

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EDUCATION

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I want to spend a few minutes commenting on some of the points the President made last night in his State of the Union Address. I was particularly impressed and encouraged about his decision to make education the centerpiece of that speech and his decision to make education the first priority of his administration this next 4 years.

One aspect of what he talked about in education, I think, is extremely important, and that is standard setting. We have had debates in Congress for many years now about the issue of standards. In fact, I introduced legislation in 1990 to establish national standards in education, and, of course, we are continuing to pursue that through the National Education Goals Panel, which I serve on along with Senator JEFFORDS.

I am persuaded that part of what the American people would like to see in their educational system is higher standards and more accountability. They want to be sure that teachers are performing to a high standard, students are performing to a high standard, and the parents of children in our public schools want to know where their children stand relative to other students around the country, around their State, and in general.

The President in particular talked about how he was going to work through the Department of Education to adapt two widely used high-quality tests—the fourth grade NAEP reading test, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, which is already being used in more than 40 States, and the now-familiar eighth grade math test, the TIMSS test, which recently confirmed how poorly many of our students are doing relative to the achievement level of other nations.

The President proposed adapting those two tests into a new test that will be available free of charge to every student, every school district, and every State in the Nation that wishes to participate in it. This is going to be done in the next 2 years.

I think this will be a major step forward, because what it will do is to allow us to give very hard, objective information about which of our schools are succeeding and which of our schools are failing. We have the anomalous situation that, because of our inability to track performance, we have in many school districts and major cities in the country some schools that are doing superbly and other schools that are doing miserably. Parents, unfortunately, sometimes do not even know which of those two schools their children are in.

For this reason, we need to give parents clear indications of which schools are doing the best job in educating students. Currently, we have a hodgepodge of different tests, a hodgepodge of different standards around the country. Parents who are interested in finding out how their children are doing often are misled by inaccurate information. So I very much commend the President for this initiative to adapt these two well-recognized tests into something which each student can take, each parent can understand, each school can understand. I think that will be a major step forward.

Let me also talk about another aspect of the standards issue, which the President, I hope, will also move ahead on very aggressively, and that is the teaching of advanced placement courses. Many of us are familiar with advanced placement courses because of our own children going through high school. These are courses that are taught in the 11th and 12th grades, generally to students who are planning to go on to college and who want to get advanced credit so they can avoid taking the same course once they get there.

We have not done what we should at the national level to encourage States and school districts to expand instruction in advanced placement courses. I believe this year, for the first time, we will see a change in that. I hope to see the President, in the budget we receive tomorrow, requesting some funds to assist low-income students in the cost of taking those advanced placement courses and tests. That, I believe, would be another major step forward.

I had the chance to speak to the New Mexico Legislature on Monday of this week, and I talked to them about the challenge that my State faces in expanding access to advanced placement classes. These courses should be available to all students. They are highly demanding, but any willing student can succeed in them.

Many people know about the advanced placement program because of a movie that came out several years ago called "Stand and Deliver." This was a movie that Edward James Olmos starred in. It was the story of Jaime Escalante, a high school calculus teacher, I believe in Garfield High School in east Los Angeles. He had become very famous in that school and in that school district because of his success in teaching students, many of them students without a good academic grounding. He would teach those students this advanced placement course in calculus.

The reason he became famous and the reason that movie was made was not because he was teaching any old calculus course. He was teaching a course that was an advance placement course so that anybody in the country who paid attention would know that was a high-quality course. If his students in east Los Angeles passed that course, they were every bit as good as any student in Manhattan, or Ohio, or in New Mexico, or anywhere else. So

they got the recognition that they deserved. He got the recognition that he deserved. They were very proud of their achievement.

I have believed for a very long time that one reason our school system falls short is that we expect too little of our students. We have low expectations for what our students can learn, what our children can learn. The truth is, if you expect very little, you will receive very little. We need to expect higher performance by our students, higher performance levels by our teachers, and through this advanced placement set of courses we do exactly that.

