From that, he came into civilian life to Scranton, PA, and served there for less than a year until he was picked by Pope John Paul II to be the Archbishop of the Catholic Diocese of New York, and then shortly thereafter was elevated to the rank of cardinal in May of 1985.

He has served as Cardinal O'Connor in the Diocese of New York and, as the leader of the Diocese of New York, also as the titular head of the Catholic Church in this country. He has provided tremendous leadership on a variety of humanitarian and moral causes, always standing up for the weakest among us and shepherding his flock in an extraordinary way with great principle, dignity, and character.

It is sad that as we speak today, Cardinal O'Connor is suffering from cancer and is gravely ill. Senator SCHUMER and I worked very hard to make sure this Congressional Gold Medal would be awarded to Cardinal O'Connor so he could be aware of it during this very difficult time in his life and know that the Senate, the Congress, and certainly all of us in Washington extend our best wishes to him and want him to know how much we appreciate the tremendous outstanding service he has given to the Catholic Church and to the people in the United States of America.

Mr. President, I reserve the remainder of my time and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GREGG). The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I will continue the remarks I made earlier about Cardinal O'Connor.

First, I thank Senator SANTORUM of Pennsylvania, as well as my colleague, Senator MOYNIHAN, and his colleague, Senator SPECTER. The four of us have worked hard on this bill.

As I mentioned earlier, Cardinal O'Connor, of course, has had a distinguished career. He has had a distinguished career as a Catholic, rising to one of the great positions of the Catholic Church in America.

He also has had a distinguished career as an American, having served for many years in the Armed Forces. He served 20 years in the Armed Forces. In 1952, he joined the ranks of the military chaplaincy. During the Korean war, he provided spiritual leadership for the Navy and Marine Corps. He was Chaplain of the Naval Academy, became Navy Chief Chaplain, and left the Armed Forces with the rank of rear admiral.

I want to say, as someone of the Jewish faith, that the cardinal has been particularly effective in moving out to the people of the Jewish community and doing a great deal to bridge the gaps—which fortunately now are relatively small and minor—between the Catholic community and the Jewish community. He went out of his way to do this, which I greatly respect.

He has always been seen doing things for the poor. He has worked hard on making working conditions better for people. He cares about the plight of the farm workers. He is dedicated to protecting the rights of immigrants and, in fact, announced at his Labor Day mass as recently as September, his first public appearance after his surgery, a new archdiocesan program of aid to immigrants. He reached out to the poor.

His views on homosexuality are known, but he has spent time anonymously working with people with AIDS. I do not agree with his views, but I sure respect the fact that, without any fanfare, he has been able to do those things.

Of course, now he is ill, and that is one of the reasons I thank every one of my colleagues for moving this bill with alacrity because my State of New York and this entire Nation owe a debt of gratitude to Cardinal O'Connor. There is no more fitting way than presenting him with the gold medal.

For his compassion, for his strength of argument—which I agreed with many times; disagreed with sometimes—for his intelligence, and for his commitment to New York and to faith, very few would be more deserving of this medal than Cardinal O'Connor.

I again thank my colleagues. I thank this body for taking the time, in the middle of this bill, to honor the cardinal in a very fitting way. Our hopes and prayers are for his health, and our thanks are for the great job he has done for New York's Catholics, for all New Yorkers, and for all Americans.

With that, I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from New York for his heartfelt comments.

I want to relate a small personal story. I had an opportunity, with my wife Karen, to meet and talk with the cardinal a few years ago when we were in New York. I had never had a chance to meet him, and he was someone whom I respected very much and followed his leadership. I had wanted the opportunity to meet with him.

We went by his residence and were hoping for about 5 minutes. An hour later, after a wonderful discussion of issues that I was working on and that he was interested in, and things he was working on that I was interested in, he gave me a tremendous amount of encouragement for work in public service.

He understood the importance of public service in his work as a chaplain and, obviously, in his work as the Cardinal of New York. That was, indeed, public service, also.

Senator SCHUMER mentioned many things he did outside the archdiocese and work that reached out into the community. He gave me great encouragement to continue to work, to fulfill what Catholic social teaching is, to care particularly for the poor and the most vulnerable in our society.

He gave me a lot of inspiration. He gave my wife a lot of inspiration. For that I will always remember and always thank him, and for the blessing and the prayers that he gave me that night.

Senator SCHUMER said—and I said earlier—he is gravely ill right now. But I know, as he spends these last few days on Earth, that many of us who know him and admire him will long remember him. Certainly, the comment, ''Well done, my good and faithful servant,'' will apply to John Cardinal O'Connor.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be able to proceed for 1 minute.

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

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, as the Senator from Pennsylvania, I have known Cardinal O'Connor for a long time. I am a cosponsor of this bill. That is not the reason I stand.

I stand today to say I hope there is a lesson drawn from what is being done here. The primary cosponsor of this amendment is a man from New York of a different faith, who disagrees vehemently with the cardinal on some very important items that mean a lot to him in terms of the rights of homosexuals and the issue of choice. Yet he has come forward to acknowledge, along with his friend from Pennsylvania, that this man should be recognized for the special features he has possessed and the courage and the commitment he has shown.

I hope we all take a lesson from this. I hope we all understand that in every one of us in this country there is a lot of good—those who have strong political positions that are diametrically opposed to us—and yet we are able to see the good as well as the disagreement. I hope this is an object lesson for everyone.

I thank the Senator from New York for having the good grace to understand how we should run all of our affairs in this country. You can disagree without being disagreeable. You can have strong views and still recognize, in this instance, the saintly side of a great man.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the bill (H.R. 3557) is read the third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider is laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

AFFORDABLE EDUCATION ACT OF 1999—Continued

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the manager of this bill, the Senator from Georgia, has agreed that we would go out of the order we have had and allow Senator BIDEN to go forward for 10 minutes with his amendment. Following that, under the regular order that has already been agreed to, Senator WELLSTONE will be up next as part of the unanimous consent agreement. According to the unanimous consent

agreement, on his amendment there are 2 hours set aside equally divided. Following that on our side, after the Republicans offer their amendment, Senator MURRAY would then offer her amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. What is the request, again?

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that Senator BIDEN be allowed to precede for 10 minutes to offer his amendment, and following that, the Senator from Minnesota be recognized to offer his amendment, and then following the Republicans offering an amendment, Senator MURRAY be recognized to offer her amendment.

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

The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I may not take the 10 minutes.

I can assure my colleagues that in order to accommodate the number of Senators who asked about my amendment, I am not going to, at this moment, force a vote on that amendment.

What I rise today for is to speak about an amendment I have submitted to this bill. What we have before us today is fundamentally a tax bill to help middle-class parents give their children the best education possible at elementary and secondary levels, as well as higher education.

I, with a few on my side of the aisle, happen to support the Senator from Georgia in his effort. The proposals in this bill are not new. In fact, I have supported many of them in their various incarnations in the past.

Several of these proposals were included as part of a so-called GET AHEAD Act—Growing the Economy for Tomorrow: Assuring Higher Education is Affordable and Dependable—an act which I introduced in 1997. Although this bill never came before the Congress for a vote, many of its provisions were included in the 1997 tax bill.

In 1998, I was one of only a handful of Democrats who supported the legislation to expand the existing education savings accounts, more commonly referred to as educational IRAs. Currently, $500 a year may be contributed to these education IRAs, and the money in these accounts may only be used for higher education. However, under the 1998 proposal, as well as the bill we have before us today, these accounts would be expanded so the parents could contribute up to $2,000 per year, and the savings in the accounts could be used to pay for elementary and secondary education costs, as well as the costs associated with higher education.

I find no principal rationale why I should be able to use a $2,000 IRA to have sent my child to Georgetown University and not use it to send my child to Archmere Academy, which is a Catholic institution as well but a high school.

During my time in the Senate, I have consistently supported reasonable, appropriate, and constitutional measures to help middle-class and low-income families choose an alternative to public schools. I believe the bill achieves part of this goal.

There is no tax deduction for the money put into these education IRAs. There is no tax deduction for the entire cost of a private or parochial education. This is not a voucher proposal.

The thing I would most want to speak to today is the idea that we have to do more than we are now to accommodate parents sending their kids to college. As helpful as this initiative is, it does not go very far. We all know firsthand how difficult it is for American families to afford college.

In 1997, we took some important steps towards making college education more affordable with the enactment of several tax credits for students and their families. So-called HOPE scholarships allow families a tax credit of up to $1,500 for tuition and fees for the first 2 years of college. The Lifetime Learning credit currently allows families a 20-percent tax credit on up to $5,000 for educational expenses through the year 2002, and up to $10,000 for educational expenses thereafter.

