the Nation's business between now and the end of February.

With all respect to those who have different schedules, I find it somewhat difficult to understand why we are not here dealing with the Nation's business on the range of different issues that have not been addressed in the Senate. We have a number of those. One of the most important is the whole issue of what is going to be the future for the young people in this country with a continuing resolution that just funds education at some 75 percent of what it was a year ago, with all of the implications that that has in higher education and also K through 12.

EDUCATIONAL IMPACT OF SHORT-TERM FUNDING MEASURES

Mr. KENNEDY. On Friday, January 26, the continuing resolution that has kept the Government operating for the last 3 weeks will expire. Once again, it will be necessary to enact a temporary funding measure to avoid shutting down the Government.

Although I understand the need to make certain accommodations while we attempt to negotiate an acceptable budget agreement, many of the areas we are fighting to protect, especially education, are facing increasing risk from this series of short-term measures.

A new continuing resolution, even for a few weeks, will take us past critical budget, planning, and teacher contract dates in school districts and will wreak havoc on the college admissions and financial aid process for high school students making critical college decisions. Furthermore, it will take us through half this fiscal year at funding levels that cut education by 13 percent overall and many programs by much more. This is no way to run a Government or to indicate the support for education from kindergarten through high school and to the colleges.

Mr. President, in the case of colleges, they cannot complete financial aid packages for the spring admissions cycle. By February 1, the Federal Government is required by statute to supply colleges with the numbers showing their Pell grant allocations and tables showing how much students of different need levels will receive in Pell grants. As of now, there are four different Pell grant appropriations numbers—the House, the Senate, the President's, and the continuing resolution—and there are different minimum and maximum award levels.

Likewise, by February 1, the Government is required to supply colleges with their allocation of campus-based aid—college work study, supplemental education opportunity grants, and Perkins loans.

In February, March, and April, when high school students are admitted to college for next fall, they receive a detailed financial aid offer showing how much each college will cost and how much aid they will get from each source—Federal, State, or college. Colleges cannot do this packaging for individual students without 1996 numbers for each type of financial aid.

Today I received a letter from the American Council on Education urging Congress to approve a full-year budget for education. Otherwise, they say, ''The confusion that all students will face as a result of this uncertainty will have its most profound impact on high school seniors.'' This is what they say, ''* * * profound impact on high school seniors. As these students sit down with their parents to negotiate the process of selecting a college to attend next fall, or determining whether they will even be able to enroll, their decisions will be influenced heavily by the level and types of aid for which they may be eligible in a particular school.''

Mr. President, just as it affects higher education, let me just mention what happens in many of the K–12 programs.

School districts across the country face needless uncertainty as they struggle to prepare budgets for next year and enter into teacher contracts. The Committee for Education Funding, a coalition of 90 education groups representing education at all levels, calls the funding levels in the continuing resolution ''a setback for education unprecedented in our nation's history,'' that will force ''layoffs of thousands of school employees and cutbacks in services to millions of children.''

Boston, for example, is required by State law to submit its school budget for the next year to its school committee by the first Wednesday in February. The school committee must submit its budget to the mayor by the last Wednesday in March.

Teacher union contracts require teachers to be notified of any layoffs for the next school year by May 15, or else teachers must be paid for the next year regardless.

Because there are no 1996 figures for key Federal education programs, Boston feels that it must adopt a budget based on the worst-case—House—level of funding for the title I Program, there would be a 15-percent cut for Boston schools. The city will have to eliminate title I services at 14 of their 79 title I schools, and they will also have to lay off teachers.

In Framingham, MA, Superintendent Eugene Thayer tells me that they will have to eliminate all title I reading programs in all middle schools, and severely cut back the support in elementary schools.

The Philadelphia public schools estimate that they will lose $13.5 million in title I funds under the current continuing resolution. At these levels, they will be forced to eliminate services in 62 schools serving 48,000 children. They will also have to lay off 100 teachers and 200 aides.

In New York, even if a final budget is passed by March 15, school districts may not be able to learn their allocations before the beginning of May—far beyond the April 1 deadline for teacher contract negotiations.

