

help educate people on these issues. What we must do instead is educate our children early. We can teach them to have opinions, and teach them why they can't read that book, or why they shouldn't read that book. As time passes, they will be able to handle the issues, before being offended. Also, they will be able to personally ban books, TV with the V-chip and movies with the rating system.

There's no "cut and dried" solution to this. If a case in book banning or any other censorship were to reach the Supreme Court, they can interpret the First Amendment. Or if two-thirds of each House vote in Congress, they could rewrite the First Amendment more specifically. And on a more local level, if two-thirds of all state legislatures wanted to, they could call an actual Convention and rewrite it themselves.

Thank you for inviting me, and I hope something can be done on this issue.

Congressman Sanders: Thank you very much, Matthew. Matthew, let me ask you a question, because you have dealt with a very sensitive and controversial issue. So, here's my question: if at town meeting, or better yet a school board meeting, a parent gets up and says, "I read this book. It is vulgar, it has filthy words in it, it has ideas that I don't want my daughter to see; I want that book out of the library." You're a member of the school board—how do you respond to that?

Answer: Tell her that we can ban the book, in a sense, ban by putting it in, maybe, a section, like an adult section or a high school section. This happened at my old school, as a matter of fact, and they did not remove it from the library, and just put it in a separate section. What happened, was a 5th grader was basically in the high school section, reading this book. And I would ask them to educate . . . their kids, and I would ask the teachers also need to educate their kids on why they shouldn't read that book at that age.

Congressman Sanders: In your judgment, what is the danger of somebody defining a book and saying, "This book is terrible, I want it out." What are the long-term repercussions of that approach?

Answer: With these books that I've brought—these are classics, these are used in teaching. If we lose these books, we lose a valuable tool in teaching our youth.

Congressman Sanders: So what you're saying is that what may be vulgar for one person may be a work of art and a classic for somebody else.

Answer: That's right.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN
HERITAGE MONTH MAY 21, 1996

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 29, 1996

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to observe Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and to recognize the many contributions Americans of Asian and Pacific ancestry have made to our Nation.

May was selected as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month because several significant events took place in May that impacted the Asian Pacific community, events such as: the first Japanese immigrants arrival to the United States—May 27, 1869; the Central Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad were joined at Promontory, UT, of which 90 percent of the track from Sacramento to Prom-

ontory was laid by Chinese workers—May 10, 1869; passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act, the first U.S. immigration law to discriminate on the basis of race—May 8, 1882; and the Alien Land Law was signed in California prohibiting Asians from buying land—May 19, 1913.

America has been enriched by the many contributions and achievements of the Asian Pacific community. We have all benefited from their struggles, their labor, and their achievement. From the railroads and bridges that were built to the works of art, music, and literature, Asian Pacific American contributions to the United States have been innumerable. For example, the most visited monument in Washington DC, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, was designed by a Chinese-American, Maya Lin; the youngest person to win the French Tennis Open is Michael Chang; and the inventor of Playdoh is a Chinese-American.

In addition, Asian and Pacific Island Americans have fought and died in defense of our country. The most highly decorated infantry troop in our country during World War II was the 442d Infantry Battalion, a troop comprised entirely of Japanese-Americans.

Asian Pacific Americans' accomplishments not only symbolize our rich and diverse heritage, but also highlights shared ideals and unity in a common quest for freedom and dignity.

In the midst of extensive discrimination, both social and legislative, APA's have managed not only to survive, but to build communities and to carry on their rich heritage. Asian Pacific Americans have enriched our country's unique diversity and strengthened us as a Nation.

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 29, 1996

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate May as Older Americans Month. This month is a special time to acknowledge the valuable contributions made by the senior citizens of this Nation, and to recognize their special needs. It is also a time to bring age-related issues to the forefront of America's attention. The population of this country is growing older at an unprecedented rate. By the year 2050, one in five Americans will be over 65 years of age. Older Americans Month gives us an opportunity to think about how we must plan to meet the needs of the rapidly growing number of our Nation's senior citizens.

At the forefront of the issues concerning older Americans is the current debate over the so-called reform of Medicare. Medicare currently provides over 90 percent of Americans over the age of 65 with quality health insurance benefits. There is no private insurance plan in the country that offers the wide range of benefits and affordable care that the Federal Medicare Program provides. Yet in their proposed budget plan, Republicans still want to cut \$167 billion in Medicare and \$72 billion in Medicaid. These cuts are unprecedented, and would have a devastating impact on today's older Americans, as well as destroying

the options of future retiring citizens. Seniors would be forced into private managed care programs which are proven to be more restrictive and make money by denying care. While essential Federal health care benefits will be sacrificed, these cuts are planned to provide tax breaks for the wealthy.

The Republican proposal would abandon the needs of older Americans rather than meet them. This month, and in the months to come, let us recognize the senior citizens of this country, not by cutting their benefits and threatening their future, but by giving them hope in maintaining their health and security.

STATEMENT BY ACACIA FANTO
REGARDING THE FINANCING OF
PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 29, 1996

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of my colleagues I would like to have printed in the RECORD this statement by Acacia Fanto, a high school student from Brattleboro, VT, who was speaking at my recent town meeting on issues facing young people.

My name is Acacia Fanto, and my topic is property tax funding of public school education.

Primary funding of public school education through property tax is inherently unfair. There are huge differences in property wealth from district to district. Based on this funding system . . . unequal from one area to another. The amount of money spent on education is a significant factor in determining the quality of education. Money is necessary to hire good teachers, buy the latest textbooks, get the latest classroom equipment, and attract good administrators. Despite this, cuts are prevalent everywhere. The biggest cuts are in arts, extracurricular activities and technology.

If money is a significant factor of a good education, and money is the biggest variable from one public school to another, then education quality is not equal in this country. The differences from one district to another are astonishing. There are tremendous disparities based on where you live. The property tax funding system is making it difficult for many areas to meet even basic educational needs, at a time when more and more money is needed for special programs. We need these programs in schools to deal with the problems of today, such as violence, teen pregnancy and broken families. All these necessities take money away from academic programs.

Property tax funding of public school education is not only unfair, but also a regressive funding system, one that often turns homeowners against schools because they don't want, or can't afford, to have their property taxes raised. The property tax funding system is unfair, unequal and ineffective, so alternatives need to be sought. The Robin Hood plan shifts money from wealthy districts to poorer ones, to try to equalize funding. This plan turns the "haves" against the "have-nots," and injects race and class into the equity funding fight. A statewide property tax, or income tax, could turn the problem from a local funding issue to a state one. These solutions would decrease inequalities within a state, but not within the country.

An alternative to the property tax funding system which would provide consistency, and would eliminate the unfairness, inequalities, and the opposition between the "haves" and