

I wonder if the President and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle agree that we should apply that same standard to our Nation's education policy. As a former member of the Alabama State school board and as the former chancellor of postsecondary education for Alabama, I think it is time for a change.

For the last 50 years, Federal education policy has failed our students, especially our Nation's poor students, who need us the most. Just look at the statistics. Only 38 percent of high school seniors can read at grade level, and just 26 percent are proficient in math. Survey after survey shows that the United States is lagging behind other countries in terms of education.

We clearly need a new approach, and that is why I was proud to support the Student Success Act yesterday in our Committee on Education and the Workforce. For too long, the focus has been on the needs and wishes of Washington special interest groups instead of on the needs of those who matter the most—the students. It is time we change that. Immediately, two glaring flaws come to mind when looking at current policy:

First, our local teachers and administrators are drowning in paperwork and mandates. While only 10 percent of the funding for K–12 education comes from the Federal Government, the Government Accountability Office has found that 41 percent of the paperwork comes from the Federal level. That is unacceptable.

Second, title 1 funds, which are intended to support our Nation's most vulnerable, are picking and choosing winners by forcing money to some schools and by not allowing that money to others. The money should follow the student. We shouldn't allow students to remain stuck in failing schools. Every child deserves a fair chance.

Mr. Speaker, this top-down, heavy-handed Federal approach to education is not working, and, frankly, it is outdated. It is not the 1960s anymore: there are more than three television networks; we aren't all eating Wonder Bread; our phones aren't rotary phones tied to the wall; and our education system shouldn't be stuck in the sixties either. Instead of focusing on special interest groups, let's turn the focus to students, parents, and local leaders.

While the other side is always quick to point out the D.C. special interest groups, which stand by their failed approach, the Student Success Act is supported by the National School Boards Association, which is made up of more than 90,000 local school board members. These are the very people who are actually dealing with Federal education policy and how it actually works on the ground every day, and they want a new approach. Democrats and Republicans and these local school boards want a new approach.

Our teachers need the flexibility to innovate. That is why the Student Suc-

cess Act reforms a patchwork of narrowly scoped grant programs and, instead, creates a Local Academic Flexible Grant, which allows local schools to spark innovation and use teaching methods that work best for their students.

During committee debate yesterday, my colleagues on the other side were so committed to these same old, failed education policies that they even defended the universally disliked highly qualified teacher requirement. While I agree we need the best teachers possible in the classroom, who are Federal bureaucrats in Washington to decide what makes you highly qualified? Teachers in southwest Alabama and all across our country agree that the highly qualified teacher provision is simply not effective. Yet my colleagues on the other side and their special interest buddies refuse to give up power and allow us to move in a different direction.

It is time for the Federal Government to get some humility. Washington bureaucrats don't know how to educate our children, but local superintendents, school boards, teachers, and principals do, so let's empower them. It is time we restored local control over education policy and put power in the hands of those who know our students best. Let's put the focus on the student for once, and that is exactly what this act does.

I think the President may be on to something. We shouldn't continue with the same, failed education policy that has failed us for decades. We should get away from this centralized approach to education, which has failed the students throughout America. Mr. Speaker, the Student Success Act offers that new approach.

I urge the leadership of this House to bring the Student Success Act to the floor for a vote, and let's empower parents and local education leaders. For once, let's put the students first.

LYNCH-JONES RESOLUTION TO DECLASSIFY THE 28 PAGES OF THE 9/11 JOINT CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, almost 14 years after the horrific terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the American public does not yet have all of the information available regarding the circumstances surrounding those attacks on our country, particularly 28 pages of the bipartisan Joint Inquiry into Intelligence Community Activities Before and After the Terrorist Attacks of September 2001, which remain classified.

Since 2013, my colleagues, Congressman WALTER JONES of North Carolina, Congressman MASSIE of Kentucky, and I have been working together to craft and to garner support for H. Res. 14,

which calls on the President to release the 28 pages of the 9/11 Joint Congressional Inquiry. I sincerely appreciate Congressman JONES' and Congressman MASSIE's willingness to collaborate on this concerted effort on this issue.