Based on past experience, New York educators say that it will take the Federal Government a few weeks, once a budget is passed, to determine State allocations for title I. These allocations are based on counties, and it takes New York 2 to 3 weeks to determine sub-allocations to its 700 school districts. This timetable would put school districts far behind their required budget schedules to comply with teacher contracts.

Mr. President, if you look at what we are doing, it is that effectively we will be cutting $3.1 billion, the largest cut in the Nation's history, in education. Last year, with the rescissions program, it was more than $600 million, and we are adding to that $3.1 billion in cuts. Those education programs would be cut basically by some 13 percent overall; the title I by 17 percent, and the list goes on.

We should oppose education cuts whenever and wherever they occur. President Clinton has demonstrated we can balance the budget in 7 years and protect education. We should not allow education to be slashed through the back door when those cuts would not be accepted through the front door.

That is the problem. We are going to be asked, on a continuing resolution, to fund it at 75 percent on this, with all of the disruption that it is going to be having for hundreds of thousands of young people who have graduated from high school and who want to go to colleges, with all the disruption it will have for the parents and those young people, with all the disruption it will have for hundreds of thousands of young people who will be going, either from Head Start through kindergarten and all the way up through high school, with all the disruption it will have in the classrooms for the teachers, the parents and the students.

Effectively, now, we have gone from holding hostage the Federal employees to holding hostage the schoolchildren in this country. That will be the effect and the impact of the continuing resolution, even at the 75 percent.

So, Mr. President, when we hear the majority leader talk about whether we can get an agreement, we know what they are saying: You better take the 75 percent or take responsibility for closing down the Government. That is the policy which is being announced here on the floor of the Senate this afternoon. That is an intolerable policy. It is, in terms of the young people of this country. Why should they, effectively, be held hostage? The education policy in this country will be held hostage because of the small minority of Members in this body or in the other body who refuse to permit an orderly processing of the education programs.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent letters from the American Council on Education and the Committee for Education Funding be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letters were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION,
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
Washington, DC, January 23, 1996.

Hon. MARK HATFIELD,
Chairman, Senate Appropriations, U.S. Senate, S–128 The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: We write on behalf of the nation's colleges and universities to express our hope that Congress will approve a full-year budget that provides adequate appropriations for education programs, especially the student financial assistance programs administered by the Department of Education.

As you are aware, federal student assistance is the primary means by which students and their families receive help financing a college education. Nearly eight million students rely on some form of federal student aid. This year, however, the highly effective system to deliver federal aid that was constructed with bipartisan support is threatened with chaos and uncertainty. Deadlines that will set the parameters for the amount of aid our campuses may distribute to needy students are approaching rapidly. Without knowing the Pell Grant maximum award level, or the amount of Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) or College Work-Study (CWS) money available, or whether any funding will exist for State Student Incentive Grants (SSIG), Perkins Loans, Javits or Harris Fellowships, college aid officers and admissions counselors will be unable to develop aid packages for the coming academic year or provide accurate and appropriate advice to students.

The confusion that all students will face as a result of this uncertainly will have its most profound impact on high school seniors. As these students sit down with their parents to negotiate the process of selecting a college to attend next fall, or determining whether they even will be able to enroll, their decisions will be influenced heavily by the level and types of aid for which they may be eligible at a particular school.

As you prepare a Continuing Resolution to keep federal programs operating past January 26th, we urge you to provide secure funding for the federal student assistance programs through the end of the fiscal year. The House and Senate bills provide identical appropriations for SEOG, CWS, and TRIO, and contain similar language regarding the Pell Grant maximum award. We urge the deletion of a Senate restriction limiting Pell Grants to not more than 3,768,000 students. However, we urge you to adopt the Senate provisions continuing the current Pell Grant minimum award level and assuring that funding is provided for the SSIG program, the Perkins Loan program, the Javits Fellowship program, and the Harris Fellowship program.

We appreciate your consideration of these views.

Sincerely,

ROBERT H. ATWELL,
President.

