

I was Governor in 1983 when President Reagan's Education Secretary, Terrell Bell, issued a report called: "A Nation at Risk," which said that: "If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war."

The next year Tennessee became the first state to pay teachers more for teaching well.

In 1985 and 1986, every Governor spent an entire year focused on improving schools the first time in the history of the National Governors Association that it happened. I was chairman of the association that year and the Governor of Arkansas, Bill Clinton, was the vice chairman.

In 1989, the first President Bush held a national meeting of Governors in Charlottesville, Virginia, and established national education goals.

Then in 1991–1992, President Bush announced America 2000 to help move the nation voluntarily toward those goals, state by state, community by community. I was the Education Secretary at that time.

Since then states have worked together voluntarily to develop academic standards, develop tests, to create their own accountability systems, find fair ways to evaluate teacher performance—and then adopted those that fit their states.

I know members of this committee must be tired of hearing me talk until I am blue in the face about a "national school board." I know it is tempting to try to fix classrooms from Washington. I also hear from governors and school superintendents who say that if "Washington doesn't make us do it, the teachers unions and opponents from the right will make it impossible to have higher standards and better teachers."

And I understand that there can be short term gains from Washington's orders—but my experience is that long term success can't come that way. In fact, today Washington's involvement, in effect mandating Common Core and teacher evaluation, is creating a backlash, making it harder for states to set higher standards and evaluate teaching.

As one former Democratic governor told me recently, "We were doing pretty well until Washington got involved. If they will get out of the way we can get back on track."

So rather than turn blue in the face one more time about the national school board let me conclude with the remarks of Carol Burris, New York's High School principal of the Year. She responded last week to our committee working draft this way:

... I ask that your committee remember that the American public school system was built on the belief that local communities cherish their children and have the right and responsibility, within sensible limits, to determine how they are schooled.

While the federal government has a very special role in ensuring that our students do not experience discrimination based on who they are or what their disability might be, Congress is not a National School Board.

Although our locally elected school boards may not be perfect, they represent one of the purest forms of democracy that we have. Bad ideas in the small do damage in the small and are easily corrected. Bad ideas at the federal level result in massive failure and are harder to fix.

Please understand that I do not dismiss the need to hold schools accountable. The use and disaggregation of data has been an important tool that I use regularly as a principal to improve my own school. However, the unintended, negative consequences that have arisen from mandated, annual testing and its high stakes uses have proven testing not only to be an ineffective tool, but a destructive one as well.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

### TRIBUTE TO BISHOP CHAD W. ZIELINSKI

• Ms. MURKOWSKI. In November, Father Chad Zielinski, the deputy wing chaplain at Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks, received what he regarded as an odd early morning telephone call. The call came from the Apostolic Nuncio, the Vatican's ambassador to the United States. The Nuncio informed Father Zielinski that he had been selected by Pope Francis to serve as the Catholic bishop of Fairbanks.

His immediate reaction: This makes no sense; how can this be? There must be some mistake. But there was no mistake. In December, Bishop Zielinski was ordained and installed to lead the Diocese of Fairbanks. The Catholic Anchorage newspaper reports that Bishop Zielinski is the first active duty military chaplain in recent history to shepherd a diocese. At age 50 he is also the 11th youngest of the 267 active U.S. Catholic bishops.

The selection was met with great enthusiasm throughout interior Alaska and especially in our military community. Before being called to the priesthood, Bishop Zielinski served on active duty in the Air Force. He was ordained a priest for the Catholic Diocese of Gaylord, MI, in 1996. But after the events of September 11 he saw a need for Catholic chaplains in the military and rejoined the Air Force.

His Air Force career was varied. Bishop Zielinski served as Roman Catholic cadet chaplain at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs and as a chaplain recruiter assigned to the Air Force Recruiting Service. He also served at Grand Forks Air Force Base in North Dakota and at RAF Mildenhall in Suffolk, England.

And he served three tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan—his first in Baghdad in 2003 and his last in Afghanistan where he served 18 forward combat positions, where religious services were punctuated by the sound of live gun fire. On one sad day, the convoy in which he was traveling was hit by a rocket, killing one of the drivers, who also happened to be a parishioner. That day ended with the bishop conducting a funeral. Needless to say, Bishop Zielinski was regarded as an exemplary chaplain and I have no doubt that he will be an exemplary bishop.

The Diocese of Fairbanks, the most northern and geographically diverse in the United States, covers some 410,000 square miles. It holds 46 parishes, most of which are in the Alaska Native villages. I am excited about Bishop Zielinski's elevation and I look forward to working closely with him in his new and important role as a leader in our faith community. •

### TRIBUTE TO FATHER FERNANDO "FRED" BUGARIN

• Ms. MURKOWSKI. On January 25, 1975, Father Fred Bugarin was ordained

as a priest in the Archdiocese of Anchorage by Archbishop Joseph T. Ryan. This week marks the 40th anniversary of Father Fred's ordination. On Saturday evening, friends of Father Fred will gather in St. Anthony's parish hall to celebrate his 40 years of faith and service. I join with the Anchorage community in expressing my appreciation to Father Fred for his good works.

Father Fred was born in the Philippines and migrated to Anchorage with his family in 1963. He was age 14 at the time. He graduated from West High School in 1967 and went on to study humanities and theology at the University of Dallas/Holy Trinity Seminary. Following his ordination, Father Fred was assigned to St. Benedict's parish as an assistant pastor. In 1978 he was selected as the first resident pastor of Sacred Heart parish in Wasilla and served there until 1981. He was subsequently promoted to direct the permanent diaconate and ministries program for the archdiocese.

Five years later, while on sabbatical, Father Fred set out on a new direction—to reconnect with his roots in the Philippines and enrolled at the East Asian Pastoral Institute in Manila where he became immersed in East Asian thought and culture. Father Fred signed up for the Maryknoll Associate Priests Program and upon completion of the training he was sent off to Mindanao in the southern Philippines. Father Fred had much to learn. He grew up in the northern Philippines and the language and culture of the southern Philippines was much different. Yet he was determined to connect with the people he served no matter how steep the learning curve. It was the right fit—a 5-year contract turned into an 8-year experience. What was to have been a short sabbatical turned into a life changing event.

Upon his return to the United States, the Archdiocese of Anchorage assigned Father Fred to Kodiak Island, a diverse community with an economy revolving around the fishing industry. Blue collar workers, mainly from the canneries, made up the bulk of the parish. During fishing season the population includes Filipinos, Salvadorans, Mexicans, Vietnamese, Samoans and Laotians among others. Father Fred regarded Kodiak as a laboratory for incorporating what he learned through his work in the Philippines.

After 5 years in Kodiak, Father Fred was reassigned to St. Anthony's parish where he remains today. He is known throughout Alaska for his work in building inclusive parishes and is active in interreligious activities in Anchorage. Since 2003, Father Fred has been involved with Alaska Faith and Action Congregations Together, has taught foundations of Christianity at Alaska Pacific University and has facilitated fatherhood workshops for the Alaska native community. In 2011, Father Fred was awarded the doctor of ministry degree from the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, CA.