

Hurricane Katrina. Three other buses filled with representatives of each group toured the central, southern and northern States and met in Washington on September 22nd to prepare for the peace march on September 24, 2005.

An estimated 300,000 people participated in the demonstration. Cindy spoke to the crowd who welcomed her as a hero. I called Cindy the "Rosa Parks" of this peace movement. Like the woman who sparked the civil rights movement, Cindy is the one person who has come forth to inspire others to do more than they believed themselves capable of doing. On that day when our grandchildren ask what we were doing during the Iraq War, we will be able to say: We spoke out and stood up in support of Cindy Sheehan.

HIGHER EDUCATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 20, 2005

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madame Speaker, I rise today in support of the temporary 3-month extension of the Higher Education Act.

I would prefer to rise today to express my support for a bill that expands access for students to college and fulfills the Federal government's promises to make college more affordable for the millions of students attending our nation's colleges and universities.

Unfortunately, that is not the bill before us today. It is my hope, however, that the Republican leadership will use this time provided by the extension to improve their plan to reauthorize the Higher Education Act—H.R. 609.

The Republican bill that passed out of the House Education and the Workforce Committee on a strictly partisan vote balances the massive deficit created by enormous tax breaks to America's most fortunate and the war in Iraq on the backs of students—who continue to face increased tuition costs across the nation. H.R. 609 cuts nearly \$9 billion from the Federal student loan program, with Republican plans to cut an additional \$2 billion in order to balance their misguided budget. This cut is the largest cut to student financial aid in the history of Federal student financial aid.

The Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act should be an opportunity to enhance access for our nation's low and moderate income students and first generation students to a higher education. Instead of finding ways to increase college affordability and fund student financial aid during this reauthorization, Republicans have been focused on finding ways to open up more Federal dollars for for-profit education institutions, while finding ways to usurp college campus autonomy. Instead of increasing access, millions of students will see the cost of a college education increase significantly because of provisions found in H.R. 609.

In committee, I voted to support the Democratic amendment to reauthorize the Higher Education Act, which would have increased access and enhance affordability for all students—all without raising taxes. The Democratic plan would have increased Pell Grants and would have maintained the promise Con-

gress made in 2002 to cap the interest rate on student loans at 6.8 percent.

The tax cuts proposed by President George W. Bush and the House Republican budget, forces college students to bear the weight of irresponsible fiscal policies.

Today, this temporary extension is necessary, but I will continue to work to ensure that students will not be forced to pay for this enormous deficit now through financial aid cuts and in the future as taxpayers.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 28, 2005

Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize that on September 27, 2005, I voted "yea" on H.R. 438 (rollcall 495), which designates the United States Postal Service facility located at 2000 Allston Way in Berkeley, California, as the "Maudelle Shirek Post Office Building."

Before voting on H.R. 438, many of my colleagues discussed Ms. Shirek's efforts on behalf of her community. At the time, I found them reason to support H.R. 438. However, after I voted "yea" on H.R. 438, I was informed of Ms. Shirek's active support for the release of Mumia Abu-Jamal—the same man who killed Daniel Faulkner, a Philadelphia police officer.

Had I known of Ms. Shirek's statements regarding Mumia Abu-Jamal prior to voting on H.R. 438, please let the RECORD reflect that I would not only have voted "nay" on passage of this bill, but I also would have urged my colleagues to join me in opposition.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF "LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL!"

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 27, 2005

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Resolution 66, supporting the goals and ideals of 'Lights On Afterschool!', a national celebration of after-school programs. Passage of this bill will not only recognize this celebration, but also reaffirm the United States Congress' continuing commitment to providing our children after-school programs.

The "Lights On Afterschool!" celebration was started in October of 2000 and was hosted in over 1,000 communities across the nation. The goal of the program at its inception was to call attention to the importance of after-school programs for America's communities. Last year, 7,500 communities celebrated Lights On Afterschool! events. This October, the Afterschool Alliance, the founding organization, expects 1 million Americans to participate in "Lights On Afterschool!"

In this time of political pressure for budget cuts, "Lights On Afterschool!" seeks to celebrate the importance of after-school programs to American Society, and assert the need for

even more programs. The worth of after-school programming is not lost on the American public. Nine in ten Americans think children need organized activities or a program to go to after school where they have learning opportunities. Nine in ten also support funding for after-school programs in low-income neighborhoods.

The "Lights On Afterschool!" program calls for expanding after-school opportunities so that every child who needs a program has access to one. This is not only a good idea on paper, but a good idea in practice. Teens who participate in after-school programs are three times less likely to try drugs, and less likely to smoke or drink. Teens who do not attend after-school programs are three times more likely to skip class. Students who participate in after-school programs have better grades, are more likely to attend college, and reach higher levels of achievement. The benefit of these programs also extends to the tens of millions of parents of school aged children, who, with the help of these programs, were better able to balance family and work life.

It seems like a simple decision to support the "Lights On" program, but budget-tightening is forcing many programs to cut back or even close. There is a tremendous unmet demand for after-school programs. Today, millions of children have no adult supervision after school. Mayors surveyed in 86 cities reported that only one-third of the children needing after school care were receiving it. Over two-thirds of principals whose children lack after-school programs claim a lack of funding as the reason for not having sufficient programming.

The "Lights On Afterschool!" program is scheduled next month on the 20th of October. Supporting this program—and after-school programs in general—should be a high priority for this country and this congress.

I support H.J. Res. 66 for the foregoing reasons, and I urge my colleagues to follow suit.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2123, SCHOOL READINESS ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2005

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to express my sincere disappointment in the Committee on Rules decision to report a restrictive rule for consideration of the bill before us today, the reauthorization of Head Start, the future of our children.

Several common-sense amendments that were offered to strengthen this bill were not ruled in order. Not surprising, most of them were Democratic amendments. Instead, several amendments that were ruled in order will weaken Head Start and the opportunity for our children to succeed.

In committee, there was bipartisan support for adding "faith-based" language into the Head Start Act, even though faith-based institutions currently participate in providing Head Start programs. We were happy to do this in committee; I was happy to do so, along with my colleagues, because the Federal Equal