Additionally, the 1997 tax bill allows students to deduct a portion of the interest paid on student loans during the first 60 months of repayment. The bill before us today proposes to eliminate that 60-month limit on student loan interest deductions and allow students to deduct the interest paid on their student loans for the duration of their repayment.

While this is another step in the right direction, I believe there is still more we can do to help our Nation's college students. That is why I am offering an amendment today to allow an additional tax relief for millions of families who are struggling to put their kids through college. My amendment builds upon the proposal contained in the legislation introduced in 1997.

My amendment would offer families the option of either a tax deduction of a 28-percent tax credit on up to $5,000 of educational expenses during 2001 and 2002 and up to $10,000 of educational expenses during 2003 and thereafter. Further, there is no limit on the number of years the family could claim this tax credit. So a student could claim a deduction or credit for every year he or she is enrolled in an institution of higher learning as either an undergraduate or a graduate student.

Additionally, this educational tax deduction contains higher income thresholds. I would allow this to be taken for up to $120,000 for joint filers, thus allowing more families and more students to take advantage of the tax benefits in this proposal.

Things have changed a great deal since I arrived in the Senate in 1973. In 1973, there was still the myth that all a student needed was a good high school education to have a clear shot at being able to make it. The statistics and the numbers and the story has been told over the last 28 years that a college education is essentially becoming a prerequisite for having a clear shot at the middle-class dream of being able to own a home, afford a good education for your children, and to live with some degree of financial certitude.

I will not take more time today, although when I do introduce this formally to a piece of legislation, I will speak much longer and in much more detail.

To summarize, I think it is the most noble of social purposes to seek to encourage families to spend money on educating their children and, particularly at this stage, on higher education. People say to me: JOE, $120,000 is an awful lot of money for you to allow someone to have a tax advantage. You can have them make up to $120,000 and they still get a benefit here.

The answer is yes. My inclination is to go higher. Try sending a kid to a private institution today and college. Try sending a kid to a school that is not a State public institution. There are phenomenal State public institutions. I am not suggesting there aren't.

Take my alma mater, the University of Delaware. As an in-State student, you can get it done for somewhere around $13,000 room, board, and tuition. Send that same kid to the school my son attended, the University of Pennsylvania and it is $35,000. Send them to Gettysburg College and it is $30,000 room, board, and tuition. The cost of education is astronomical.

What I don't like to see happen, when you think about the incredible cost of education today and what we are developing, is basically a two-tiered education system. One of the greatest bills that ever passed was the GI bill. The GI bill meant that Irish Catholic kids and inner-city kids and farm boys could go to Harvard and Yale and Princeton and to the great ''universities'' out there. But now to go to those schools and every other school, many of which we haven't heard the names of, there is very little possibility. The only choice a student has in a middle-class family is to be able to go to the State institution.

I went to the State institution. I am proud of having gone to the State institution. My wife graduated from the State institution. My whole family went to the University of Delaware. I take a back seat to no one at any other university in terms of the education I received, but I don't want to be in a position where, in fact, the only choice middle-class people have of sending their kids to college is at a State university. I don't want this two-tiered system to reemerge.

If you get into one of the great universities, the prestige universities, they are endowed enough that if you have no money, you are likely to be able to get help. You will be able to get some aid packages to go. The people who get crunched are the people in the middle.

I am delighted and pleased and I applaud the Georgetowns and the Dukes and the Princetons and the Stanfords and the great universities out there that are the named universities for providing for the education of moderate- and low-income people who otherwise qualify to get in. Very few get turned away because of that. The problem comes with the quintessential middle-class family who makes what appears to be a good income, has three kids going to college, and they lose that option. I don't think they should.

Mr. President, rather than take the time of the Senate, I will withhold sending my amendment to the desk because I am not going to ask for a vote on it now. I will speak to this in more detail later.

I thank the manager of the bill for allowing me the opportunity. I particularly thank Senator WELLSTONE, who was here before me, for allowing me to precede him.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

AMENDMENT NO. 2865

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to report to Congress on the extent and severity of child poverty)

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Minnesota [Mr. WELLSTONE] proposes an amendment numbered 2865.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the appropriate place add the following:

SEC. . REPORT TO CONGRESS REGARDING EXTENT AND SEVERITY OF CHILD POVERTY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than June 1, 2001 and prior to any reauthorization of the temporary assistance to needy families program under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) for any fiscal year after fiscal year 2002, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the ''Secretary'') shall report to Congress on the extent and severity of child poverty in the United States. Such report shall, at a minimum—

(1) determine for the period since the enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–193; 110 Stat. 2105)—

(A) whether the rate of child poverty in the United States has increased;

(B) whether the children who live in poverty in the United States have gotten poorer; and

(C) how changes in the availability of cash and non-cash benefits to poor families have affected child poverty in the United States;

(2) identify alternative methods for defining child poverty that are based on consideration of factors other than family income and resources, including consideration of a family's work-related expenses; and

(3) contain multiple measures of child poverty in the United States that may include the child poverty gap and the extreme poverty rate.

(b) LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL.—If the Secretary determines that during the period since the enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–193; 110 Stat. 2105) the extent or severity of child poverty in the United States has increased to any extent, the Secretary shall include with the report to Congress required under subsection (a) a legislative proposal addressing the factors that led to such increase.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, the purpose of this amendment—and I hope there will be a very strong vote for the amendment—is to call on the Secretary of Health and Human Services to report to the Congress on the extent and severity of child poverty in our country. I will make the connection to education in a moment.

We need to have some critical information about the welfare bill before reauthorization. That is what this amendment says. We ask the Secretary of Health and Human Services to provide this Congress with critical information. The Congress has consented so far to allow welfare reform to continue without an honest accounting of how our actions impact our Nation's children. Before we reauthorize this bill, we need to know what has happened.

There is one missing ingredient when we talk about welfare, and that missing ingredient is information. Let me quote from some of the most knowledgeable people who are doing research in this area. The National Academy of Sciences convened a panel of leading researchers to evaluate the data and methods for measuring the effects of welfare reform. This is basically a quote from their report:

The gaps in the data infrastructure for determining the effects of welfare reform are numerous.

''Numerous gaps in the data''—what does that mean? It means we have no understanding of what the effects of this legislation on the lives of people in our country—poor people, mainly women and children. The information is simply not collected, and we don't know because we don't ask.

The purpose of this amendment is to understand the effect of this legislation on child poverty before we reauthorize it. We need to know whether or not it is true, as has been reported in the data, that actually we are seeing an increase in the poverty of the poorest of the poor children—those children in households with less than half of the officially defined poverty income. We need to know what the gap is between the welfare bill and families working, and whether or not they are above the poverty level income, because the whole goal was to move people to economic self-sufficiency. We need to know what, in fact, is going on with programs such as the earned-income tax credit, or food stamp assistance, or Medicaid, and how that has affected the lives of poor children in America.

We need to do some policy evaluation. Too many people—Republicans and Democrats and the administration—brag about the fact that the rolls have been slashed by 50 percent since 1994. But how can anyone in good conscience use that as a measure of success alone? Reducing the rolls is easy. You just push people off the rolls, you close their cases, and you wish them good luck.

Reducing the rolls by half doesn't indicate whether or not we have reduced the poverty. The goal is to reduce the poverty of women and poor children in America. The question is whether or not people who have been pushed off the rolls are working and at what kinds of jobs. Are they living-wage jobs? And the question is, What kind of child care do they have for their children? Do they still have medical assistance, or are they worse off because they have been cut off of medical assistance? The question is, What about the additional services for those families where maybe the single parent struggles with addiction, or maybe she has been battered over and over again and there needs to be additional support before this woman and her family can move to employment and decent wages. Are the support services being provided?

I think we have created a whole new class of working poor people in this country. We have created a whole new class—unless we call for a policy evaluation—of the ''disappeared.'' We don't know what is happening. We have been unwilling to do any serious policy evaluation. Gunnar Myrdal, the Swedish sociologist, once wrote that ignorance is never random. We don't know what we don't want to do. Before we reauthorize the welfare bill and as we move forward on an education piece of legislation, I would ask the Senate to go on record calling for an evaluation as to the effect of this legislation on poor children in our country.

Some would say: What are you doing, Senator WELLSTONE, calling for an evaluation on a welfare bill? This doesn't belong on an education bill.