On behalf of the following postsecondary education associations: American Association of Community Colleges, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, American Council on Education, Association of American Universities, Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, Association of Community College Trustees, Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities, Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, Council of Graduate Schools, Council of Independent Colleges, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, National Association of College and University Business Officers, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, United Negro College Fund.

COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION FUNDING,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR/REPRESENTATIVE: The Committee for Education Funding (CEF), a coalition of ninety major education organizations representing a broad spectrum of the education community, strongly urges you to seek a bipartisan budget agreement that makes education investment a priority and also to approve a continuing resolution that maintains the vital educational opportunities of America's children, youth, and adults while negotiations proceed. We also urge you to oppose a year long extension of the current continuing resolution, which cuts education by $3.1 billion, or targeted appropriations that fund some programs while eliminating or cutting others.

Recent polls show that the American public believes strongly that improving education should be a top priority for Congress. The polls also demonstrate overwhelming—92%—support for the same or increased federal funding for education. Yet Congress is about to approve another continuing resolution for FY96 that would cut education by $3.1 billion if extended for the remainder of this fiscal year—a setback for education unprecedented in our nation's history. This is in addition to $600 million in rescissions from education already enacted for FY95.

A full year extension of the current continuing resolution would mean severe cuts in basic skills instruction; college grants, scholarships, and loans for needy students; school reform and educational standards; teacher education; vocational and career preparation; educational technology; learning English; school safety and drug abuse prevention; educational research and innovation; impact aid; libraries; Head Start; and other vital education programs. See the attached sheets for details of the impact of these cuts.

Almost a third of this fiscal year is over without providing 1996 funding levels for education. Postsecondary institutions across the country are unable to approve financial aid packages for millions of students. States and local school districts are making budget decisions now that will force layoffs of thousands of school employees and cutbacks of services to millions of children.

We urge you to oppose these cuts and insist that Congressional leaders make investment in education a top priority in the budget for FY96 and beyond. Americans want greater educational opportunities for themselves and their families to meet the challenges of a changing world economy. Stop the education cuts and secure America's economic future.

Sincerely,

VIOLET BOYER,
President.

1996 COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION FUNDING MEMBERS

American Association of Classified School Employees, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, American Association of Community Colleges, American Association of School Administrators, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, American Association of University Professors, American Counseling Association, American Council on Education, American Educational Research Association, American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations.

American Federation of School Administrators, American Federation of State, County, & Municipal Employees, American Federation of Teachers, American Library Association, American Psychological Association, American School Food Service Association, American Student Association of Community Colleges, American Vocational Association, America's Public Television Stations, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Association of American Publishers.

Association of American Universities, Association of Community College Trustees, Association of Proprietary Colleges, California Department of Education, California State University, Career College Association, City University of New York, Coalition of Higher Education Assistance Organizations, The College Board, Colorado Department of Education.

Cooperative Education Association, Incorporated, Council for American Private Education, Council for Educational Development and Research, The Council for Exceptional Children, Council of Chief State School Officers, Council of Graduate Schools, Council of the Great City Schools, Educational Testing Service, Georgetown University.

International Reading Association, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, The McGraw-Hill Companies, Michigan Department of Education, Military Impacted Schools Association, National Association for Bilingual Education, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, National Association of College Admission Counselors.

National Association of College and University Business Officers, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Federal Education Program Administrators, National Association of Federally Impacted Schools, National Association of Graduate Professional Students, Inc., National Association of Health Career Schools, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, National Association of Private Schools for Exceptional Children, National Association of School Psychologists, National Association of Secondary School Principals.

National Association of State Boards of Education, National Association of State Directors of Special Education, National Association of State Directors of Vocational & Technical Education Consortium, National Association of State Scholarship and Grant Programs, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, National Committee for School Desegregation, National Community Education Association, National Coalition of Title I Chapter I Parents, National Council for the Social Studies.

National Council of Educational Opportunity Associations, National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs, Incorporated, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Dissemination Association, National Education Association, National Middle School Association, National School Boards Association, National School Development Council, The National Title VI Steering Committee, National Writing Project.

