many years to cut government waste and improve the efficiency of government, and I applaud his efforts.

Since his arrival in 1974, JOHN GLENN has championed the cause of space exploration and research, an area of particular interest and importance to my home state of New Mexico. He has long understood, and I strongly concur with him, that the United States has a unique opportunity and obligation to the pursuit of knowledge and exploration of the heavens. Thanks to Senator GLENN's continuing sense of duty and service to his country, we will expand our understanding of space and its effects on the human body.

The success of our space program has enabled our children to dream of different worlds, our scientists to explore the nature of matter and the origins of time, and us to be able to look up into the night sky and to understand what we see. JOHN GLENN played a crucial role in achieving this success. His flight on *Friendship 7* was one of the first indications of the greatness of America's space program. His flight on *Discovery* will be a continuation of the greatness JOHN GLENN helped established—and a confirmation of the contributions senior Americans can, and do, make in our society.

JOHN GLENN's life as a military hero, space pioneer, and statesman is the stuff of legends. Although his time here in the Senate draws to a close, he assures us that the legend will grow when he takes off on the shuttle *Discovery* later this month. It truly has been a pleasure to work with the distinguished Senator from Ohio. Good luck, JOHN GLENN, and God Bless.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR WENDELL FORD

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, it is with great respect that I rise today to express my gratitude to the distinguished Minority Whip, Senator WENDELL FORD, for his 22 years of service to the United States Senate. I have been here since the beginning of his Senate career and have witnessed his many accomplishments over the years. His tenure has represented a shining example of hard work, honesty, and integrity.

Senator FORD and I served on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee for many years together and shared a mutual interest in energy policy. He has been a strong advocate of the disposal of chemical weapons at the Blue Grass Army Depot in Kentucky and has stood firm in his commitment to exploring safe, affordable, and environmentally sound alternatives to chemical weapons incineration. He understands the threats of nuclear proliferation and we have shared a common desire to ensure proper stewardship of nuclear stockpiles across the globe. I have appreciated his valuable contribution to this mission and will miss his presence on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

An accomplished public servant, Senator FORD served his country in World War II, was elected Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and as a Senator, established himself as a national leader in energy, aviation, and federal-election reform policy. However, he may be best known for his steadfast commitment to serving the people of his beloved home state, Kentucky. He has diligently sought to create opportunities for the people of America and I am confident that upon his return to Kentucky, he will continue to give as generously of himself as he did during his 22 years of service in Congress.

I believe that I speak on behalf of all members of the Senate when I say that WENDELL's leadership, talent, and friendship will be sorely missed. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to work with him and hope that when the time comes for me to leave office, I will be as well respected as Senator WENDELL FORD by my constituency and colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

WENDELL, on behalf of myself and the State of New Mexico, I commend you on job very well done and wish you and Jean continued health and happiness in your retirement.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, in light of the Columbus Day holiday—a day in which we honor Christopher Columbus for discovering a debt-free nation—I am unable to report to Congress our nation's outstanding federal debt from the close of business Friday, October 9, 1998. I do however feel obliged to submit the federal debt from years past.

With no holiday in site for an escalating national debt, I report, Mr. President, that one year ago, October 9, 1997, the federal debt stood at $5,409,087,000,000 (Five trillion, four hundred nine billion, eighty-seven million).

Twenty-five years ago, October 9, 1973, the federal debt stood at $459,857,000,000 (Four hundred fifty-nine billion, eight hundred fifty-seven million).

Mr. President, as we stand in the twilight of budget negotiations for fiscal year 1999, I remind my distinguished colleagues that we must curb the desire to spend, spend, spend. Even with a holiday weekend our federal debt reflects an increase of more than $5 trillion—that is more than 5 million million—during the past 25 years.

