

The community colleges already have programs where they evaluate what they're doing. They have to justify their programs, and the State should be setting priorities and funding those things that are most needed in the State. With unemployment as high as it is, I know that all the community colleges in North Carolina are setting priorities to work with people who need to get the education they need to get jobs, but there is so much taxpayer money wasted here on administration and bureaucracy and very little lack of accountability, despite what my colleagues have said.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS), a member of the committee.

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

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

This amendment does not pose a choice between those who support bureaucracy and those who support education. It poses a choice between those who wish to see economic growth by investing in the most important aspect of economic growth, our workforce, and those who would prevent such a thing.

I would not rely on this argument on, frankly, my colleagues here in the House, although I commend them for putting this in the bill. I would rely instead upon this statement from the Business Roundtable, which is the association of chief executive officers of leading U.S. companies with more than \$5 trillion in annual revenues and 10 million employees. So this is not the community colleges speaking. This is not those of us on the majority side speaking. It is the CEOs of the leading companies in America, and here is what they said:

"On behalf of the Business Roundtable, I want to commend you"—it's addressed to Chairman MILLER—"for inclusion of the Community College Initiative in H.R. 3221. This Community College Initiative and the President's American Graduation Initiative reflect the fact that community colleges have emerged as important institutions where acquiring skills for new jobs and new careers will take place."

The United States cannot compete without the most highly skilled and motivated workers in the world, and I dare say that our odds of achieving that goal in the workforce are severely compromised if our community college sector is not strengthened.

The community colleges that I represent are overwhelmed with new applicants. They're overwhelmed attempting to find facilities and re-

sources to deal with the education of those new applicants. That's why my colleges would agree with the CEOs of the biggest companies in this country who say that the Community College Initiative is so important for community colleges to reach their potential.

Let us not unduly constrict these fine institutions. Let us not listen to Republicans or Democrats. Let's listen to the leaders of corporate America who say, vote "yes" and oppose this amendment.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MILLER).

Mr. MILLER of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, it's astonishing that when unemployment in many parts of North Carolina is more than 13 percent that I have to defend an investment in community colleges.

Community colleges give students a chance to learn the skills that they will need to support themselves and support their families, and community college students move heaven and Earth to take advantage of that chance. Community college students often work full time, go to school full time, and for many, you can put on top of that, taking care of their children.

In North Carolina, about one adult in six is enrolled in the community college each year. All manner of workers depend on our community colleges for the skills they need for their livelihood: construction workers, law enforcement and other first responders, biotech workers, all manner of health care workers, and on and on. Talk to community college students and you will learn what industries are laying off and what industries are hiring.

North Carolina, like much of the Nation, was already going through a tough economic transition even before the recession, and millions of families depend on a community college education to make it through. And tough economic times have only made community colleges more important. Enrollment in North Carolina's community colleges increased by 8 percent just last year, and preliminary data shows that enrollment is increasing even more this year.

I welcome the Obama administration's recognition of the importance of community colleges to working families, to breadwinners willing to work hard to learn new skills. It is long overdue. And North Carolina's community college leaders welcome that, too, and strongly support this program.

I have a letter dated just yesterday from the President of North Carolina's Community Colleges strongly supporting this program. Help parents who will make any sacrifice to support their families. Vote for working families. Defeat this amendment.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman and Members of the House, this amendment should be overwhelmingly rejected. Not only does it destroy the Obama administration's initiative on community colleges, but

it destroys what almost every Member knows, that as much as the community colleges are doing today, as many students as they help, they're being asked to do even more. And the fact of the matter is we need them to do more, and we need them to do a better job.

We still have too many students who are starting community colleges but are not successfully completing it, either with a certificate for a career or an AA degree or transition to a 4-year school, whatever path they take. We have got to strengthen those pathways that those students take. We have got to strengthen the ability of the community colleges to make sure that they can provide that kind of opportunity. They are becoming the catalyst for economic innovation, economic change, economic revitalization and flexibility in all of our communities.

And what the Obama administration is suggesting with this initiative is that we should help them do that because we're vitally in need of their success so that people can change the careers as we move from one economy to another. As energy becomes modern and innovative and new, we need a different type of energy worker.

We must defeat this Foxx amendment. We must stick by this initiative and support the community colleges.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from North Carolina will be postponed.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ANDREWS) having assumed the chair, Mr. KISSELL, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3221) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

□ 1900

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KISSELL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.