If a child is living in poverty—and I try to stay very close to this question, as I care a great deal about what happens to poor children in America—the preliminary reports I have seen indicate we now have more children living in households below the poverty level of income. We see a deepening of poverty in children in our country.

I argue that if a child is sick, if a family has been cut off medical assistance—and please remember that Families USA, 6 months ago or so, issued a report that there are 670,000 people in our country today who no longer have medical assistance because of the welfare bill—I argue that children don't do well in school when they do not receive adequate care, when they are sick, when they have an illness, or when they have tooth decay or an abscessed tooth. It is very hard for children to do well in school under those circumstances. I think we are sleep-walking in the Senate if we don't see any connection between how well children do in school and the economic circumstances of their lives.

We had a wonderful coalition gathering yesterday. Senators KENNEDY and SPECTER are introducing antihunger legislation, of which I am proud to be an original cosponsor. If we have 30 million citizens in our country today with a booming economy who are ''food insecure,'' and if too high a percentage of those citizens are children, and if, in fact, we have seen a dramatic decline in food stamp participation—and I will marshal the evidence for this in a moment—and the Food Stamp Program was the major safety net for children in this country, you had better believe I have this amendment on this bill, because when children are hungry, they don't do well in school.

May I repeat that. When children are hungry, they don't do well in school. May I repeat the fact that we have dramatically slashed the food stamp rolls and that many children who should be receiving food stamp assistance today are not receiving food stamp assistance. That is an important fact. We ought to do the policy evaluation. We ought to have the courage to evaluate the impact of this welfare bill on poor children in America today.

In my State there is no longer any affordable rental housing. It is absolutely unbelievable. Children are the fastest-growing segment of the homeless population in our country today, and they end up having to move four or five times during the school year. In many of the schools I visit in our State of Minnesota, especially in our cities, and I visit one every 2 weeks, the teachers tell me it is hard for a third-grader to do well when she is moved four times during a year because the family can't find affordable housing. Don't tell me that doesn't have any impact on how well a child performs in school. This is an education bill being debated, so I have an amendment that deals with the poverty of children in our country.

I argue that today, with an economy booming and an affluent country, we have one out of every five children growing up poor in our country. Under the age of 3, I believe it is closer to one out of every four; and under the age of 3, it is about 50 percent of children of color growing up poor in our country today, which is a national disgrace. I argue that poverty has everything in the world to do with education and whether or not each and every child in America has the same opportunity to reach her full potential and his full potential, which is the goodness of our country.

Challenging Senators today to vote for a policy of evaluation on the welfare bill, so we can assess what is happening to poor children, is the right thing to do on an education bill.

If we blindly accept the argument that the welfare ''reform'' is a great success because we have eliminated the rolls by 50 percent, we are guilty of turning our backs on the most vulnerable citizens in our country—poor children. And if we will not address the underlying problems that deal with race—yes, race—and gender, and poverty, and inequality, and social injustice in our country today, it is all too predictable which children will come to kindergarten way behind and which children will fall even further behind, and, yes, which children will fail these standardized high-stakes tests we give to show how tough we are and how rigorous we are, and which children will be held back, and which children will drop out of school, and which children will wind up incarcerated in America today.

Don't move to table this amendment arguing that it has nothing to do with education. No Senator should say, ''Senator WELLSTONE, I am going to table your amendment because your amendment deals with race, gender, and poverty of children in this country and that has nothing to do with education.'' Today, 13 million children are growing up poor in our country with a booming economy.

I ask my colleagues to consider my amendment before we reauthorize this welfare bill which will impact on children and the poverty of children.

Let me now discuss some recent studies.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Bob Greenstein, director, received the McArthur Foundation grant—I think one of the genius grants—for the impeccable research he directs. More than two-thirds of our States impose full-family sanctions, stopping aid to children as well as parents. Nearly half of these States impose a full-family sanction at the first instance of noncompliance. More than one-fourth of all case closures in a number of States have been the result of sanctions.

In other words, half of the people are off the welfare rolls. In many cases, the families have been sanctioned. That doesn't mean they are working. It doesn't mean they have good wages or are doing well. They have just been sanctioned. Then the question becomes, If in a lot of States you have these sanctions, are the sanctions justified?

A recent Utah study found that three-quarters of the sanctioned families had three or more barriers to employment, including a health or medical problem, lack of transportation, or lack of skills.

A Minnesota study concluded that sanctioned families were four times as likely as the caseload as a whole to report chemical dependency, three times as likely to report a family health problem, and twice as likely to report a mental health problem or domestic violence.

We should be worried about this. We should want to know what is going on.

Finally, quite often the families who are subject to the sanctions may have the greatest difficulty understanding the program, rules, and expectations. Recent studies from South Carolina and Delaware document that sanction rates are highest for those people with the least amount of education. The Delaware study also found that sanctioned individuals were more likely to have trouble comprehending TANF rules and did not understand the consequences of noncompliance.

As a result of the welfare bill, more than 2.5 million poor families have lost their benefits. That is a decline in the rolls of 50 percent. But the number of people living in poverty in our country has held close to the study. Many of these families have gone from being poor to getting poorer, and most of the welfare recipients are children.

This is why I challenge Senators today. I do not know how any of you can vote against this, colleagues. I am saying, before we do any reauthorization of this welfare bill, we ought to evaluate the impact of poverty on children.

Don't table this amendment because you cannot separate whether children are hungry, homeless, or whether there has been decent child care before they get to kindergarten.

One study I cite should trouble Senator REID and every Senator. It was released by researchers at UC-Berkeley and Yale. They found that about a million additional toddlers and preschoolers are now in child care because of the changes in the welfare law. Mothers work. They are single parents. But these children, unfortunately, are in low-quality child care, and therefore they end up lagging behind other children their age in developmental measures.

There was a study of nearly 1,000 single mothers moving from welfare to work, and they found that many of these children had been placed in child care settings where they watched hours of television or wandered aimlessly and had little interaction with their caregivers.

The result: These toddlers showed developmental delays. When asked to point to one of three different pictures in a book, fewer than two out of five of the toddlers in the study pointed to the right picture compared to the national norm of four out of five children.

One of the study's authors is quoted as saying, ''We know that high-quality child care can help children and that poor children can benefit the most. So we hope this will be a wake-up call to do something about the quality of child care in this country. The quality of day-care centers is not great for middle-class families, but it is surprising and distressing to see the extent to which welfare families' quality was even lower.''

Colleagues, we ought to know what is going on with this bill. If we are telling these mothers they have to work, that we are not looking at the child care picture, and their children are in dangerous and inadequate child care centers and falling further behind developmentally, shouldn't we know that? Don't we want to know the impact? Can any Senator tell me that is of no consequence as to how well these children do in school? Of course it is.

I also want to point out that many of these families have been stigmatized. We have an additional problem. Again, I would like to see an analysis of this. But all too often, too many families don't even enter TANF. They do not know they have the right to receive assistance at the beginning, and, therefore, in this affluent economy we see a rise in the use of food banks and shelters. It is amazing. Everybody is claiming success.

The 50-percent reduction in the welfare rolls has hardly reduced poverty. In many cases, children are poorer now than they were before. In all too many cases families don't even know they are eligible to receive this assistance, and they don't.

I will save some of my time in case there is a response to the debate. But I want to talk about a report released yesterday by the National Campaign for Jobs and Income. It is a new coalition of antipoverty groups.

They found a couple of results that are very distressing. In too many cases families are eligible still for medical assistance and food stamp assistance when they move from welfare to work, but at the local county level they are not told they are eligible. That is incredible. That is absolutely incredible.

Let me talk about Medicaid and what is happening under welfare reform.

Despite the creation of the State Child Health Insurance Program, CHIPS, which provide resources to States, the total number of low-income children enrolled in Medicaid in the State CHIP program combined has actually decreased in the 12 States with the largest number of uninsured children between 1996 and 1998.

A study in the January issue of Health Fairs found that 41 percent of the women surveyed lacked health insurance one year after leaving welfare. Forty-one percent of these women no longer have any coverage. Their families don't have coverage. Only 36 percent of the women had been able to retain their Medicaid coverage. The same study found that 23 percent of the women with children were also uninsured. Some were about to keep their insurance. But 23 percent were uninsured one year after losing welfare benefits.

I ask you to vote for an amendment that says we ought to do an evaluation of the impact of their welfare bill on the poverty of children. If 23 percent of the children one year after their mothers leave welfare no longer are covered and no longer have any health insurance coverage, that is a serious consequence. We ought to understand that.

According to Families USA, two-thirds of a million low-income people—approximately 675,000—lost their Medicaid coverage and became uninsured as a result of the welfare bill.