New York State Education Department, Princeton University, Public Education Fund Network, San Diego City Schools, Seattle Public Schools, Software Publishers Association, Texas Education Agency, United States Coalition of Education for All, United States Student Association, University of Michigan, Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Mr. FEINGOLD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

THE POLITICAL REFORM AGENDA

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I think we are all very much looking forward to hearing the President's State of the Union Address tonight. It is a great honor to be a Member of this body and a great honor to be able to sit in the room with our national leader and hear his thoughts about the future for this country.

I recall just a year ago, when the President gave his first State of the Union Address, under the rule of a different political party in the Congress, that some of the pundits said one of the questions was whether President Clinton would be irrelevant to the process; he had to establish his relevance. That was an absurd proposition. Of course we found, during the past year, it is pretty tough to make any President irrelevant, given his powers and given the willingness of this President to use those powers this year to try to represent the reality of our Government. The reality of our Government in 1995, and now in 1996, is we have a split Government. One party is in the majority in the Congress and one party controls the Presidency.

What I appreciated at the time, though, despite some of those press comments about the President's possible irrelevance, is that he came right out there and talked about many issues, and, in the midst of all this alleged irrelevance, he was willing to put on the table something that had been overlooked, perhaps forgotten, in the language of the Contract With America. That is, he brought us back to what I like to call—what many people in both parties like to call—the reform agenda, the political reform agenda.

Those were issues across party lines that respond to the national feeling that maybe there is a little bit too much money in Washington that is expressed in too many ways and takes the elected representatives away from focusing on their constituents. So it was very helpful last year when the President in his State of the Union Address referred to the need for Members of Congress to give up the gifts, to have a gift ban. In fact, the President said something like, ''Why don't you just say no.'' Those words were helpful. And it came to pass, in part because of his leadership, in part because of the public's interest. The media helped by exposing the reality of the gift-giving practice.

But what helped most of all, along with the President's words, was the fact that there was a bipartisan effort, a true bipartisan effort, first in the Senate and then in the House, to try to stop this ridiculous practice of allowing gifts to be given to Members of Congress. It went into effect on January 1. I do not think it got enough attention in the year-end analysis of what happened in the 104th Congress. There were a lot of bad things to talk about, a lot of failure to resolve, a lot of failure to cooperate between the parties. But on that issue, both Houses in the end responded overwhelmingly and very positively.

Tonight is an opportunity for the President, President Clinton, to take us to round 2 of the political reform agenda. I refer to it as sort of the big daddy of political reform compared to the gift ban. That is the issue of real campaign finance reform.

President Clinton is no newcomer to campaign finance reform. I remember, as a brandnew U.S. Senator, in January 1993, the President came to our Democratic conference in the Senate. He said he had three top priorities for his term. The first had to do with the deficit and the economy. Of course there has been progress. We are still struggling mightily to try to move forward even more in that area. Second, he talked about his desire to reform our health care system. We have not achieved our goals in that area. That has been an area of disappointment to which we must return. But the third item he mentioned and that not many people are aware that he stressed right from the beginning was his belief that we had to have campaign finance reform for congressional elections, to truly change the tenor of the debate and the policy outcomes in this country.

So he did not miss any time. He referred to the unnecessary and extreme hold that powerful moneyed interests have in this town of Washington and he did so in his Inaugural Address. Last summer, when he had the chance to appear jointly with the Speaker of the other body, he was quick to emphasize the issue of campaign finance reform, and did the famous handshake where he indicated his willingness to work together with both parties to solve the problem. So President Clinton has been there whenever the call for political reform has gone out. He has always been supportive, as we try to solve these problems. So he has been a big help.

But tonight we need more help. Tonight we need the President of the United States to specifically put his strength, and the strength of his office, and the strength of his resolve, behind a national effort to change our campaign laws so that the people of our country can feel for the first time in a long time that those elections belong to them, that their votes count, and that it is not just the power of big money and influences that they cannot see or hear that control those elections.

Mr. President, let us build on the success this year when some Members of this body tried to change the system we have for financing our Presidential election. Let us build on that. We were able to defeat that.

