

opportunity. I think that is really what it is all about. We are not talking about handouts here to people who do not want to learn. We are talking about providing an opportunity so that everyone in this country can get an education at the highest level that they want and that they deserve and that they are willing to work for. That is what it is all about.

That is the promise, if you will, of America. If that promise is not there anymore, it makes it much more difficult for us to talk to our constituents or our children about equal opportunity. The equal opportunity just will not be there anymore. That is why I think it is really important that we continue to work toward that equal opportunity goal, particularly when it comes to education, which is so important for the future. I want to thank both of you for joining me.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to take up a cause that is the No. 1 concern of millions of working parents and is an issue that the Republicans have called garbage. I am talking about the education of our children. I am talking about the future of our democracy and how we as a nation will take on the challenges of the 21st century. Let's look at the record of the Gingrich Congress. In 1995, the Republican Congress voted for the largest education cuts in history—slashing education programs by 15 percent or \$3.6 billion. They voted to eliminate the funding for Goals 2000 School Reform which sought to raise the achievement levels of 44 million children. They voted to cut the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program by 57 percent—denying 23 million students services that keep drugs and violence away from children and their schools. They voted to cut Head Start by \$137 million.

All of these cuts were in the face of the largest school enrollment in the history of our Nation—this is the time of the baby-boom echo. These are the children of the baby-boom generation that Republicans want to face their future with less resources for their education.

Finally, yesterday, the Republicans could no longer take the heat that they were shortchanging our Nation's schoolchildren and are now prepared to restore \$2.3 billion of education cuts they took out of President Clinton's proposed spending for schools in fiscal year 1997. They now want to bury this issue and go home and try to forget about how they have done our children the worst disservice possible. How they want to forget that there are fewer teachers in the classrooms this fall because of what they did last year. They want to wash away their guilt when they see classrooms in school lunchrooms and even closets. We need to be increasing education funding, in light of growing school enrollments—not cutting. We need to invest more in our future and the future of our children.

Still, Mr. Speaker, Republicans have had the audacity to call our efforts to increase spending for education political garbage. Well, is it political garbage for working parents to see Republicans cut valuable funding for basic reading and math skills, Head Start, summer jobs for kids, school-to-work initiatives and Pell grants for college students. It may be garbage to them, but it's the key to our future.

So, don't be fooled by these 11th hour Republican conversions. Republicans can't go

home now and undo the damage they have done to our schools. We have to keep up the pressure—Republicans can't be trusted with our children's education. This November, let's throw out the real garbage.

Democrats have a real agenda for working families that helps them to prepare their children for the challenges of the 21st century. Our Families First Agenda offers a brighter path for the future education for our children. It offers a better chance for helping get our kids to college.

With stagnating household incomes and the ever-increasing costs of a college education, American families are worried about how they are going to send their children to college. And what have the Republicans done to help? They have voted again and again over the last 2 years to slash student loan programs and to eliminate direct student loans. They have also voted to cut back on Pell grants and Perkins loans. All of this in the face of a fact that every working person knows—a college degree is a ticket to a higher income. It is a ticket to a better life and a life that is becoming more and more out of reach for greater numbers of people every year.

Families First Agenda includes a HOPE Scholarship Program that President Clinton offered in June. It would provide all students with a \$1,500 refundable tax credit for full time students who keep up their grades. The HOPE Scholarship Program tries to make 2 years of college as universally accessible as high school is today.

This Democratic Families First educational initiative also includes a \$10,000 tax deduction for education and training expenses. This deduction is up to \$10,000 a year for each family. It would be available even for families that don't itemize their deductions. And this is in addition to the tax credit which is \$1,500 for each student. It all adds up to help for families that want to see their children get a college education and have a better life.

Mr. Speaker, education is the key that will unlock our potential for the country's future. We have to at least help our families put the key in the door. Congress should not go home without giving our children a chance at a better life. We need to provide for safe and drug free schools and for strong investments in education and training of America's young people and workers. That, Mr. Speaker is the right way to prepare our country to compete in the world economy of the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, we have finally gotten the Republicans to see the light. Quoting from the Washington Post of September 18, 1996:

GOP RESTORES \$2.3 BILLION IT CUT IN EDUCATION FUNDS—REPUBLICANS WANT TO AVOID PREELECTION GRIDLOCK

Bombarded by Democratic charges that they were shortchanging the country's schoolchildren, Senate Republicans agreed to match President Clinton's proposed spending for schools by restoring \$2.3 billion that Republicans had cut from education accounts for next year.

The GOP concession on education spending came only minutes before Democrats were prepared to offer a proposal to add \$3.1 billion for education and job training to an Interior Department spending bill. Before they could offer their proposal, Lott told reporters Republicans were prepared to add back \$2.3 billion for education alone.

CORRECTION TO THE RECORD OF SEPTEMBER 18, 1996, PAGE H10580, SPECIAL ORDER OF THE HONORABLE SONNY CALLAHAN

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE TOM BEVILL AND THE HONORABLE GLEN BROWDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCINNIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. CALLAHAN] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

WATCH FOR ELECTION-YEAR SPIN IN HOUSE FLOOR SPEECHES

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, it must be confusing to the people who are watching this, both in the gallery and on C-SPAN, about what we are talking about today. During this time of our political careers in history, it is an election year. It is like selling Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola. You have one side that says Pepsi-Cola is better, and one side that says Coca-Cola is better. What we do is create spin efforts. We try to convince the American people that one side is going to do all of these evil things, and the sky is going to fall if indeed a certain individual is elected President.

You hear things about cutting Medicare. There is not a provision anywhere in Washington where anybody has introduced or even suggested that we cut Medicare. All of this is partisan politics, trying to convince you, trying to manipulate you, the audience, into believing their side or our side of any particular issue.

They just talked about the environment. We are not going to destroy the environment. Not one individual in this entire body wants to do anything to do harm to the environment.

So as you go through these little periods of speeches on the floor of the House, keep in mind that it is that time of year. You are intelligent people. You can make your own mind up. Base it on character, base it on history, base it upon the future, base it on whatever you want. But keep in mind that these are like television ads. They are just a few minutes dedicated to the Members of the House to come here and express their views, and to try to convince you that the future lies in someone else's hands, or the future lies in the hands of those that have it today.

Spin is interesting here in Washington, because, you know, I heard the Secretary of Defense went over to Kuwait. I think all of us in the House knew, and certainly everybody in television land knew, and certainly, Mr. Speaker, you knew, that the Kuwaitis decided they did not want us there, even though we sent 500,000 men over there to save their country. When we tried to send 3,500 men there, they balked. But in any event, the Secretary went over there and he explained it. Finally, they let us come in.

But the spin that came out of it, and I quote the Washington Post, Mr.