APPOINTMENT BY THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic leader, pursuant to Public Law 100–696, announces the appointment of the Senator from North Dakota, Mr. DORGAN, as a member of the United States Capitol Preservation Commission.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEBATE DURING THE FINAL DAYS OF THE 105TH CONGRESS

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I want to talk a little bit about some of the impending debate going on right now to try to close out these final days of this Congress. As you know, most of the talk is centered around the issue of education. While I was sitting here listening, I thought really that most Members of Congress that are up for election were back home campaigning. But I guess they are not, because some have been here this afternoon campaigning on the floor of the Senate. I heard today some of the outlines of what was basically their very liberal agenda, which did not pass some very radical proposals that this Congress did not accept.

They talked about delays and about the lack of work in this session, but they didn't mention that this Congress has required more cloture motions just to try to get issues onto the floor. We have also heard, I think, some real tall tales of revision of the history of budget negotiations, et cetera, talking about how much credit should go to this President for the current economic benefits that we are reaping. But somehow they forget a lot of the work done during the 1980s, like the tax cut, deregulation of many industries, the productivity of workers and companies that have basically produced more revenue for this Government to allow us to balance the budget. It really hasn't been anything that this President has done to balance the budget.

If you talked about this big budget plan offered in 1993—which I am proud to say not one Republican supported because the centerpiece of that plan was just like every other Democratic proposal over the last 40 years—that was to raise taxes on the American people in order to try to solve what they saw as a crisis or problem, but the real intent was to enlarge and expand the size and scope of Government, to bring more control to Washington. This plan raised $263 billion in new taxes—the largest tax increase in history in this country—which has now taken the average American family to the highest levels of taxation in history, with over 42 percent for the average American going to taxes. That means you work just about as much time to support Government as you are allowed to work to raise your family, to support your family—health care, educational needs, food, clothing, shelter, et cetera.

I have to say that if it was such a great idea to raise taxes and that solves the problems, I don't know why we don't simply say let's raise taxes to

100 percent of what you make so the Government can be real sure that it takes care of every need that you have, and we can be on the floor here bragging next year, or the year after and the year after how great Washington has done.

When you see some of the waste, fraud and abuse in this Government, the bureaucracy—and we can sit here and say that Washington can handle problems better than the American family. Mr. President, that kind of baffles the mind. Some people think raising taxes and sending more money to Washington is a godsend, and it has somehow taken care of all the problems in this country, when I don't think too many people out there would want Washington to be their own financial adviser when they can't even count on Social Security to be there. I wanted to express more concern and basically disappointment over what appears to be an eleventh-hour attempt now by the President to force straitjacket education policy on our Nation's schools and children.

The President brought this up a year ago in his State of the Union Address. There has been no legislation or ideas brought to the floor on increasing the size or putting more teachers into the classroom. Everybody can agree that education is probably one of the most important things that we need in this country. Again, I don't know if people want to give that control over to Washington and have them hiring teachers, telling us who we can hire and fire in the classroom. They would go from there to what the curriculum is going to be. Then they would tell us what to teach the children and what books to read.

When you talk about revision of history and what we have heard here on the budget issues alone, can you imagine what our textbooks are going to be like when we hear some apologizing for Christopher Columbus? Can you imagine the difference in the wealth and lifestyle of this great country? In some of our textbooks, Christopher Columbus is being viewed as somebody who did things wrong. Sure, there were problems back then, and there were new diseases brought to this continent. But to say now that we should be apologizing for what Christopher Columbus did, or maybe apologize for how this country ended World War II—nobody wanted to use the bomb, but to rewrite the stories of the *Enola Gay* and say America was somehow responsible for World War II, we didn't start the war. We had to find a way to end it. It was not a pleasant way to do it, but it did save lives from the day-to-day fighting. There would not have only been thousands more American soldiers who would have died, in addition to the thousands who died in World War II, but thousands more Japanese civilians would have been killed as well.

Mr. President, President Clinton and others in Congress have decided to renew their one-size-fits-all argument that they know how best to spend education dollars for each and every student, in each and every school in the country, from the inner city to rural classrooms.