New Mexico lags behind the national average fairly significantly in the per capita rate of 11th and 12th graders who take advance placement courses. In my State I think the percentage is something like 24 percent. Nationally it is 40 percent. We need to do better than that. We can do better than that. We are setting about working with the business community and our State legislature to bring together the resources to expand the training of advanced placement teachers and to expand course work in advanced placement courses.

I think one other point needs to be made. It should be obvious to everybody. You are not going to bring about a major reform of education, a major improvement and upgrading of education, without a very major program to reeducate and develop the human capacity to do that. We need to have training courses for our teachers in the summer. These advanced placement courses are very good. But, unfortunately, too few teachers are able to take advantage of them, or do take advantage of them.

So we need to think seriously in this Congress about what we can do to support the retraining that is needed to get people to these higher standards that the President is talking about. This is an essential part of the agenda that we need to confront over the next couple of years.

I commend again the President for his leadership in putting this on the front burner for the country. I hope we, in Congress, are up to the task of following his lead. I think he has identified a very important priority for our country. It is the one that I hear the most about.

I get around New Mexico a lot, and people want to know why we can't do a better job of educating kids in this country. I hope that we can.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. BINGAMAN. Yes. I am glad to yield.

Mr. DORGAN. I was interested in the Senator's statement. He, I think, identifies one of the priorities of many of us in this Congress. If we do not make an investment in education of America's youth then the country does not have much of a future. I am enormously proud of what we have done in

the investment in the Head Start Program, for example. This does not start in grade school or high school or college. It starts in the early intervention years with Head Start. The Head Start Program we know works. It produces enormous dividends. It gradually improves the opportunity of young people who come from difficult circumstances.

But one of the things that it seems to me we should invest in is safe schools. First of all, if the school is not safe and the students feel insecure, they cannot learn. And the other ingredient is a teacher who knows how to teach—a good teacher, a student willing to learn, and a parent who cares. If any one of those are missing, it does not work very well.

But let us talk about the safe school issue first. The Senator from New Mexico I know heard me describe on the floor a bill which I introduced late last year on this issue. If I might, with the indulgence of the Senator from New Mexico, I would like to describe again a circumstance that exists that I am trying to correct dealing with safe schools in New York City.

A young boy came into a school with a loaded pistol in his belt and a jacket covering his loaded pistol. He went through the school, walked down the hallway to his classroom, and a security guard identified or saw the bulge in the young 16-year-old's jacket and apprehended this young boy and took a loaded pistol from this young fellow. A loaded pistol with this young fellow walking down the school hallway; the security guard removes it. It goes to court and goes to a disciplinary proceeding. The result of it all was that the court said the exclusionary rule applied to the disciplinary proceeding and the security guard had no right to search that kid and take the gun away.

When I read that I thought, "Can this be right? Could anybody use that kind of strange thinking to conceive of that kind of decision?"

You go to the airport and get on a plane going to New Mexico or North Dakota. They will run you through a metal detector because they say, "You can't get on an airplane with a gun. We will not allow it." But it is OK to go through a school hallway to a classroom with a loaded pistol with a 16-year-old. I do not think so. That does not make any sense to me.

So I introduced legislation dealing with that issue. The exclusionary rule, my eye. A 16-year-old and a loaded pistol—I want a security guard to take that pistol away in a schoolroom because my kids and yours and all of the kids in this country deserve to be safe in school.

That is the first element: Safety in school.

The second is what the Senator from New Mexico is talking about: Directing investment into programs that we know work and we know yield significant returns. He talked about good teachers, and the President talked about attracting and keeping good

teachers in our classrooms. Nothing could be more important than that because we send our kids to someone else most of the day. We place them in their hands. I have been in a school that the Senator from New Mexico has. He knows some of these teachers. I leave that school thinking, "Wow, this is an incredible person. What a job they do with these young kids." There are times when perhaps you find something that you think isn't quite right. The President addressed that last night.

But the key, it seems to me, is matching the three things: First, a teacher who really knows how to teach; a kid who is willing to learn; and a parent who cares about that kid's education and is with that kid at the end of the day before they go to bed at night, reviewing the homework. All of those elements come together to make an educational system work.