Over the past few weeks, calls to declassify the 28 pages have been in the spotlight due to recent allegations by convicted terrorist Zacarias Moussaoui, who conspired to kill American citizens and who will rightly spend the rest of his life in prison. Whatever the motivations for Mr. Moussaoui's recent accusation of complicity by foreign agents in the 9/11 attacks, his testimony does bring to light important questions. Most notably is the fact that, as a nation, we have not yet fully accounted for the sources of funding and logistical support that enabled al Qaeda to undertake those terrorist attacks.

We owe it to the families who lost loved ones on that tragic day to provide a complete accounting of the events and circumstances leading up to the tragedy of 9/11, and it is a grave injustice that 28 pages of the bipartisan, bicameral congressional inquiry remain classified 14 years after September 11. This was not a mere redaction of a few specific words or phrases but the wholesale excising and removal of a full section, 28 pages in length. It may have been a matter of national security to classify these pages back in 2002, but it is now a matter of public interest and good governance to release them in 2015.

I am in firm agreement with former Senator Bob Graham of Florida, who oversaw the inquiry, with my colleague WALTER JONES of North Carolina, with Mr. MASSIE, and with Members of both parties, who, like myself, have read the 28 pages and believe the disclosure will not jeopardize sources or methods used in gathering this information. I firmly believe that declassifying the findings is appropriate for a number of reasons.

As Thomas Jefferson said:

An enlightened citizenry is indispensable for the proper functioning of a republic, and self-government is not possible unless the citizens are educated sufficiently to enable them to exercise oversight.

In other words, there can be no accountability without transparency. We must advocate for the need to make these pages public in order to shine a brighter light on the information contained therein and utilize it in framing our foreign policy going forward.

In addition, I have met with the spouses, children, siblings, parents of the 9/11 victims as well as with representatives from the 9/11 Families United for Justice Against Terrorism. They have provided powerful testimony and heartrending submissions regarding how important it is to seek the truth and to bring all those to account who were responsible for the 9/11 attacks.

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Today, at a time when the world continues to face challenges from expanding terrorist organizations such as

ISIS, Jabhat al-Nusra, Boko Haram, and al Shabaab, as well as al Qaeda and its affiliates, we must be mindful of the urgent need to bring their financiers and supporters to justice as well.

At an even more basic level, our commitment to one another as citizens in a society that values freedom and justice demands that we hold accountable those who aided and abetted the savage attacks on our homeland and murdered thousands of innocent Americans.

When that fundamental duty to protect American citizens has been breached, it is not enough to say that we will “never forget.” The military and civilian personnel at the Pentagon, the first responders and office workers in the New York office towers, the passengers and crew of those hijacked planes, and all those families whose hearts still ache, we owe it to them.

So I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to not only take the time to review those 28 pages but also consider supporting House Resolution 14, as these families and the American people deserve to have their questions answered.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S FISCAL YEAR 2016 BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to start off with a positive note. Just recently, President Obama submitted the Federal budget on time for the first time since 2010. While I appreciate his timeliness, I, and the constituents in my district, don't appreciate, however, his disregard for fiscal responsibility.

The President sent a budget to Congress which starts the fiscal year with our country in the red. What organization starts off the fiscal year by saying they are going to purposefully spend more money than they take in? How many folks around a dinner table actually have their conversation at the start of the year saying, “You know what? I want to start the year broke and I want to end broke.” That is what the President's budget does.

The President presented to Congress a \$4 trillion budget, and yes, you heard me right, that is trillion with a T. The proposed budget requests \$4 trillion in spending but only provides—catch this—\$3.5 trillion in revenue. I was not the best math student but I can see a problem here. That leaves the government with a half-trillion-dollar deficit.

Wait. Hold on a second. Let me go back and correct myself. I misspoke. That leaves the U.S. taxpayers with a half-trillion-dollar deficit because, let me remind you, the government makes nothing. Everything we spend comes from right here in my pocket, your pocket, and the pocket of everyone else in this country.

Now, I just checked, and the population of the United States is slightly over 320 million. So every man, woman,

and child would have to add an additional \$1,500 onto what they already owe in taxes—to include newborns—in order for this budget to even break even. And that is just for 2016.

