the answer. We must find solutions that will fix the problems in DC and all public schools. We must build new schools, repair run-down buildings, provide funding for more teachers so that class sizes can be reduced and funds for computers and other needed resources. Allowing only 2,000 out of over 80,000 DC students to get a better education will do more harm than good. Vote no on S. 1502. We must not allow the majority to experiment on the children of DC while doing further harm to an already desperate public school system.

Mr. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the District of Columbia school voucher legislation. This is not the way to improve public education.

Not one of us is going to contest the assertion that the D.C. public schools need help. but the way to do this is through comprehensive school reform, by engaging parents, teachers and the community in creating and maintaining high performance centers of learning with challenging academic standards.

Diverting public money to private schools is not a way to improve education. It is, however, an experiment that is doomed to fail leaving this city's school children as the casualties. This legislation may benefit 2,000 D.C. students but abandon 76,000 others. Quality education for all students, not for a select few, should be our priority.

Creating a voucher system does not solve the problem, it shifts the responsibility elsewhere. It also does not guarantee that students from low-performing schools will meet the admission standards of private institutions, or that the voucher would even cover the expense of many private schools.

Public school choice, magnet schools, charter schools and comprehensive school reform efforts provide effective alternatives to passing our problems off on private schools.

Our federal responsibility in education is to support States and local school districts in their efforts to make better public schools and better learners. It is not an acceptable solution to engage in misguided social engineering in the District by draining funds that would be used to improve the public schools. The Democrats of this House have a plan, a good plan that raises the prospects for all of America's public school children, not just a select few at the expense of all the rest.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). All time for debate has expired.

The Senate bill is considered read for amendment.

Pursuant to House Resolution 413, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the third reading of the Senate bill.

The Senate bill was ordered to be read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO COMMIT OFFERED BY MS. NORTON

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I offer a motion to commit the Senate bill to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the Senate bill?

Ms. NORTON. Yes, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to commit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. NORTON moves to commit the bill S. 1502 to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The motion is not debatable.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to commit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to commit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule XV, the Chair announces that she will reduce to a minimum of 5 minutes the period of time within which a vote by electronic device, if ordered, will be taken on the question of passage of the Senate bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 198, noes 224, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 118]

AYES—198

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baesler
Baldacci
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Becerra
Bentsen
Berman
Berry
Bishop
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Bonior
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Capps
Cardin
Carson
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Condit
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cramer
Cummings
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Fazio
Filner
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Furse
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gordon
Green
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hamilton
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hefner
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Holden
Hooley
Hoyer
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
John
Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E. B.
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
Kleczka
Klink
Kucinich
LaFalce
Lampson
Lantos
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lofgren
Lowey
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manton
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McHale
McIntyre
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Morella
Murtha
Nadler
Neal
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Poshard
Price (NC)
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Reyes
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sawyer
Schumer
Scott
Serrano
Sherman
Sisisky
Skaggs
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith, Adam
Snyder
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stenholm
Stokes
Strickland
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Thompson
Thurman
Tierney
Torres
Towns
Traficant
Turner
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Wexler
Weygand
Wise
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates

NOES—224

Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baker
Ballenger
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bereuter
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Brady
Bryant
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Cook
Cooksey
Cox
Crane
Crapo
Cubin
Cunningham
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeLay
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Ensign
Everett
Ewing
Fawell
Foley
Forbes
Fossella
Fowler
Fox
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Gingrich
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Goss
Graham
Granger
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jenkins
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kasich
Kelly
Kim
King (NY)
Kingston
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lucas
Manzullo
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oxley
Packard
Pappas
Paul
Paxon
Pease
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pickett
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Redmond
Regula
Riggs
Riley
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roukema
Royce
Ryun
Salmon
Sanford
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Skeen
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith (TX)
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Stearns
Stump
Sununu
Talent
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Upton
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wolf
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—11

Bateman
Bunning
Dixon
Gonzalez
Kennelly
McHugh
Meek (FL)
Parker
Sandlin
Smith (MI)
Young (AK)

□ 1453

The Clerk announced the following pairs:

On this vote:

Mrs. Kennelly of Connecticut for, with Mr. Young of Arkansas against.

Mr. Meeks of New York for, with Mr. Smith of Michigan against.

Mrs. CHENOWETH changed her vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Mr. VENTO and Mr. ANDREWS changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the motion to commit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). The question is on the passage of the Senate bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 214, noes 206, answered ''present'' 1, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 119]

AYES—214

Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baker
Ballenger
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bereuter
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blunt
Bonilla
Bono
Boyd
Brady
Bryant
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Condit
Cook
Cooksey
Cox
Crane
Cubin
Cunningham
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeLay
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
Ensign
Everett
Ewing
Foley
Forbes
Fossella
Fowler
Fox
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Gingrich
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Goss
Graham
Granger
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jenkins
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kasich
Kelly
Kim
King (NY)
Kingston
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
Livingston
Lucas
Manzullo
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oxley
Packard
Pappas
Paxon
Pease
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Redmond
Regula
Riggs
Riley
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Royce
Ryun
Salmon
Sanford
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Skeen
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith (TX)
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Stearns
Stump
Sununu
Talent
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Upton
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)

Weller	Whitfield	Wolf
White	Wicker	Young (FL)