Families are losing Medicaid coverage under welfare reform because: No. 1, they are basically not being told they are entitled to it at the local level.

No. 2, you have these complex rules, and it is very difficult for people to know their rights. Legal immigrants, in particular, are especially confused.

No. 3, antiquated computer systems. Most States rely on computer systems that were designed for welfare programs, not Medicaid. As a result, these systems produce letters that are technical and difficult to understand. When families are pushed off welfare right away they don't even know they are entitled to medical assistance.

Now for the second set of disturbing facts. Sometimes facts make Members uncomfortable—or they should make Members uncomfortable. According to the USDA, 30 million people live in a ''food insecure'' house; 40 percent of them are children; 12.5 million children are ''food insecure''—that is another way of saying going hungry or malnourished.

I have talked about all of the people who have been pushed off welfare. According to a study by the USDA, more than one-third of those eligible for the Food Stamp Program are not receiving the benefits. A General Accounting Office report released last year found food stamp participation dropped faster than related indicators would predict.

Furthermore, GAO points out there is a growing gap between the number of children living in poverty, an important indicator of children's need for food assistance and the number of children receiving food assistance. That food stamp participation dropped faster than related economic indicators would indicate simply means we have hardly made a dent in reducing poverty. We have many poor children in the country. The Food Stamp Program was the major safety net program for poor children in America and we have seen a dramatic decline in participation. Probably as many as 33 percent of the children should be receiving the help, and they are not. Therefore, they are hungry, they are malnourished, and therefore they can't do as well in school. And no Senator's child could do well in school if their child went to school malnourished or if their child was hungry.

These are not my opinions but that of good researchers. The Urban Institute report found two-thirds of the families who left the Food Stamp Program were still eligible for food stamps.

What is going on? We need a policy evaluation. A July 1999 report, prepared for USDA by Mathematics Policy Research, identified ''lack of client information'' as the barrier to participation and pointed out that many of these people who were not participating were not aware they were eligible.

At the local level they are not being told. We have created such a stigma, we have done so much stereotyping and bashing of these poor women and children and the poor in America today, that it has filtered down to the local level. Basically, at the local level people don't even know they have the right to get this assistance.

Much of this is happening at the same time the States are now sitting on a $7 billion surplus of TANF money. Colleagues who were for the welfare bill should be as concerned about this as I am. There were a number of States—Minnesota was one last year; not this year, I am happy to say—that through a little of bit of accounting and juggling, used the TANF money for a tax rebate.

This is what we have: Families who are not being told they are eligible for medical assistance, and they are; we have families not being told they are eligible for food stamp assistance, and they are; we have a rise in the use of food shelters; we have hungry children in America; we have many families who no longer receive medical assistance 1 year after the welfare bill; we have the vast majority of the women no longer on welfare and still don't make even poverty wages; and we have a whole group of other recipients and women who have severely disabled children or they had children when they were children, who do not have the skills development or have struggled with addiction, or we have, unfortunately, a central issue of violence in the home, women who have been battered over and over again. They need to have the support services so they can move from welfare to work and be able to support their children in this prosperous economy.

The Governors came here and said, several years ago: Trust us, trust us, trust us.

Some States are doing good work. The Chair was a Governor of New Hampshire. Some States are doing good work.

I can't believe they are sitting on $7 billion in TANF money, some of which could go into training, some of which could go into education, some of which could go into the support services. That is what this was all about.

There is reason to be concerned. Not later than June 1, 2001, and prior to the reauthorization of this bill, let's call upon the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make a report on the poverty of children in America and in particular on the welfare bill and how it has affected the economic status of the children in these families.

The reason I offered this amendment is manyfold, but let me make it twofold. First, there is disturbing evidence based upon reports that we are now seeing an increase of children who are among the poorest of poor in America. Second, there is disturbing evidence that very few of these families have actually moved from welfare to escape poverty. There is clear evidence that many of the families have now lost their medical assistance and are worse off. In addition, there is clear evidence that many of these children and many of these families are eligible for food stamp assistance, which is particularly

important in making sure that children don't go hungry, and they are not being told about it.

The second reason I bring this amendment to the floor is I think there should be an up-or-down vote. Members can't argue that this is irrelevant to the discussion at hand. The Yale-Berkeley study sends chills down my spine. There has also been a national report. I know there was a New York Times article about it. What has happened with many of these families is the mothers work, but all too often they have to leave at 6 by bus. It takes them 2 hours. There is not adequate transportation. They don't have a car or they may live in a rural area. They don't get home until 8 o'clock at night. The child care situation is frightening. A lot of the child care for these children is dangerous and inadequate, at best. These children should be valued as much as our children.

Colleagues, I wait for a response.

How much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 28½ minutes remaining.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I ask my colleague from Georgia whether there is any response.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I did not hear the Senator's question.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I say to the Senator from Georgia, I reserve the remainder of my time. I have tried to make the following arguments. I have tried to say there is disturbing evidence, outside reports that all may not be right with what is happening. Before we reauthorize this bill, we ought to have a policy evaluation of the impact on poor children. Then I went on and tried to give examples. I can repeat them if my colleague wants me to. It is in my head and my heart.

My second point has been I certainly hope this amendment will not be tabled because I think it has everything to do with education. I think it is terribly important.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, how much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 59 minutes. The Senator from Minnesota has 28 minutes.

Mr. COVERDELL. It might be helpful to the Senator from Minnesota to know I do not believe there will be a rebuttal to his amendment. It is my intention to yield back our time at the appropriate moment.

I am unaware of anybody who has expressed to me an interest in debating his amendment. If the Senator wanted to use the remainder of his time, this would be the time to do it.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I gather from what my colleague said that means if there is not a rebuttal, there is going to be a good strong vote for this amendment? Is that what my colleague is saying? That would please me.

Mr. COVERDELL. Anybody who predicts the legislative process is probably the same person who gets his own attorney.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Is my colleague going to move to table?

Mr. COVERDELL. Yes, I am.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Georgia. Here is what I am concerned about now. I want to say this to the Senator from Georgia.

The background of this is, I have for the last 2 years, off and on, been trying to get a policy evaluation of the bill. This time I focused on the poverty of children because I thought it was so important, so relevant to education. I believe that. I think my colleague from Georgia does.

I say to the Senator, he does not have to respond. We will see what the House does. It is a tax bill. It may go to the President, and it could very well be vetoed. If that happens, then I have to come back with this amendment on another vehicle, but I certainly hope if we go to conference committee this amendment will not be dropped.

I am going to call for a record vote because I want everybody on record. What has happened in the past is I will come out and then it will get dropped. First, we lost on a vote, a slightly different amendment. Then the next one was dropped.

I know I speak with emotion about this, but I really do think it makes sense before we reauthorize by 2001—before we reauthorize in 2002, we ought to know what the impact is. I have presented a lot of studies that should trouble all of us. I think it is terribly relevant to how well our children do.

I thank the Senator from Georgia because he could have come out and tried to give this the back of his hand and tabled it. I appreciate the fact he did not. I do not think Senators should vote against this amendment. What I hope is it will stay in conference committee. I make that request to my colleague.

I have been on votes that have been 99–1, where I am the 1. Obviously, I have not persuaded too many people. And then I have been involved in votes that are closer. If this is almost a unanimous vote or a unanimous vote, I would like Senators to know: You are on record. When we vote we are on record. I want Senators to know when you vote you are on record saying it is important we have a thorough policy evaluation done of the effect of the welfare bill on children. We want to know if there has been a rise in the poorest of the poor children. We want to know what the gap is between those families who are working and poverty-level income. Are they moving to economic self-sufficiency? We want to know what has happened with other programs such as food stamp programs and why there has been such a drop in food stamp participation, way below the drop in poverty. We want to know what is going on. We want to know what is going on with child care. I am troubled by all these reports about the dangers due to inadequate child care for these children.

The way I look at it, I say to Senator COVERDELL, the evidence is irrefutable that probably the most important thing any of us could do is try to make sure prekindergarten kids get the developmental child care from parents—or whoever, if the parents work—so they come to kindergarten ready to learn and not way behind.

I want all Senators to know you are on record supporting this policy evaluation. I have been trying to do this for several years. I appreciate the support. It is not a small question. Children who are hungry do not do well in school. Children who receive no health care coverage or dental care where they have an abscessed tooth and infection do not do well in school. Children who have been in inferior prekindergarten situations, inadequate child care, do not do well in school. Children who are homeless do not do well in school. And children who are among the poorest of the poorest of the poor citizens of this country, living in households at less than half the poverty-level income, do not do well in school.

