

Commission's [FCC] May 7th decision regarding universal service and the Snowe-Rockefeller-Exon-Kerrey amendment.

While this op-ed piece speaks for itself, I think it is good to note the interest and support of business leaders for education technology and the specific initiative to link classrooms and libraries to the information super-highway. Thoughtful business leaders understand the importance of computer literacy. A California study estimated that 60 percent of the new jobs by the year 2000 will require skills possessed by only 22 percent of workers—clearly we must do better. I believe that linking up our classrooms will help a great deal.

I ask that the article from the May 7, 1997, Los Angeles Times be reprinted in the RECORD.

The article follows:

[From the Los Angeles Times, May 7, 1997]

JUMP-START THE URBAN CLASSROOM NETWORKS

(By Eric A. Benhamou)

Just as cars aren't particularly useful without roads and freeways, the same is true of an information highway without well-planned onramps and offramps. This is particularly evident in our schools.

While classroom connectivity increased from 6% to 14% between 1994 and 1996, most of these networks are low-speed analog connections, the computer equivalent of unpaved roads.

President Clinton advocates connecting all classrooms to the Internet, and this message has been heard by principals, administrators and school boards anxious to have their students log on. However, this presidential mandate has been largely unfunded, with private money/state projects and volunteer efforts substituting for systemic programs. Poor schools have suffered or been relegated to the slow lane or no lane.

The Snowe-Rockefeller amendment to the Telecommunications Act of 1996 corrected this deficiency by funding the necessary telecommunications infrastructure. But the Federal Communications Commission must still approve it.

This is critical if we're going to solve the problem of getting all U.S. classrooms hooked up by 2000. The amendment's plan to provide the largest hookup discounts for "have-not" schools will help jump-start connectivity. Today, 47% of schools with more than 70% of their students qualifying for federal lunch subsidies have no Internet access; only 22% of the schools where less than 11% qualify for free lunches are not hooked up. This gap must be closed.

Studies from pilot programs show higher test scores in English and math from Internet-enabled classrooms. More important, technology raises test scores more for underprivileged kids than for wealthy kids, more for kids who have interactive hands-on experience (e.g. the Internet) and more where schools invest in teacher training. Unfortunately, only 7% of urban schools mandate advanced telecommunications and networking skills training for teachers.

President Eisenhower's conception and subsequent implementation of the U.S. highway system fostered our mobile society, creating industries and jobs. President Clinton's vision of a nation of learners benefiting from the Internet offers similar return. Companies like Netscape and America OnLine are already providing jobs for American youth.

The amendment isn't perfect, but it provides for much broader and systematic introduction of networking into our schools. It earmarks \$2.25 billion annually for communications and networking equipment. The FCC commissioners should make the tough trade-offs and approve this highway construction project.●

ACTIONS BY THE PALESTINIAN

● Mr. BOND. Mr President, during the past few weeks we have all heard disturbing news coming forth from the territories under Palestinian Authority control.

The idea that Chairman Arafat even hinted of his support much less, his embrace of a policy to sanction the assassination of his own people for selling real estate to Jews is abhorrent and beyond the pale.

That individuals were actually murdered because of this policy should serve as a wake-up notice to those who attempt to push the principals into agreements before they are ready.

We also have been appraised of the situation facing Mr. Daoud Kuttub, a United States citizen, who during the exercise of his right under Palestinian Authority rule, was arrested for complaining about the jamming of his radio station which was broadcasting the legislative council session of the Palestinian Authority. This activity, much like C-SPAN, I believe, is a core freedom of a democratic government. An American citizen, holding a Jerusalem identity card, as Mr. Kuttub does, is exempted from jurisdiction of the PA.

The road to democracy is not an easy one. It is filled with what may seem to be impossible impasses, but they are not. The right of a free press to operate and the right of free speech and the right of an individual to dispose of his own property in a free and legitimate manner are core to a democratic state.

I call upon the President of the United States to reiterate to Mr. Arafat, our Nation's commitment to those freedoms and our inability to accept anything less than a full compliance with those freedoms or face the withdrawal of our continued support. I also call upon the President to voice through appropriate channels, our condemnation of the policies and resulting actions which we have seen occur in the recent weeks in the areas under Palestinian Authority jurisdiction.

While I am firmly committed to the principle that the United States remain a neutral and honest mediator, I must speak up when those very principles for which we stand and for which the parties claim to be attempting to achieve are ignored and violated flagrantly.

I hope that President Clinton will be forthcoming with some initiative to address these and other issues such as the revocation of the clauses calling for the destruction of Israel within its charter, and that we hold the Palestinian Authority responsible for implementing democratic ideals which will

be critical to a strong and vibrant Palestinian Government.●

TRIBUTE TO FRANKLIN S. BILLINGS, JR.

● Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Franklin "Bill" Billings on the occasion of his 75th birthday. In addition, I would like to take this opportunity and commemorate his distinguished service as a Federal judge.

Bill's career has been dedicated to serving the people of Vermont in a wide array of positions. He first served the Green Mountain State as assistant secretary of the Senate from 1949 to 1953. He was later selected to represent the Woodstock area as a member of the Vermont House. During his tenure, Bill was elected speaker of the Vermont General Assembly in 1963 and 1965, which were tumultuous reapportionment years for the State. In 1975, he was appointed to the Vermont Supreme Court and subsequently chosen to serve as Chief Justice. He concluded his career as the U.S. district court judge for the district of Vermont.

Throughout his efforts, Bill has remained consistently committed to standards of professionalism above reproach as well as an unwavering respect and dedication to ethics. His uncanny ability to see beyond the surface, while considering some of the most complicated legal matters, is testimony to a keen intellect.

Once again, I would like to extend my best wishes and congratulations to Judge Bill Billings. He has set an example which we should all strive to emulate.●

MEMORIAL DAY

● Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President and fellow Senators, on Monday May 26 our Nation observes Memorial Day; a day of remembrance for all the members of our Armed Forces who gave their lives so that our Nation could be free. Sometimes it seems as if, in our haste to address the issues of the day, we forget that the freedom we enjoy—the freedom we take for granted—was not free. Countless American soldiers, seamen, marines, and pilots paid for our freedom with their lives. On the last Monday of May each year we honor our veterans, fly the flag at half-staff, and pause to remember their sacrifice.

It is unfortunate that if you look in the newspapers or watch the ads on TV, you might think that the only purpose Memorial Day serves is to announce the beginning of another summer season or the start of a new sales drive. But if you spend some time talking with veterans like those who returned from Europe, Korea, or Vietnam; if you talk with those who landed at Normandy or those who survived the Bataan Death March, you learn the real purpose of Memorial Day—to honor the men and women who gave their lives, most at a very young age—in defense of our Nation.