NOES—206

Abercrombie	Harman	Obey
Ackerman	Hastings (FL)	Olver
Allen	Hefner	Ortiz
Andrews	Hilliard	Owens
Baesler	Hinchey	Pallone
Baldacci	Hinojosa	Pascrell
Barcia	Holden	Pastor
Barrett (WI)	Hooley	Payne
Becerra	Hoyer	Pelosi
Bentsen	Hutchinson	Peterson (MN)
Berman	Jackson (IL)	Pickett
Berry	Jackson-Lee (TX)	Pomeroy
Bishop	Jefferson	Poshard
Blagojevich	John	Price (NC)
Blumenauer	Johnson (CT)	Rahall
Boehlert	Johnson (WI)	Ramstad
Bonior	Johnson, E. B.	Rangel
Borski	Kanjorski	Reyes
Boswell	Kaptur	Rivers
Boucher	Kennedy (MA)	Rodriguez
Brown (FL)	Kennedy (RI)	Roemer
Brown (OH)	Kildee	Rothman
Capps	Kilpatrick	Roukema
Cardin	Kind (WI)	Roybal-Allard
Carson	Kleczka	Rush
Clay	Klink	Sabo
Clayton	Kucinich	Sanchez
Clement	LaFalce	Sanders
Clyburn	Lampson	Sawyer
Conyers	Lantos	Schumer
Costello	Leach	Scott
Coyne	Lee	Serrano
Cramer	Levin	Sherman
Crapo	Lewis (GA)	Sisisky
Cummings	LoBiondo	Skaggs
Danner	Lofgren	Skelton
Davis (FL)	Lowey	Slaughter
Davis (IL)	Luther	Smith, Adam
DeFazio	Maloney (CT)	Snyder
DeGette	Maloney (NY)	Spratt
Delahunt	Manton	Stabenow
DeLauro	Markey	Stark
Deutsch	Martinez	Stenholm
Dicks	Mascara	Stokes
Dingell	Matsui	Strickland
Doggett	McCarthy (MO)	Stupak
Dooley	McCarthy (NY)	Tanner
Doyle	McDermott	Tauscher
Edwards	McGovern	Thompson
Engel	McHale	Thurman
English	McHugh	Tierney
Eshoo	McIntyre	Torres
Etheridge	McKinney	Towns
Evans	McNulty	Traficant
Farr	Meehan	Turner
Fattah	Meeks (NY)	Velazquez
Fawell	Menendez	Vento
Fazio	Millender-McDonald	Visclosky
Filner	Miller (CA)	Waters
Ford	Minge	Watt (NC)
Frank (MA)	Mink	Waxman
Frost	Moakley	Wexler
Furse	Mollohan	Weygand
Gejdenson	Morella	Wise
Gephardt	Murtha	Woolsey
Gordon	Nadler	Wynn
Green	Neal	Yates
Gutierrez	Oberstar	Young (AK)
Hall (OH)		
Hamilton		

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

Paul

NOT VOTING—12

Bateman	Dixon	Meek (FL)
Boehner	Gonzalez	Parker
Brown (CA)	Hall (TX)	Sandlin
Bunning	Kennelly	Smith (MI)

□ 1504

The Clerk announced the following pairs:

On this vote:

Mr. Bunning for, with Mrs. Kennelly of Connecticut against.

Mr. Smith of Michigan for, with Mr. Meeks of New York against.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the Senate bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I missed the vote on final passage of S. 1502, The District of Columbia Opportunity Scholarship Act. As a strong supporter of this much-needed legislation to improve the quality of education for thousands of school children in the District of Columbia, I would have voted ''yes'' on final passage.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3579, 1998 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS AND RECESSIONS ACT

Mr. MCINNIS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105–505) on the resolution (H. Res. 416) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 3579) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 4(b) OF RULE XI WITH RESPECT TO SAME DAY CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up the resolution (H. Res. 414) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 414

Resolved, That the requirement of clause 4(b) of rule XI for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported from that committee before May 1, 1998, providing for consideration or disposition of the bill (H.R. 3579) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes, an amendment thereto, a conference report thereon, or an amendment reported in disagreement from a conference thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, for the purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL), pending which I yield myself several such time as I may consume. During the consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 414 is a simple resolution. The proposed rule merely waives the requirement of clause 4(b) of rule XI for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House for resolutions reported from the Committee before May 1, 1998, under certain circumstances.

This narrow, short-term waiver only applies to special rules providing for the consideration or disposition of H.R. 3579, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, amendments thereto, a conference report thereon, or items in disagreement from a conference for H.R. 3579.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 414 is straightforward, and it was reported by the Committee on Rules with a voice vote. The Committee recognizes the need for expedited procedures to bring these emergency supplemental appropriations forward as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker, the timeliness of some of these emergency appropriations cannot be understated. There are many areas within the country that have been hit by significant natural disasters which need relief as well as critical funding for military operations. Therefore, we must move promptly.

I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 414.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank my colleague the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) for yielding me the time. As he has described, this rule will permit the House to consider the conference report on the emergency supplemental appropriation bill the same day the Committee on Rules reports a rule for the bill.

Mr. Speaker, under this procedure, Members will have little or no opportunity to examine the conference report before they vote on it. Generally, important and complex bills should not be taken up in this manner. Moreover, I am opposed to provisions in the bill itself, including cuts in the program which funds housing for poor people and the failure to include funding for the International Monetary Fund.

Though I understand the need for moving quickly to pass the emergency spending bill, because of the reasons I have already mentioned, I oppose this rule.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to inquire of my good friend the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL) if he has any further testimony or any further discussion on his side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from Ohio have any further speakers?

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, it appears that I have nobody here really to speak on this particular rule. Therefore, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.