Education for all is a top priority, as I mentioned. All of us have the top priority of education for our children and grandchildren. That politicians are using it today as a last-ditch political coverup, I believe, is beneath contempt. The central charge being made is that the Republican-led Congress hasn't met the demands for increases in education spending. This simply is not the case.

According to the Senate Budget Committee, in the last three budget cycles during which Republicans have controlled Congress, this Congress has provided $79 billion, or 97 percent of the President's education requests.

In other words, in 5 of the last 6 years, there has been less than a 3-percent difference between the President's request for education outlays and what Congress has provided. And to suggest otherwise is nothing but pure politics.

As we have seen time and time again in Washington, it is very easy to just go out there and try to up the ante. When I say that, what they are trying to do out here is bribe the American people with your money. In other words, they just want to take a little bit more of our money to Washington, raise your taxes, erode your tax bases, take more money away from your tax base to support your own local schools so they can up the ante out here in Washington, because Washington can't give you anything. It can't enrich your school districts until it takes something from you. So it has to take money from you to bring it to Washington and promise you something that they are going to give back, but with a lot of strings—and by the way, a lot less money, because by the time you support the buildings and bureaucracy here in Washington, you are only getting pennies on the dollar back.

Somehow, they promise you something, but they don't tell you who is going to pay for it. Sure, some might be getting more money back than they paid, but most Americans are going to pay more in taxes to get this type of help from Washington. When you give that control to Washington, you as parents lose control at home over what decisions are going to be made, whether it is over teachers, curriculum, et cetera.

So upping the ante here, its easy for somebody to try to outbid the other, saying let's do $3 billion or $5 billion or $7 billion—it is all your money. So it is easy to up the ante so as to be able to complain that Congress isn't spending enough. We have seen this painfully played out, for example, in making emergency moneys available for our Nation's farmers.

One tell-tale sign that the administration's proposals are for ''show'' only is that they cannot be met without breaking the budget. I heard here a while ago that the spending bidding wars the President is talking about right now is not going to break the budget, that it is all offset. I don't know where it is coming from. I haven't seen the offsets. The only offset I have seen is that it is going to come out of the budget surplus.

Something in the neighborhood of $20 billion of surplus money is already being spent by this administration. He is trying to twist the arms of the Republican Congress to go along with this looming threat of a possible Government shutdown, or saying we don't care about education, or we don't care about the American farmer. But somehow Republicans wanted to give a tax break because some of the surplus money is from larger revenues due to income growth. We say, if we are overbilling the American people, maybe we should give some money back. They say, you can't do that, and they say they think about Social Security first. That tax cut would have been about $7 billion in the year 1999. That was too much money to give $7 billion back, which would amount to basically less than $1 a month per person in this country.

That is a huge tax cut—less than $1 a month—$7 billion? They couldn't do that. But yet $20 billion of that surplus can be spent. And they are saying, ''Well, we are not taking this out of the surplus; we are going to offset it.'' I would like to know where they are offsetting it, and, if they are offsetting it in some programs, I would like to know where those programs are going to be able to get along with less money, after all of this year trying to work out budgets through our committees. The President knows this.

The only offset proposal has been through increased tobacco taxes. That is what we heard earlier this year. That is how the President was going to pay for 100,000 new teachers. That is how the President was going to pay for rebuilding new schools. And that, by the way, is the prerogative, the responsibility, the opportunity, of the local school boards and school districts. They should be doing this—not the Federal Government, because the Federal Government then has to make money from them to give back to them. But, in the meantime, they lose a lot of control and authority. But when there was no tobacco bill this year—again, this is one of the radical liberal agendas that did not pass this Congress that we have heard complaints about. Again, I am very proud to have voted against that piece of legislation. But there is no money there.

So, if there is no money from the tobacco legislation, now the President is saying we are going to have to dip into something else. But it is going to come out of the surplus, and that is the extra money that you have worked for, which Washington now has and won't give back. Congress has rejected that plan. The President has now proposed an alternative method of financing his proposal.

