

a very, very important and a very, very unhappy circumstance that has occurred in my district. Many of you may have watched the CBS Evening News last night and observed an alarming segment of the news about a situation in Toms River, NJ. Toms River is in Dover Township in Ocean County.

Unfortunately, over the past several years, the rate of brain and central nervous system cancers in children has increased very dramatically. As a matter of fact, it has increased far beyond what would be expected if you looked at some kind of a national average or at a normal town. In Ocean County itself, as a matter of fact, 54 children have been diagnosed with brain or central nervous system cancer since between 1979 and 1991, just those several years. This is a rate which is far in excess of what we would expect to find.

In Toms River, there were eight children diagnosed with those types of cancers when you would expect an average of maybe two. So this is obviously many times higher than we would expect and has created a very difficult situation and, of course, has frightened many of us who live in that area.

Back in New Jersey, there are a number of efforts under way to try and do something about this, about this situation, and of course, before we can do anything about it, the situation has to be defined so that we can know what caused it.

There are citizens groups which have formed. For example, there is a citizens group which is very, very active which is known as Oceans of Love. Its leader, a lady by the name of Linda Gillick, who has been very active over the years, has done much good for families that have been affected. As a matter of fact, here 17-year-old son, Michael, is one of the children that is affected by this condition.

Also back in New Jersey, State Senator Andrew Ciesla and his two running mates in the State assembly, Assemblyman Holzapfel and Assemblyman Wolfe, have introduced legislation to provide \$400,000 to go toward a definition of the problem, to try to study the situation, to find out what it is that may have caused the situation to occur.

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Here in the Congress, on a bipartisan basis, we are taking steps to try to do likewise. The administration has been brought into this, the Clinton administration has been brought into this, and I understand there is a good possibility that assets of the Federal Government will be made available through the administration.

Yesterday, I, together with a number of other concerned Members of Congress, introduced legislation here to match the State bill of \$400,000, so we would have a total of \$800,000 to look at this problem and provide a study and report so we can take corrective measures once we know what has happened.

Mr. Speaker, as this bill proceeds through the legislative channels here

in Washington, I hope that we will have support, and I am sure we will have support, of Members from both sides of the aisle. This is obviously a situation which must be corrected. There are some suspected carcinogens in the area which need to be looked at, which need to be studied, which may be the root cause. Of course, this needs to be looked at more carefully in order to make sure that we know what it is that is happening.

Last night there was a meeting in the township, and 1,000 community members showed up to express their concern. If you could read the accounts of that or hear from the people who were there, you would understand just how difficult and frightening this situation is.

So, Mr. Speaker, I hope that we will be able to move with dispatch, either through the administration or through the Congress or both, to bring to bear the assets, the financial capabilities, and the personnel which are embodied in the Federal Government, in order to quickly and efficiently define this situation, define a solution to the situation, and get this episode behind us.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to express these thoughts here this afternoon.

COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF OFFICIAL CONDUCT MUST ITSELF BE ABOVE REPROACH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Ms. SLAUGHTER] is recognized for 1 minute.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned today. I am very concerned about the ability of the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to conduct its business in a fair and impartial manner, because of press reports that we have seen throughout this Congress expressing doubts about the committee's failure to uphold the bipartisan standard of fairness for which it is well-known.

Just yesterday I read a press report about a new breach or possible breach of impartiality, where the committee was accused of communicating with a Member who was under review. Surely, Mr. Speaker, this must not happen. It is totally unacceptable.

The group in this House that is charged and given the privilege of maintaining the ethics and the decorum of this House must not itself come under reproach.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. RIGGS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. RIGGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

THE WEEK THAT WAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, this indeed was a week that was, but I hope this is no indication of what our future may be. This is the week where we cut \$3.5 billion from education funds. Yes, this is the week where we denied aliens who are here on the soil access to free education. Yes, this is the week where we also gave, I think, a very poor example that we have to have assault weapons in order to feel protected in the sanctity of our home.

Mr. Speaker, this was the week that was. But I hope and pray this is no indication about the future that is to come.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation deserves a future that is worthy of its past.

In the past, we led the world in education. Today, we trail many nations in Europe and Asia.

In the past, we adequately invested in education, spending 10 percent of our funds. Today, we spend roughly 1 percent, and worse, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to cut another 25 percent of those funds.

It should, therefore, not surprise us, Mr. Speaker, that Japan, which now leads America in education, also leads America in the sale of many products and services.

It should not surprise us that we have a balance of trade deficit with Japan.

Education and our economic position are tied together.

We all know the old adage, "If you build a better mousetrap, the world will beat a path to your door."

We cannot build better mousetraps without a solid foundation of education in this country.

We cannot compete globally, without education at home.

Yet, Members of this House have voted to further cripple education by making the largest cuts in America's history, with overall funding of the Department of Education likely to be reduced by 25 percent.

These cuts will affect basic reading, writing and math skills—skills that shape the workers and managers of tomorrow.

These cuts will mean fewer computers in the classroom, and worse, fewer teachers to educate and train our future work force.

These cuts could mean that some 45,000 teachers will get layoff notices in April, making classrooms more crowded and teaching more difficult.

We must restore these cuts, we must invest in education to provide greater educational opportunities for America's children, America's families and America's workers—so that they will be ready to meet the challenges of the changing global economy.

Japan and China recognize the value of education.

That is why they are using their resources and sending more and more of their young people to the United States for an education.