I think it is important we get a handle on what it means that in the most affluent country in the world, with an economy booming and record surpluses, we have 12.5 million children who are ''food insecure.''

We can do better, and we will do better when we are willing to do an honest evaluation as to what is happening.

I thank my colleague from Georgia. I take his support not as a sort of effort to trivialize this but as sincere support. It means a lot to me.

Before I yield the floor, I ask my colleague, I would like to have the vote. I would like to have everybody on record. When would we be scheduling this vote?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, it is not a precise science we are dealing with here, but it is contemplated that we will move from the Senator's amendment to an amendment by Senator HUTCHISON of Texas, to an amendment by Senator MURRAY of Washington, and perhaps one other which is being discussed from Senator ROTH, which is a managers' amendment. Then all those would be voted on back to back. My guess is, if that is the general plan and it occurs that way—as the Senator knows, these things are sometimes subject to some modification—I think that is a pretty good description of what is likely to happen and that would probably happen around 5:30 or 6 o'clock. It is contemplated the Senator wants a vote on his amendment. It will be in that stacked series of votes.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I say to my colleague from Georgia, what would be best for Senators' schedules would be stacked votes, either later today or early tomorrow morning; is that correct?

Mr. COVERDELL. Yes. The purpose for that is we are trying to facilitate people offering amendments, trying to keep it as near on time as we were doing with the presentation of the Senator so people can keep their schedules.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank my colleague from Georgia. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator yield back his time?

Mr. COVERDELL. Is the Senator from Minnesota prepared to yield back his time? I am prepared to yield back our time on the amendment.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I yield back our time.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I yield back our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has been yielded back.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALLARD). Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2860

(Purpose: To establish the Careers to Classrooms Program)

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 2860.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Texas [Mrs. HUTCHISON] proposes an amendment numbered 2860.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The text of the amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Amendments Submitted.'')

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, this amendment adds flexibility to our school systems. I am working with Senator JEFFORDS and his committee, and Senator LEAHY as well, on the ESEA reauthorization.

I wish to lay down the marker with this amendment because I think it is the key to what we are talking about. We are trying to give parents more options for their children to make the choices that are best for each child.

One of the problems we have in high-needs schools across our country is that we do not have qualified teachers to teach subjects that will benefit young people all over our country. It may be computer courses. It may be language courses. Yet we have people who have had careers—people in the military, people in corporations and businesses—who may be proficient in French and they may live in an area where the school is not able to teach French because they do not have a qualified teacher. This would be a big benefit to the young people in that school system if they had that as an option. It may be the Russian language or the Chinese language. It may be computer skills. It may be chemistry or biology classes. There are so many areas, but they just are not teacher qualified.

My bill, which is called Careers to Classrooms, is being offered as an amendment to give more flexibility to the States by allowing them to go to a high-needs school and give priority in that high-needs school to recruiting teachers.

My amendment also encourages a certification process that will bring the teacher up to speed quickly. It is an expedited certification process so the teacher will not have to wait a whole year to go into the classroom but can go through an expedited certification process by that State.

It is important we replicate the programs that have succeeded. My Careers to Classrooms amendment replicates the Troops to Teachers Program that has been in place and has been very successful. It uses retired military people who have experience in the military which they can transfer to the classroom and enrich educational opportunities for our young people. This allows people in the private sector to do the same.

This is similar, but not the same, as the Graham amendment. The Graham amendment goes toward the universities being able to have programs. Mine is for the States to put these programs in place.

I urge the adoption of my amendment. I think it adds an enriching experience for the classrooms, particularly in high-needs schools, whether it be in an urban community that does not have access to teachers or in our rural areas.

I happen to know of a case involving a woman who was a French major in college. She had taught French in private schools. She moved to a small town in Texas where they wanted to offer French in the high school. She wanted to teach it, but she could not because she did not have the teacher certification.

This is made to order for this situation. This is a French language major who taught French in private schools and who wants to give this opportunity to a small Texas high school. I want her to be able to do that because we know those students will be enriched by having that option.

I urge the adoption of my amendment. I hope we can offer this kind of enrichment to schools all over our country by giving the States this option.

Mr. President, I ask the distinguished manager of the bill if I can ask approval of my amendment. Does he want a voice vote?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, if the Senator from Texas has completed her presentation on the amendment, my suggestion is that we set it aside and move to other matters. We are trying to determine the sequence of amendments. Perhaps we can deal with the amendment either on a recorded vote or perhaps we can secure a voice vote in the back-to-back management of this current series of amendments.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I am happy to accommodate whatever works. Is my amendment the pending amendment?

Mr. COVERDELL. It is at the moment.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, does the Senator want me to set it aside?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we may be able to clear this. We do not know. I have to check with the Finance Committee as to how they feel about this. It may be better to put this in the normal course of amendments. If we can do this by voice vote, that will be great.

Mr. COVERDELL. What we are saying is we have not decided that yet. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be set aside for the moment. We will proceed with business and return to it at the appropriate time.

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

The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I am going to propound a unanimous consent in just a moment. I see my colleague is wishing to make a remark or two, so I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I say to my friend from Georgia, there are a number of meetings taking place tonight, one at the White House. What we are trying to do is get things arranged so we can have votes completed in time for Senators to go to the White House for a bipartisan meeting. What we are trying to do is have Senator MURRAY take the floor for her amendment at about 20 until 5. The majority will respond to that. We will then begin a series of two and possibly three votes, two recorded votes, maybe one voice vote. If we can't do the one by voice, that will be put over until tomorrow, so Members have an idea of what we are trying to do.

Mr. COVERDELL. I appreciate the remarks of the Senator from Nevada. They very appropriately characterize what is being attempted at this point.

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

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

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time in relation to the Murray amendment on class size be divided with Senator MURRAY in control of 20 minutes and Senator COVERDELL control of 10 minutes. I further ask consent that at 5:05 p.m. today the Senate proceed to a vote in relation to the Wellstone amendment No. 2865, to be followed by a vote in relation to the Murray amendment regarding class size. I further ask consent that no amendment be in order to the amendments prior to the votes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, my only modification would be that the vote will be at approximately 5:05. It may not be exactly at that time because the time doesn't add up.

Mr. COVERDELL. I so modify the request to say approximately 5:05 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. For the information of all Members, this agreement would provide for the disposition of two additional amendments. It is hoped that the Hutchison amendment will be agreed to by a voice vote; therefore, Members can expect two or three votes beginning at approximately 5:05 p.m. today.

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

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

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, while we are waiting for the Senator from Washington to present her amendment, I thought I would take a couple of minutes to talk about a certain section of this longstanding debate.

The day before yesterday, the discussion of the core policy of this piece of legislation was that we would leave and not tax the interest buildup on education savings accounts so that they would compound themselves more quickly as an incentive for people to open the accounts. We are told it will probably result in 14 million people opening an account of this nature, and it will bear the parents of 20 million children, which is a little over a third of the entire population of children attending kindergarten through high school.

So the reach of the legislation we are debating and amending is very large. But in the discussion, Senator KERRY of Massachusetts referred to the fact that when you leave, you don't collect a tax. In his mind, that is an expenditure; we didn't appropriate it necessarily, but by not collecting that revenue we, in a sense, are appropriating money.

I find that a flawed theory. Under that context, every dime we do not take from a working family or an individual belongs to the Government, and only by the grace of the Government have we allowed it to stay in the family's checking account.

I won't say that is a convoluted theory, but it is certainly foreign, I believe, to the genesis of American liberty which envisioned the proceeds of the wages that are earned by families and individuals in our country as belonging to them—the people who earned it. Thomas Jefferson warned us of Government's propensity to take too much from the laborer who produced the wealth or the income.

So I thought I would take a minute or two to say that this Senator is among those who believe the wealth, the income, the paycheck belongs to the person who earned it, and Government should only, by the most urgent necessity, tax and remove that resource and thereby lessen the ability of that family or that individual to pursue their dreams and care for their family and its vision.

This theory, which essentially is the view that everything that everybody produces belongs to us up here in Washington unless we just happen to gracefully leave it in the family's checking account, is not a healthy idea. And it has come up two or three times in the debate over these education savings accounts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I think under the previous order we would hear from Senator MURRAY on her amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 2821

(Purpose: To provide for class size reduction programs)

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) proposes an amendment numbered 2821.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The text of the amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Amendments Submitted.'')

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, the Senate is currently considering the Republican education agenda. I have listened carefully to the debate over the last several days.