Another giveaway as to the political nature of this last-minute demagoguing is the plain fact that simply spending more money in Washington for the sake of spending more money does nothing to solve the education problems in this country. I think the President should pay attention to the fact that it is going to take a little more time and a little more effort to solve these problems than he has been willing to devote in the past.

If this is such an important issue, which I think it is, I think we need to have Congress to bring it before our committee. Let's sit down and debate it and lay it all out and see where the advantages are, how much it is going to cost and where the money is going to come from, rather than the President trying to again break arms and jam it into an omnibus budget bill. In fact, spending money blindly may ultimately do more harm than good.

According to a recent article in the Washington Post,

> The nation's largest study examining the use of computers in schools has concluded that the $5 billion being spent each year on educational technology is actually hurting children in many cases because the computers aren't being put to good use.

While I support teaching out kids to use technology, and computers are an important part of this, I do not believe high-tech classrooms are the only priority.

And, while spending great sums of money on technology-education is feel-good politics for those who spend the money, it can come, as we've seen, at the expense of our kids.

Last year, the American Management Association found that two-thirds of managers said new employees had strong computer skills, but that only 29 percent said the employees could write competently.

I am always reminded of a story, because I think it suggests some very serious education problems in this country: A small school district in northern Minnesota was being given an award because their students had ranked among the top in the scores that year. In the test scores out there, their students had ranked among the top. Somebody came up, and while they were going through some of the records, they noticed that this school district had some of the lowest costs per pupil in the State. So the question was asked: ''How can you account for having higher test scores when you have had some of the lowest spending per pupil year?'' The principal said, ''I don't know how to explain it.'' He said, ''All we can basically do is offer our kids the basics.''

In other words, they were teaching them to read, to write, and to do arithmetic rather than the ''feel good'' diversity type programs that we see teachers now hamstrung with today. They can spend less than half of their costs on the basics, because the Government dictates today already preclude them from teaching their kids the basics.

When they talk about money in this country, that we are not spending enough money—we spend more on education; it is only second to health care. About $450 billion a year goes to education. That is more than any country in the world spends per student per year. In fact, if you look at the numbers, the United States spends nearly twice as much per student per year as any country in the world. Yet we rank 14 out of 14 of the industrialized nations in the world in test scores when it comes to math and sciences and the ability to write.

So, if other countries can spend less and get more, where is the problem? The problem isn't the amount of money that we are spending on education, it is how that money is being used. And now, to say if we could only come back and throw some more money at it—I will give you an example. Back in the 1950s, if we adjusted to inflation today, the States were spending an average of about $600 per student per year in education. Today, 1998, we are spending well over $6,000 per student per year—from $600 in 1950 to over $6,000 today.

The District of Columbia spends over $10,000. In Minnesota, the city of Minneapolis spends over $10,000 per student and yet has some of the lowest test scores in the State.

So, again, is it the money? Or is it some of the ways that we are teaching our children, or some of the programs, or the time that our kids are being given to study the basics in order to learn?

I think the ones who really come out on the short end of this are the students. While we are up here debating all of this, saying that we need all this curriculum, that we need all this money, that we need all this stuff, our kids are graduating with some of the lowest test scores around the world, without the ability to compete in the next generation. They are the ones being shortchanged while a lot of this debate is going on here. I think those problems show that our students are not learning the basics despite our spending efforts.

Over the last 30 years, as I have mentioned, we have increasingly spent more of the Nation's money on education. Nominal spending has risen eightfold since 1969.

Furthermore, a recent Wall Street Journal article reports that in the past 45 years the average pupil-teacher ratio in this country has already fallen by 35 percent. In the past 45 years, the student-teacher ratio has fallen 35 percent. Yet, our test scores have fallen with it. The SAT scores have stagnated, and the international tests have put them at the bottom.

In Math and Science General Knowledge tests, United States students ranked 16th out of 21 in science, behind Russia and Slovenia but ahead of Cyprus.

In math, United States students ranked 19th out of 21 countries, behind Russia, Slovenia, Hungary, and Lithuania. America already outspends every other country per child on education, and ranked among the bottom of all.