The President's budget is a political document that reflects a very different view of fiscal responsibility than most people have.

Let's go through it and discuss the good, the bad, and the ugly of this budget.

First, the good. Now it is true that our national deficit is shrinking. Is it because of the President's policies? No. It is because of the ingenuity and determination of the American people. The private sector is now growing—and has been for a while—even as the administration has attempted to stifle businesses with antigrowth policies like ObamaCare and other regulations that continue to put sand in the gears of American business.

Even in the President's own budget document he cites economic growth as helping accelerate the pace of deficit reduction. He likes to go around the Nation and do speeches on how the deficit has decreased to its lowest level in decades during his Presidency. The inconvenient truth is that he decides to leave out that the biggest drops occur after 2010, when the Republicans took control of the House of Representatives.

The Republicans were able to garner concessions on reductions in spending. Plus, sequestration entered the fray, which aided in the decrease of federal expenditures. While sequestration is not the budget tool Congress would have hoped for, the President is now trying to capitalize off of this budget negotiation side effect.

President Clinton likes to take credit for the budget surpluses in the nineties, which were a result of the Republicans' Contract with America. Now, President Obama wants to take sole credit for a decrease in the deficit, a reduction in spending that he has had to make do with.

The bad. The President wants to raise taxes on Americans at the worst possible time—as we are emerging from the financial crisis. President Obama's tax proposals target job creators and the middle class. One such proposal was so egregious that even the Democrats said, We can't go along with this.

The President had a tax proposal to cut tax benefits on college savings plans. The 529 college plans are a means by which close to 12 million families save for college, many of them middle class Americans. That comes at a time when student loan debt is approaching a trillion dollars.

Hidden deep in Obama's budget is a student loan program that recently has been discovered to have a \$21.8 billion shortfall. His plan to subsidize student loans has now created a loss equal to the annual budgets of the Department of the Interior, EPA, and NASA.

The ugly. In President Obama's budget he discusses that by 2025 the Federal

debt will have reached 73.3 percent of GDP. That is almost three-fourths of our Nation's collective wealth. The President defines the country's \$18 trillion debt as being fiscally sustainable.

For him, 73 percent of our GDP is acceptable:

The key test of fiscal sustainability is whether debt is stable . . . as a share of the economy, resulting in interest payments that consume a stable . . . share of the Nation's resources.

Figure that one out.

The most disheartening part is the President's numbers are incorrect. The Congressional Budget Office, a non-partisan analytical wing of Congress, has stated that by 2025, the Federal debt will actually rise to nearly 79 percent of GDP, when the Federal debt would be \$26.3 trillion. CBO states that our debt is currently 74 percent of GDP.

The question you are asking now is: What is causing this increase in government spending? I bet you know the answer but I am going to tell you anyway. The CBO lists many factors, all of which are contributing to a bust in our Federal spending.

With that, this budget is another example of what does not need to be.

REMEMBERING JIMMIE LEE JACKSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to celebrate the life and legacy of Jimmie Lee Jackson.

Jimmie Lee Jackson was one of the foot soldiers who died to ensure that all Americans have the fundamental right to vote.

This 26-year-old Marion, Alabama, native was brutally killed at the hands of an Alabama State trooper on February 18, 1965, after attending a voting rights rally while trying to protect his mother and his 82-year-old grandfather.

The State trooper confronted the family at Mack's Cafe in Marion and shot Jimmie Lee Jackson at gunpoint range for simply shielding his family from the intimidation and retributions being carried out by law enforcement.

And to think that this occurred because of the audacity of this young man and his family to peacefully protest for their constitutional rights, which led to his brutal murder at the hands of law enforcement.

It was the senseless murder of Jimmie Lee Jackson that served as a catalyst for the voting rights movement in Selma, Alabama. Jimmie Lee Jackson deserves to have his proper place in American history as a true agent of change.

Likewise, the city of Marion is, rightly, the starting point of the historic road to voter equality that led marchers from Selma to Montgomery. I have sponsored efforts and look forward to the National Park Service adding the city of Marion to the historic trail from Selma to Montgomery.