It seems to me the difference between the Democratic and Republican approaches couldn't be more clear. Democrats want to invest in policies that really make a difference for today's young people. On the other side, we are hearing the same old song and dance about tax cuts, vouchers, block grants, and savings accounts. I fear those policies will really weaken our public schools instead of strengthening them.

The education savings account bill we are considering today would only help a very few wealthy families at the expense of everyone else. I urge my colleagues to reject it.

We should be spending our limited time on the policies that parents and teachers know work—things such as smaller classes taught by fully qualified teachers. Those are the policies that time and time again have produced real results for our students—not tax schemes, not funding gimmicks, not policies that will drain money away from our public schools.

That is why I am here this afternoon to introduce my class size amendment which will provide real help for students across the country.

These education savings accounts will only help a few people with very high incomes. Unfortunately, families who aren't well off need more incentives to save for education. And this bill doesn't offer them any. For the 90 percent of Americans whose children attend public schools, this bill offers peanuts.

The Joint Tax Committee found that the average benefit per child in public school would be between $3 and $7 per year over a 4-year period. This program is a backdoor voucher which will drain money away from our public schools and take scarce resources from students who need them most. All the while, this bill will do nothing to improve the quality of public education.

I know I am not the only person in America who thinks we should be investing in the things that we know work in education. A recent poll was conducted for the National Education Association by two bipartisan research firms—a Democratic research firm and a Republican research firm. It found that Americans want specific policies—policies such as providing additional support for students with special needs, policies such as helping school districts attract quality teachers, and policies such as hiring 100,000 new, fully qualified teachers to reduce class sizes in our country. Those are some of the specific, concrete policies on which the American people want us to focus.

In the same poll, the American public chose education as its No. 1 priority over tax cuts by a margin of two to one.

The bill on the floor today ignores the priorities the American people are asking us to address.

As a former school board member, let me give my colleagues a real-life opportunity to test this poll's funding.

Monday night, for many districts, is ''School Board Meeting Night'' across the country. If my colleagues want to know what the education priorities are at home, all they have to do is attend a local school board meeting. Senators will have the ability to see locally-

elected officials, respected community activists, parents, and students gather to discuss priorities and real problems.

School boards all across the country face very tough issues. I know what service on a school board is. I know what school boards are dealing with. They are grappling with class size, hiring quality teachers, deteriorating facilities, textbooks, curricula, and other issues.

I know what school boards are not dealing with. School boards are not debating tax cuts and vouchers. School boards are not considering diverting revenues from public schools to private schools. But that is what this bill would do.

This is the wrong education debate for our country. The right education debate gives our students the tools and the support they need to reach their full potential. Every child in America deserves a well-trained teacher and a small class size. When a student's hand goes up in the classroom, she should get the help she needs and the attention she needs. That is why this Senate should pass this class-size amendment.

I am offering this amendment for one reason—to continue the progress we have made in classrooms across America for the last 2 years. As a former teacher, I can tell you, it makes a difference if you have 18 kids in your classroom instead of 35. Parents know it, teachers know it, and students know it. By working together over the past 2 years, we have been able to bring real results to students.

This year, 1.7 million students across the country are learning in classrooms that are less crowded than the year before; 1.7 million students are in classrooms where teachers can spend more time teaching and less time dealing with discipline problems; and 1.7 million students are in classrooms where they can get the individual attention they need and where they will learn the basics.

That is progress. But it is not enough. There are still too many students in overcrowded classrooms. So far, we have hired 29,000 new fully qualified teachers. My class size amendment will continue our progress.

I recently visited a classroom in Takoma, WA, where they have taken our class size money and put it into their first grade classrooms. Now 67 classrooms in that district have 15 students in the first grade. The teachers will say they know this is the first year they will be able to say at the end of the year that every child in their first grade classroom will be able to read. There will be direct results from this program we have passed the last 2 years. They could not make those promises with 30 kids in the classroom. They now can as a result of the work we have done.

I wish to take a moment to go through the specifics of my amendment. This amendment uses $1.2 billion to reduce class size, particularly in the early grades, first through third, using highly qualified teachers to improve educational achievement for regular and special needs children.

This amendment targets the money where it is needed within the States. Within States, 100 percent of the funds go directly to local school districts on a formula which is 80 percent need-based and 20 percent enrollment based. Small school districts that alone may not generate enough Federal funding to pay for a new teacher may join together to generate enough funds to pay for a new teacher or to institute a top-notch recruiting program.

This amendment ensures local decisionmaking. Each local school district board makes the decisions about hiring and training their new teachers. The school district must use at least 75 percent of the funds to hire new certified teachers.

This amendment promotes teacher quality. Up to 25 percent of the funds may be used to test new teachers or to provide professional development to new and current teachers or of regular and special needs children. The program ensures that all teachers are fully qualified. Under the amendment, school districts hire State-certified teachers so every student will learn from a highly trained professional.

This amendment is flexible. Any school district that has already reduced class sizes in early grades, to 18 or fewer children, may then use the funds to further reduce class sizes in the early grades, to reduce class size in kindergarten or other grades, or carry out activities to improve teacher quality, including professional development.

The class size program is simple and efficient. School districts fill out a one-page form which is available online. The Department of Education sends them the money to hire the new teachers based on need and enrollment.

Let me add that teachers have told me they have never seen money move as quickly from Congress to the classrooms as they have under our class size bill.

Finally, this amendment ensures accountability. The amendment clarifies that the funds are supplementary and cannot replace current spending on teachers or teacher salaries. School districts fill out no new forms to get the funding, they just add a description of their class size reduction plan to a current form. Accountability is assured by requiring school districts to send a report card in plain English to their local community, including information about how achievement has improved as a result of reducing class size.

Those are the specifics of my amendment. I know this amendment will help my students. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. REID. Before the Senator from Washington leaves the floor, I say to her and Members of the Senate how much I appreciate her leadership on this issue. She has been the voice speaking out on this issue time and time again. I think we in the Senate should listen to someone with experience. She served in the school boards we hear so much about. Why do we not do what the school boards want? That is what we are trying to do. We are doing that through the voice of someone who has served on a school board, who taught in preschool, who has been a voice on education.

On behalf of the people of the State of Nevada, I express my appreciation to Senator MURRAY for leading the Senate down this road of talking about the important matters that affect public education. That is what the debate should be: What can we do to provide a better education for the more than 90 percent of children in America today who go to public schools.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. L. CHAFEE). The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. I rise in opposition to the amendment. I wish to make several points. The first point is the Senator from Washington characterizes the education savings account as something that would only benefit a handful of people who are wealthy. I believe that is pretty close to what she said.

According to the Joint Tax Committee, 70 percent of those who would utilize the education savings account make $75,000 or less. This is not something for anybody driving around in a black limousine. It is wrong to characterize it otherwise.

The second point: the criteria for these educational savings accounts are identical to the President's criteria for the higher education savings account. The same folks who use these savings accounts are the ones who were applauded by that side of the aisle when they created a higher education savings account. There is no difference. Every ''t'' is crossed and every ''i'' is dotted exactly the way it was done on the other side of the aisle. We cannot have it both ways. If they are not rich over here, they are not rich over here. The point is, the vast majority of accounts are utilized by middle-class folks and low-income people.

No. 2, this is the fourth attempt from the other side of the aisle to gut the creation of the education savings account. Who do they leave behind? The 14 million American families, 20 million American children who would save on their own $12 billion that would go to help education. By simply cutting out the funds as the amendment of the Senator does, $1.2 billion, she robs the Nation of $12 billion in resources that would come freely from families investing in these accounts utilizing their own money. It is bad economic policy to leave $12 billion sitting on the table.

The Senator in her amendment strikes the provision that allows 1 million students in college to receive prepaid tuition in the 43 States that do that, including her State, from their prepaid tuition being taxed when they get it. We are trying to leave the resource there so it can be used for the

college education. The amendment guts it.

Last, the proponents of the amendment, as is so often the case, say we will do something for you. But read the language under ''use of the funds.'' They are mandatory uses. It is a long series. If you want to play ball with the Federal Government, you have to hopscotch through every hurdle, every loophole, every this, every that, page after page, reports, qualifications—mandatory.

It is reinforcement of the entire concept of oversight by the big principal in Washington. That is not what America wants. It wants its schools governed at home.