The Presidential election in 1992 actually involved less expenditures than the Presidential election in 1988. That is because of the national laws we have had in this area. That is lacking in the congressional area. We have a complete OK Corral situation where any amount of money can be spent, and there are no rules to speak of about how much is spent in these elections. So nothing would be more helpful than to have the President tonight mention the fact that he has been and continues to be very supportive of campaign finance reform.

I think he knows there is a unique opportunity in the Congress this year. Working with Senator MCCAIN of Arizona and others we have introduced the first bipartisan campaign finance reform bill in 10 years. It is a voluntary bill, as it must be under the Supreme Court rule in Buckley versus Valeo, but it addresses several of the major areas of concern. It addresses that there is too much money spent in individual elections. It addresses the fact that we would like to encourage candidates to get a majority of their campaign contributions from their own home States. It for the first time addresses the problem that too many people are spending their own personal fortunes to be elected.

All of these things are addressed in the bill. I am hoping the President has been made aware of that and is supportive.

What is even more exciting is, it is not only bipartisan but it is bicameral. In the House there was another bill being promoted that several of the House Members said, why do we not look at the Senate bill? They made their own version of the McCain-Feingold bill, and they have many supporters of both parties involved. People in the country have noticed.

A bipartisan, bicameral bill endorsed by over 25 major newspapers in this country—Common Cause, Public Citizen, and many other groups.

Mr. President, I think one of the reasons why it has received such reception from the public is that people know that it is not just a question of too much money being spent in elections. They know there is a connection between what is spent in Washington on campaigns, what is connected to things like why we cannot solve our budget problem, why there is too much money spent in Washington, even though the public is begging us to get our finances under control.

In fact, I think there is a direct connection between campaign financing, overspending in campaigns, the drive to raise all the money you can, and the fact that we still have not resolved the deficit problem. The ability of many special interests to secure millions, and sometimes billions, of taxpayers' dollars in Federal contracts and subsidies and other spending programs relates directly to our current campaign finance system where candidates for public office must raise millions of dollars for their campaigns.

A report was just issued by the Center for Responsive Politics entitled ''Cashing in From A to Z.'' It is a long report, but they list a few recent examples that I think the public can respond to. Cattle and sheep ranch interests contributed over $600,000 during the

last election cycle while fighting to protect Federal grazing fee policies that give ranchers access to Federal lands at below-market prices.

The mining industry spent over $1 million in 1993–94 on campaign contributions to Members of Congress so that they could try to prevent the reform of the 1872 mining law which allows people to pay a few thousand dollars for land that contains billions of dollars worth of gold and silver and other minerals.

The oil and gas interests contributed over $6.1 million during the last election cycle to help back their hefty 1995 agenda, which included repeal of the alternative minimum tax. They do not even want to pay a minimum tax for all the profits they are making.

Mr. President, in the 6 weeks following a close House vote on funding the B–2 bomber, opposed by even the Defense Department, contributions from defense contractor Northrop Grumman's PAC's to House Members who voted for the program totaled over $50,000, just from that one company for that one program that the Defense Department did not even want.

Mr. President, obviously I could go on with these examples, but they show the fact it is not just a question of there being too much money in campaigns, but the connection between campaigns and the fact that we still have a terrible budget and deficit problem in this country.

So, Mr. President, it has become clear to many of us, Democrats and Republicans alike, that their failed campaign finance system contributes to keeping many unnecessary Government subsidies flowing, and it helps explain why well-financed special interests were able to grab the legislative process by the scruff of the neck in the first place.

Mr. President, it is my fond hope the President of the United States will use his bully pulpit and excellent intentions on this issue to give a strong push behind the bicameral, bipartisan effort to reform our campaign finance laws.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

Mr. HEFLIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, I believe we are closer to a balanced budget than we have been in many years. I think the public overwhelmingly wants a balanced budget. I think we are moving in that direction. But there are little problems here and there that seem to prevent us from getting together in being able to shake hands on a balanced budget.

The President and the Republican leadership I think all realize that we need a balanced budget for it will certainly directly affect virtually every segment of the Government and every citizen of the country. I feel that lost in the political rhetoric over the budget is the fact that we have reached substantial agreements at this stage.