Clearly, simply spending more money is not the answer to better learning. If it were, we certainly wouldn't have these sorts of test scores to show for it.

The answers to our education problems do not lie in ''wired classrooms.'' No computer can take the place of a good teacher. Instead, I believe that the answers to learning are found in each and every teacher-child relationship, in each and every classroom.

There is no amount of money that can replace a teacher who cares and wants to reach kids, and has the freedom to do so.

This freedom comes with the authority to make decisions based on local needs—not dictates from Washington, not more control from Washington, not more strings attached to the classrooms from Washington. I have continually supported plans which would return money and also return control from Washington to parents, to teachers, and to local school districts. After all, I think they know best how to spend their education dollars.

Plans such as the Education Savings and School Excellence Act would have been an important step toward accomplishing this.

This bipartisan education reform legislation would have allowed low- and middle-income families to open education savings accounts to pay for the particular education needs of their children—from textbooks to tutoring to tuition.

Unfortunately, for families and students, President Clinton vetoed this legislation. There has been an agenda dealing with education in this Congress this year. It has gone nowhere, because the President and those Members on that side of the aisle —the Democrats—have disagreed and have stalled the efforts, or have vetoed it with the President's plan, claiming that it would divert resources from public education. This is false. The Education Savings and School Excellence Act would not have touched 1 cent of Federal spending for education—would not have touched 1 cent of the surplus either. It would have come from parents being able to set aside more of their own money so that they could decide how they wanted to spend it for their children's education—whether they needed additional tutoring, or tuition to go to a private or parochial school, or whatever the parent decided they needed. But they vetoed that plan.

The reason the President vetoed this legislation—and I will be generous with this inference—is because he thinks he knows what is best for each and every student if America.

But I would ask my colleagues to reflect on this for just a moment and to see if they aren't forced to come to the same conclusion: To think that the U.S. Government should impose a rigid

generic formula on day-to-day decisions for all students is nothing short of frightening.

So, Mr. President, I thank you very much for the time, and I hope we can work out these questions in the remaining days. Some of the questions now do not relate to the amount of money being spent on education but is being narrowed down to who is spending it, who controls it. I think the Republicans have made it very clear that if the money is to be spent, it should go to local school districts so that the parents and the teachers and local officials can decide how that money should be spent, not Washington. But on the other side, they would rather have the money come here to Washington so they can disperse it, so they can tell parents, teachers, local school districts and local officials how those dollars should be spent. I think Americans would rather have those local options left to themselves because this is incrementalism at its best. If you let Washington get its foot in the door, the camel's nose under the tent, it is only going to be a matter of time before they want more and more control over education in this country.

I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURNS). The Senator from Vermont is recognized.

EDUCATION IN THE 105TH CONGRESS

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, over the past several days, the White House has bombarded the airwaves with rhetoric suggesting that congressional Republicans have turned a deaf ear to the needs of our nation's students. Hearing all this, I have to say I feel like I have entered a parallel universe. Less than one week ago, I was standing in that same White House listening to the President laud one of the most significant bipartisan achievements of the 105th Congress—enactment of the Higher Education Amendments of 1998.

Lost in all the pre-election maneuvering is any recognition of the solid record of accomplishment by this Congress on behalf of students from preschool through graduate school. I would like to take a few minutes to review that record.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)

One of the first measures considered by the 105th Congress was the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997. The development of this legislation involved a level of cooperation which is virtually unprecedented—between Republicans and Democrats, House and Senate, and Congress and the Administration. The leadership demonstrated by Senator LOTT was critical to the success of this effort, as was the many hours of work by my colleagues on the Labor and Human Resources Committee—particularly Senators KENNEDY, COATS, HARKIN, FRIST, DODD, and GREGG.