Time is limited; we have 5 minutes remaining in our time. I see Senator GREGG of New Hampshire, and I yield the remainder of our time to Senator GREGG of New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. How much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 5 minutes 40 seconds.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Georgia. I appreciate his hard work on this bill. He has certainly outlined most eloquently the importance of these savings accounts to education and how the dollars that will be going into the savings accounts will have a multilayer effect and grow radically, thus increasing the opportunity for more and more kids and more and more families to experience the American dream of going to college. They are using these dollars for other educational activities.

I wish to speak specifically to the amendment of the Senator from Washington State. This amendment is misdirected. It has come to the floor on a number of other occasions and it has been misdirected every time it came to the floor. It has been put forward by the administration as basically a polling amendment. I mean they went out and polled the term and then they concluded that term polled well so they came forward with a program based on that term.

It does not have anything to do with quality education. Study after study has shown the issue of quality education is not tied directly to class size. It is tied to the quality of the teacher in the classroom. In fact, there was a recent study done which studied all the other studies; 300 studies were looked at by Eric Hanushek of the University of Rochester. His conclusion was this, looking at 300 different studies on this specific issue: Class size reduction has not worked; the quality of the teacher is much more important than class size.

Equally important to that issue is the fact this is a straw dog amendment; 43 of the States in this country already are below what the President wants in class size ratio, 18–1. So the amendment really is not for the purpose of reducing class size; it is for the purpose of putting out a political statement.

Let's do something about education. That is what the Republican side of this aisle wants to do. So we have come forward with something called the Teacher Empowerment Act. Rather than having Washington put a straitjacket on the communities where they have to use this money for one thing and one thing only, which is to hire new teachers—many school systems not needing new teachers; what they really need is keep the good teachers they already have and they are having trouble doing that—rather than having this straitjacket from Washington delivered by the Clinton administration and the Members on the other side of the aisle, we said: Let's give the local communities the opportunity to give them what they need, the Teacher Empowerment Act.

It says we will take the funds suggested by the Senator from Washington and put them in the proper vehicle, which happens to be the Elementary and Secondary School Act, which is being marked up today, and we will allow those funds to be used by local communities to assist in addressing their teacher needs. They can use it for teacher education; they can use it for paying good teachers more money to keep them there in the school system; they can use it to send teachers out to get better qualifications and more certification or, if they want, they can use it to hire teachers to reduce class size.

We give the local school system a series of options, which is exactly what should happen. We in Washington should not be saying to every school system in America that in order to get these funds it has to add another teacher because that may not be what the local school system needs. There are numerous school systems in this country that have great teachers that they are losing because the tremendous demand of the marketplace is taking those teachers out of the school system and putting them in the private sector, especially in the math and science areas. So what that school system needs is the ability to pay them a differential, pay them a little more money. This gives them that option.

The Republican proposal is a logical proposal. It is a proposal that addresses the needs of the school systems, the needs of the principals in the school systems, the needs of the superintendents in the school systems and, most important, the needs of the teachers in the school systems and the needs of the parents whose children those teachers teach, rather than addressing some polling data that happens to make a nice political statement but ends up straitjacketing the local communities and the parents and teachers in those local communities.

That is the difference. To begin with, the Coverdell bill is the wrong place for this amendment. The amendment is bad to begin with, as I just noted, and I noted why it is bad, but it has no place in this bill. We are in the process of marking this specific issue up in committee. In fact, today we heard from the Senator from Washington; we heard from the Senator from Massachusetts as to how class size was going to be one of the two essential issues they intended to raise in the committee as we marked up the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. That is very appropriate. That is where the debate should occur.

In that bill already is the TEA bill, the Teacher Empowerment Act. They don't like it because it gives freedom to local school districts and they want to keep control in Washington. I can understand that is their political philosophy, but that debate should occur in the committee of jurisdiction on the bill appropriate to the issue. It should not occur on this bill, which is a bill to expand and empower parents and kids so they can go to college, so they can pursue other types of educational excellence activities.

The Coverdell idea is a superb idea and it certainly should not be mucked up, the water should not be discolored as a result of putting out what is basically a proposal that has no relevance to this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington has 9 minutes remaining.

Mrs. MURRAY. How much time is left on the other side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Mrs. MURRAY. I will just take a few minutes to wrap up and then I can yield my time. A number of Senators want to vote. They have other business to do.

Let me respond to the Senators from Georgia and New Hampshire. The Senator from New Hampshire is correct. We are in markup on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in committee. Unfortunately, we just gave political speeches this morning and were not able to offer our amendments and go through that process. I know the committee intends to do that, but the majority decided what was going to be on the floor today—their education policy. This is what we are debating. This is our opportunity as Democrats to say what we believe is important.

We believe clearly that we have a choice. We can take very important Federal resources and offer them to families who are wealthy enough to put $2,000 away and get $3 to $7 back in a tax cut, or we can use that money for programs that we know work.

The Senator from New Hampshire indicated he did not believe class size reduction worked. Let me tell you two things, Mr. President. First of all, a very important study that was completed, a STAR study from Tennessee, that followed kids in the early grades, first through third grade, in small classes, and then watched their progress until they graduated a year ago, clearly found students in small classes, as we are asking this money to go for, had fewer discipline problems, graduated with higher scores in math

and English, and in much greater numbers went on to college.

What Member of this Senate has not been out here to say those are goals every one of us has: Better discipline and higher scores in math and English and higher rates of students going on to college? That is clearly a goal for all of us in public education. It is the STAR study and other studies that have shown it works.

We are saying if we want to provide this money, we should do it for programs that work for kids. The mandatory provision the Senator from Georgia spoke to in the bill is, I believe, 13 lines long and merely says what this money goes for is for class size reduction with a quality teacher in every classroom. It provides some of those funds for training those teachers because that is a critical issue. I absolutely agree.

Finally, let me say from a personal perspective, having been in a classroom as a teacher with a large class and a small class, I can tell you what the difference is. The difference between the large class and small class is the difference between crowd control and teaching; having the time to work individually with students, to understand what their needs are, to help them get through the difficult processes of learning in the early grades: Reading, writing and math. Those are very basic skills that a child needs to have.

It is very clear to me we have a choice between a few families in this country who can afford to put away several thousand dollars a year and only get $3 to $7 back—a very few families—or we can use this money in a way that absolutely makes a difference in early grades for our children.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and ask them to seriously consider what education policies we believe are important for families across this country. I believe reducing class size, providing quality teachers, making sure our schools are safe, are important criteria and a responsibility for us at the Federal level, to work in partnerships with our State and local school boards to make sure every child in this country—every child, not just a few—is able to learn to read and write and be a success.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I support Senator MURRAY's amendment to provide $1.2 billion dollars to help reduce class size in the early grades by hiring 100,000 new teachers. The Coverdell bill does nothing to help improve public schools that need assistance. Instead it diverts scare resources to wealthy families in private schools, when 90% of the nation's students attend public schools.

Research has documented what parents and teachers have always known intuitively—smaller classes improve student achievement. In small classes, students receive more individual attention and instruction. Students with learning disabilities are identified earlier, and their needs can be met without placing them in costly special education. In small classes, teachers are better able to maintain discipline. Parents and teachers can work together more effectively to support children's education. We also know that overcrowded classrooms undermine discipline and decrease student morale.

Project STAR studied 7,000 students in 80 schools in Tennessee. Students in small classes performed better than students in large classes in each grade from kindergarten through third grade. Follow-up studies show that the gains lasted through at least eighth grade, and the gains were larger for minority students.

STAR students were less likely to drop out of high school, and more likely to graduate in the top 25% of their classes. Research also shows that STAR students in smaller classes in grades K–3 were between 6 and 13 months ahead of their regular-class peers in math, reading, and science in grades 4, 6, and 8. Michigan, California, Nevada, Florida, Texas, Utah, Illinois, Indiana, New York, Oklahoma, Iowa, Minnesota, Massachusetts, South Carolina, and Wisconsin have initiated or considered STAR-like class size reduction efforts.

In Wisconsin, the Student Achievement Guarantee in Education program is helping to reduce class size in grades K–3 in low-income communities. A study found that students in the smaller classes had significantly greater improvements in reading, math, and language tests than students in bigger classes. The largest achievement gains were among African-American boys.

In Flint, Michigan, efforts over the last three years to reduce class size in grades K–3 have produced a 44% increase in reading scores and an 18% increase in math scores.

Because of the Class Size Reduction Act, 1.7 million children are benefitting from smaller classes this year. 29,000 were hired with fiscal year 1999 funds. 1,247 are teaching in the first grade, reducing class sizes from 23 to 17. 6,670 are teaching in the second grade, reducing class size from 23 to 18. 6,960 are teaching in the third grade, reducing class size from 24 to 18. 2,900 are in grades 4–12. 290 special education teachers have been hired. And, on average, 7% of the funds are being used for professional development for these new teachers.