But the Senator from New Mexico is right. We need in this country at the State and local level and at the Federal level to decide that the education of our children is a priority for us because educating our children is an investment in our country's future.

I really appreciate the statement which the Senator from New Mexico made.

Mr. BINGAMAN. I appreciate, Mr. President, the statement of the Senator from North Dakota.

Let me just add one other element to this. I commend him for his proposal to deal with the problem of someone coming into school with a gun and no one being able to apprehend him. I am also persuaded that virtually everything we want to see happen better in our schools will be facilitated if we recognize that we need to have smaller classrooms.

Much of the crime, discipline, and absentee problems in our schools today are because the schools are too large and because the teachers do not know the students by their first names. The students don't feel accountable to their peers. We put 40 kids into a class and wonder why the teacher can't teach all of them. We put 2,000 or 3,000 kids in a high school and wonder why the principal can't keep track of everybody.

There have been some very good studies done that show that the optimum size for a high school, for example, is somewhere between 600 and 900 kids, and that when you go over 900 the quality of the students' performances start dropping, the discipline problems start rising, and the incidence of criminal problems start rising. We need to factor this issue into what we do as well.

Of course, we in Congress don't make the laws that govern the size of the schools, and we should not. But we need to encourage States and local school districts to take that into account when they decide to build a new high school. You don't necessarily need to tear down the old building. You can take an existing complex and break it into two or three high schools just as

well as leaving it in one 3,000-person high school.

Mr. DORGAN. If the Senator will yield further, Mr. President, I was in a school recently called the Ojibwa School on an Indian reservation in North Dakota. When the Senator from New Mexico talks about construction, the President last evening talked about our trying to provide help to State and local governments with respect to school construction. I can tell you that in the Ojibwa School, and others that I have visited, there is a significant need for some construction, some maintenance, and some repair. I worry very much that these little kids on that Indian reservation going to this school are going to be in significant trouble some day because the repairs have not been made. That school is not a safe school. We have report after report and investigation after investigation. Now we have another one going on. But we very much need to invest in the infrastructure of these schools.

The Senator from New Mexico is right. We do not run the schools, and should not. Local school boards should run the local schools, and the States are involved largely in the State judgments about what the curriculum is, and so on. But we can marginally help in a range of other ways and do Head Start and college. We also can help in the kinds of things the President recommended in providing some resources for school construction in areas where you need to have some additional construction to repair and bring up to standard some of our schools.

Again, I say finally, the question around here is always a question of choices: What is your priority?

Two years ago, I was on this floor talking about the strange sense I had when I looked at a budget document offered and actually passed—it was subsequently vetoed—which said let us double the amount of money we spend for star wars and let us cut by half the amount of money we spend for Star Schools. Star Schools was not a very big program, but it was a really interesting program—directed investment to try to help certain people. I just thought that was a strange priority. But the priority I hope for all of us is to find some way to advance the opportunity to improve our schools in this country for the future of this country.

I appreciate the Senator from New Mexico yielding.

Mr. BINGAMAN. I appreciate the Senator from North Dakota and his comments.

Let me say one other thing and then I will yield the floor, Mr. President. I was on a radio interview program earlier this morning, and one of the reporters, who is a very knowledgeable reporter, said to me, "The President said we ought to increase funding for education by 20 percent. That is a very major increase. Can we afford that kind of an increase given the budgetary constraints on us?"

My response was that you have to look at this in the context of the overall Federal budget. In the overall Federal budget, we spend somewhere near 1.5 percent on education, which represents less than 10 percent of overall spending by States and localities. So what the President is saying is that we ought to spend 1.8 percent, or thereabouts, on education. Most of the people I talk to in New Mexico do not think that is excessive. I think it is not unreasonable for the Federal Government to give education that high a priority.

So I hope very much we follow the President's lead. I hope very much we will make education the centerpiece of our efforts here in this 105th Congress.