The result of this bipartisan effort is a law which strengthens our assistance to States for making a free appropriate public education available to children with disabilities. Major principles underlying the reauthorization bill included: placing an emphasis on prevention; basing procedures and paperwork on common sense and accountability for results; developing a coherent policy for dealing with disciplinary actions; and offering local school districts options for fiscal relief.

In addition, we have followed up words with action by providing substantial funding increases for IDEA. I was extremely disappointed that the Administration's fiscal year 1999 budget included no increase for special education funding for children with disabilities from 3 through 21 years of age—not even an adjustment for inflation. Fortunately, due to the prodding of Senator GREGG and others, Congress had increased special education funding by more than 60 percent over the past two years. In fiscal year 1996, we provided about $2.3 billion for IDEA state grants. That figure was increased to $3.1 billion in FY 1997 and increased again to $3.8 billion in FY 1998. We expect to add at least another $500 million this year.

TAXPAYER RELIEF ACT

Bipartisan cooperation also led to the inclusion of a substantial investment in education as part of the Taxpayer Relief Act signed into law last summer. This act contains 11 types of education tax breaks amounting to $40 billion over 5 years—the most significant of which is the HOPE Scholarship credit.

EMERGENCY STUDENT LOAN CONSOLIDATION ACT

Late last year, the President signed into law a measure designed to provide relief to borrowers who were unable to consolidate their student loans due to the suspension of the Direct Loan consolidation loan program. On August 26, 1997, the Department of Education suspended its consolidation loan program in an effort to deal with the backlog of 84,000 applications which had piled up prior to that time.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

This summer, Congress completed action on the first major reform of the National Science Foundation in a decade. Approved unanimously by both bodies of the Congress, this legislation responds to our Nation's changing research and technology needs and provides $11 billion over three years to ensure our continued world leadership in science and technology. As a result of leadership provided by members of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, particularly Senators KENNEDY, FRIST, DODD, and COLLINS, these funds will be used to support more than 19,000 competitively awarded projects at over 2,000 colleges, universities, elementary schools, and high schools.

Through this authorization, we provided for the greatest investment in basic math, science, and engineering research in our Nation's history. An often overlooked feature of the measure is the dramatic investment being made to develop and strengthen our Nation's human resources.

The reauthorization bill reflects the critical need for greater investment in systemic education reform, professional development, curriculum reform, as well as informal science education. It provides more than $1.2 billion over three years to strengthen our nation's capacity to teach math and science to secondary and elementary students. More than $300 million of these funds will be used to ensure that our Nation's math and science teachers have the knowledge and skills they need to prepare their students. Another $300 million will be used to support model efforts at systemic education reform. An additional $800 million will be used to strengthen the quality and availability of math, science and engineering education at our nation's colleges and universities.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY

Yet another example of the progress which can be made when partisan differences are set aside is legislation signed into law by the President this August, which supports programs that assist educationally disadvantaged adults in developing basic literacy skills, achieving high school equivalency certification, and learning English. These provisions comprised the education component of comprehensive legislation known as the Workforce Investment Act to which Senators KENNEDY, DEWINE, and WELLSTONE made significant contributions throughout the process.

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act provides assistance for those adults most in need of acquiring literacy skills. Of the approximately 4 million adults who annually receive services under this program, 75 percent usually come into the program with below 8th grade literacy skills.

This legislation emphasizes the importance of coordinating adult education programs with employment and training activities and family literacy initiatives. It also establishes a comprehensive accountability system to assess the effectiveness of the activities undertaken by States and local communities. The establishment of accountability measures will enable the federal government to optimize its investment in adult education and family literacy activities. This investment stands at $385 million today.

HIGHER EDUCATION ACT

As I mentioned earlier, one of the most significant bipartisan achievements of this Congress is the Higher Education Amendments which were signed into law last week. From the start of this process, in both the House and Senate, the development of this legislation was a joint venture on the part of Republicans and Democrats. In the Senate, I worked closely with Senators KENNEDY, COATS, and DODD each step of the way. In addition, every single member of the Labor and Human Resources Committee—as well as many Members outside the committee—made positive contributions to this measure.