We have agreed that the budget ought to be balanced in 7 years. We have agreed that CBO figures ought be controlling. We have agreed that there ought to be less Government. We have agreed that there ought to be a tax cut. And while both sides still have some major differences to work out, I feel that good-faith negotiations on these issues can yield a budget that is fair and equitable to all segments of society, and each party can claim victory.

When the recess occurred, there was a statement to the effect that we were going to stop the negotiations and then come back again.

There have been three or four efforts that have been made recently to try to get the parties together to start negotiating again. But for some reason or other they have been called off. Now that the recess is over, and the recess from the negotiations is over, it is time to begin again and for each side to meet and come to an agreement. The longer the negotiators avoid constructive negotiations the greater the chances for each side to become reentrenched in their policy positions.

Compromise is an art that appears to have somehow been forgotten. It is apparent that in order for an agreement to be reached, both Democrats and Republicans are going to have to give and take. Each side is going to have to have some wins and each side is going to have to have some losses. If the Israelis and the Palestinians can get together and negotiate in good faith, there is no reason why the Democrats and the Republicans cannot do likewise. If the Croats, Moslems, and Serbs can agree on a cease-fire, why cannot both parties put their verbal pistols back in their holsters?

I do not know exactly what the solution is. But it may well be that we may have to go to Camp David and tell them to stay there until they reach an agreement. Maybe Dayton is the place. Maybe Norway. But whatever it takes in regards to getting together and finding a location and staying with it until we reach an agreement, it seems to me to be the proper course to follow. When you add it up, the current Democratic proposals and the Republican proposals are less than $100 billion apart. Taking into account $12 trillion over a 7-year period, this figure amounts to less than .8 of 1 percent. With this in mind, it seems to me that the negotiations should proceed with an emphasis on what each side is willing to give and take in order to reach a long overdue budget agreement.

The State of the Union Address will have a significant impact on the negotiations. It is a good opportunity for the President to demonstrate his willingness to reach an accord. However, if his speech is overly partisan, it can harm the negotiating atmosphere by having a hardening effect on the Republican negotiators. Likewise, the Republican response can also either help or hurt the negotiating process.

Hopefully, the President will extend a hand of conciliation, and if he does, I hope the Republicans will not slap it, but instead shake it. I hope that each Senator will keep this in mind when determining exactly what he or she wants to convey, when commenting on the content of the President's speech. Each Senator must be aware that their responses may affect the overall negotiations pertaining to the budget.

We need to adopt a continuing resolution—hopefully a clean one—by January 26. The expiration of the current continuing resolution, of course, runs out on that date. Despite all the heated rhetoric, I do not believe it is in the best interest of our citizens to have the remaining portion of Government closed down. A great number of the various Agencies and Departments will stay open under the legislation that has already been adopted.

Taxpayers and Federal employees should not be punished, because Congress and the administration have not fulfilled their obligation to reach a budget.

Mr. President, as I have stated before, I think it is imperative that we reach an agreement on the budget, and I am optimistic that when reasonable people sit down together an agreement can be worked out.

It seems to me we have made a great deal of progress. We have agreed on some fundamentals: A 7-year period for a balanced budget; CBO figures; a tax cut; and a cut in Government. We just need to get together. Perhaps we need a mediator. But I hope that we will let reason prevail, and we will not let this opportunity pass to achieve a balanced budget.

Mr. GRAMS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KYL). The Senator from Minnesota.

FRESHMAN TOUR: PROMISES MADE, PROMISES KEPT

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, too often here in Washington, politicians come to town with a mission but end up coming down with a severe case of Beltway fever.

They get caught up in the unreal atmosphere of this place and eventually forget what it was that first propelled them into public service.

They shut themselves away in their Senate or House offices or even in the Oval Office.

They spend their time hobnobbing with their new-found Washington friends. And after awhile, they just lose touch with the folks who sent them here. They think they are doing ''the people's business,'' but in truth, they are no longer speaking for the people at all.

The 11 Members of the Senate freshman class came to town with a mission, too, a mandate given to us by the voters.

We met often as a group last year to track our progress. And as 1995 came to