The Boston School District received $3.5 million this year to reduce class size. As a result, Boston was able to hire 40 new teachers, reducing class size from 28 students to 25 in the first and second grades.

In Mississippi, Jackson Public Schools used its $1.3 million federal grant to hire 20 new teachers to reduce class size in 1st grade classrooms from 21 to 15, and in 2nd and 3rd grade classrooms from 21 to 18.

In New Hampshire, the Manchester School District received $634,000 and was able to hire 19 new teachers in grades 1–3, particularly in its English as a Second Language and special education programs, reducing the average class size from 28 students to 18.

In Ohio, the Columbus Public School District has hired 58 fully certified teachers with funds from the class size reduction program, and placed these teachers in 14 high-poverty, low-performing schools, reducing class size in grades 1 to 3 from 25 to 15. Along with proven-effective reading programs such as Success for All, class size reduction is a central part of efforts by the City of Columbus to improve low-performing schools.

Senator MURRAY's amendment is an important amendment which deserves the Senate's consideration, and I urge the Senate to approve it. The nation's children and the nation's future deserve no less.

AMENDMENT NO. 2865

Mr. COVERDELL. By a previous unanimous consent agreement, I believe the order of business is to move to the Wellstone amendment for a vote. Have the yeas and nays been ordered?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. They have.

Mr. COVERDELL. I assume we will proceed to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2865. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 89, nays 9, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 20 Leg.]

YEAS—89

Abraham	Edwards	Lincoln
Akaka	Feingold	Lott
Allard	Feinstein	Lugar
Ashcroft	Fitzgerald	Mack
Baucus	Frist	McConnell
Bayh	Gorton	Mikulski
Bennett	Graham	Moynihan
Biden	Grams	Murkowski
Bingaman	Grassley	Murray
Boxer	Gregg	Reed
Breaux	Hagel	Reid
Brownback	Harkin	Robb
Bryan	Hatch	Roberts
Bunning	Helms	Rockefeller
Burns	Hollings	Roth
Byrd	Hutchinson	Santorum
Campbell	Hutchison	Sarbanes
Chafee, L.	Inonye	Schumer
Cleland	Jeffords	Sessions
Cochran	Johnson	Shelby
Collins	Kennedy	Smith (OR)
Conrad	Kerrey	Snowe
Coverdell	Kerry	Specter
Crapo	Kohl	Stevens
Daschle	Kyl	Thurmond
DeWine	Landrien	Torricelli
Dodd	Lautenberg	Warner
Domenici	Leahy	Wellstone
Dorgan	Levin	Wyden
Durbin	Lieberman	

NAYS—9

Craig	Inhofe	Thomas
Enzi	Nickles	Thompson
Gramm	Smith (NH)	Voinovich

NOT VOTING—2

Bond	McCain

The amendment (No. 2865) was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2821

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now occurs on the Murray amendment.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the next vote in this series be limited to 10 minutes.

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

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, have the yeas and nays been called for?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. They have not been ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The Senator from Washington yields back her time. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2821. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) and the Senator from Missouri Mr. BOND) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 42, nays 56, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 21 Leg.]

YEAS—42

Akaka	Edwards	Leahy
Baucus	Feingold	Levin
Bayh	Feinstein	Lincoln
Biden	Graham	Mikulski
Bingaman	Harkin	Moynihan
Boxer	Hollings	Murray
Breaux	Inouye	Reed
Bryan	Johnson	Reid
Cleland	Kennedy	Robb
Conrad	Kerrey	Rockefeller
Daschle	Kerry	Sarbanes
Dodd	Kohl	Schumer
Dorgan	Landrieu	Wellstone
Durbin	Lautenberg	Wyden

NAYS—56

Abraham	Frist	Murkowski
Allard	Gorton	Nickles
Ashcroft	Gramm	Roberts
Bennett	Grams	Roth
Brownback	Grassley	Santorum
Bunning	Gregg	Sessions
Burns	Hagel	Shelby
Byrd	Hatch	Smith (NH)
Campbell	Helms	Smith (OR)
Chafee, L.	Hutchinson	Snowe
Cochran	Hutchison	Specter
Collins	Inhofe	Stevens
Coverdell	Jeffords	Thomas
Craig	Kyl	Thompson
Crapo	Lieberman	Thurmond
DeWine	Lott	Torricelli
Domenici	Lugar	Voinovich
Enzi	Mack	Warner
Fitzgerald	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—2

Bond	McCain

The amendment (No. 2821) was rejected.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2860

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I believe the next order of business is the Hutchison amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Hutchison amendment.

The amendment (No. 2860) was agreed to.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the Mack-Hatch amendment No. 2827 and that following the reporting by the clerk, the Senate proceed to a period for morning business with Members permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

I further ask consent that the Senate resume the pending bill at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday and that there be 30 minutes equally divided in the usual form, to be followed by a vote in relation to the Mack-Hatch amendment. I ask that no second-degree amendments be in order prior to the vote.

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

Mr. COVERDELL. In light of this agreement, there will be no further votes this evening and the first vote tomorrow will occur at 10 a.m.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, for information purposes, it is my understanding in the morning we will do the Hatch amendment. It is my further understanding after that we will move to the Roth amendment.

Mr. COVERDELL. Yes, I have the consent request I will read.

Mr. REID. That is fine.

Mr. COVERDELL. I further ask consent that following the disposition of the Hatch amendment, Senator ROTH or his designee be recognized in order to call up the Roth amendment. I also ask consent that immediately upon reporting of the amendment, Senator GRAHAM of Florida be recognized in order to offer a second-degree amendment relating to offsets.

I ask unanimous consent that there be a total of 30 minutes equally divided in the usual form with respect to both amendments. Finally, I ask that following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to a vote on or in relation to the Graham amendment, to be followed by a vote on or in relation to the Roth amendment, as amended, if amended.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I ask that there be a number assigned to the Roth amendment. Do we have a number on that? Is this the one that is going to be offered for the purpose of substituting original text? We want to make sure if, in fact, the Roth amendment is adopted the legislation remains amendable.

Mr. COVERDELL. There is no intent to alter that plan.

Mr. REID. My only other suggestion is that the time be 1 hour equally divided. We believe we can do it more quickly, but at this time, there is a request for more time.

Mr. COVERDELL. It says 30 minutes for each amendment. Does the Senator want to make it an hour for each one?

Mr. REID. I believe 30 minutes for each amendment will be adequate, but let's cover the phone call we just received.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I modify the unanimous consent request to read according to the request of the Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Also, Mr. President, we will have no objection, but for the information of Senators, especially those on my side, following the disposition of the Roth amendment, as amended by Graham, we are going to move to the Boxer amendment, the Feinstein-Sessions amendment, and thereafter, we will probably move to either the amendment of Senator DORGAN or Senator KENNEDY or Senator SCHUMER. We have their amendments lined up. The first two will be Boxer and Feinstein. We should be able to move through the next amendments in the next day or two.

Mr. COVERDELL. In conjunction with the Senator's question about the Roth amendment, I think this language will clarify it. And with respect to the Roth amendment, if agreed to, it will be considered as original text for the purpose of further amendment.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2827

(Purpose: To eliminate the marriage penalty in the reduction in permitted contributions to education individual retirement accounts)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Georgia [Mr. COVERDELL], for Mr. MACK, for himself and Mr. HATCH, proposes an amendment numbered 2827.

The amendment is as follows:

In subsection (a) of section 101, add at the end the following:

(4) ELIMINATION OF THE MARRIAGE PENALTY IN THE REDUCTION IN PERMITTED CONTRIBUTIONS.—Section 530(c)(1) (relating to reduction in permitted contributions based on adjusted gross income) is amended—

(A) by striking ''$150,000'' in subparagraph (A)(ii) and inserting ''$190,000'', and

(B) by striking ''$10,000'' in subparagraph (B) and inserting ''$30,000''.

BUELL ELEMENTARY SHOOTING

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am saddened to come to the floor this afternoon to speak about a tragedy that occurred yesterday in my home State of Michigan.

Yesterday morning, in room No. 6 at Buell Elementary School in Mount Morris Township near Flint, a first-grade student allegedly shot and killed his young classmate, Kayla Rolland.

We don't yet know all the facts about how the first-grader gained access to the handgun or whether the shooting was accidental or intentional. We do know, however, that one girl lost her young life in this tragedy and the children at Buell Elementary are scared