Mr. President, I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. ROTH and Mr. MOYNIHAN pertaining to the submission of Senate Resolution 50 are located in today's RECORD under "Submission of Concurrent and Senate Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware is recognized.

Mr. ROTH. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. ROTH and Mr. LIEBERMAN pertaining to the submission of Senate Concurrent Resolution 5 are located in today's RECORD under "Submission of Concurrent and Senate Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. ROTH pertaining to the introduction of S. 266 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GREGG). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. McCAIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 268 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE AMBASSADOR PAMELA HARRIMAN

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, it was with great sadness that my wife and I learned this morning of the death of a dear friend of over two and one-half decades, Pamela Harriman, our country's Ambassador to France.

As I said, for the better part of about 25 years, Pamela and Averell, first of all, were friends and two people who encouraged me early on in my political life when I first ran for office. Later, after her husband Averell passed away, Pamela continued to extend that hand of friendship to me, my wife, and our family.

I remember when I first came to Washington as a freshman Congressman in 1975, I was amazed at how Pamela Harriman and Averell at that time opened up their home to younger Members. I know a lot has been made about how the movers and shakers of the world were always at Pamela Harriman's house. But it was not just them; she always made sure her home and house was open to the new people who came to Washington. She was constantly promoting and encouraging young people, young Members of Congress, new people who were here, to showcase their ideas, to encourage them, to push harder and to climb up the ladder. So I remember her very fondly for the encouragement and support that she gave this Senator in my early years of seeking public office.

During the last decade, the 1980's, Pamela Harriman was always there in our party, the Democratic Party, trying to rebuild and to encourage people to seek public office. As I said, she was always encouraging the formulation of new ideas and approaches. I think our party owes her a great debt for all that she did to encourage these younger people and to keep us pulled together during the decade of the 1980's. During the Presidential election of 1992, she was very active in helping then Governor Clinton gain the White House.

For the last 3½ years, Pamela Harriman served this country honorably and well and I think with great distinction as our Ambassador to France. As I have had occasion to travel overseas, I have heard, on many occasions, from individuals in different parts of Europe about what a great representative of America Pamela Harriman was. She was indeed that.

Pamela Harriman was always proud of her British ancestry and heritage. She was even more proud of the fact that she was an American. She was always undeniably gracious to all who came within her reach. She was always open to new ideas, as I said, of the younger people coming into Government and politics. She always found time to give encouragement, help, and support.

So it is a sad day for our country, for all of her friends, and for all of those of

us in the Democratic Party who looked to her for help and support for so many years. Ruth, my wife, and I extend our deepest sympathies to the Harriman family. I just want to say that Pamela Harriman indeed left a very indelible mark, not only in the city of Washington, not only on the Democratic Party, but indeed on the United States of America. She will be greatly missed.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, may I inquire what the current order of business is?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business.

WELCOMING FORMER SENATOR ALAN J. DIXON

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I note the presence of a colleague and friend on the floor, the former Senator from Illinois. We are pleased to have him come back and visit us. I just want to take this opportunity to tell him how much we appreciated his service and how much I enjoyed serving with him on the Senate Armed Services Committee. I hope he is doing well.

AMBASSADOR PAMELA HARRIMAN

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Ambassador Pamela Harriman. She was a gallant and courageous lady—and a very dear friend.

Pamela Harriman lived a full and exciting life. We all know of her grace and her charm. But she was so much more.

She was, for me, first of all a good friend. She and I worked together on issues and politics for many years. She was a tremendous supporter of women candidates, and I often turned to her for her insight and counsel. I will always treasure the memory of my last visit with Ambassador Harriman. She helped me to work with European space agencies—to foster better links with our space program. She was, as always, perceptive and enthusiastic about the prospect of greater cooperation between America and Europe.

She wanted to make a contribution to our political system. She brought together leaders from all sectors of society to discuss a wide range of important issues. She fostered the kind of civil political discourse that is so often lacking.

Ambassador Harriman had the kind of strong patriotism that comes from being born in another country—and from witnessing first hand what America did during the Second World War. She often talked about living through the Battle of Britain—and how America's military partnership helped the