

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 6, HIGHER EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1998

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington (during the Special order of Mr. OWENS), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-499) on the resolution (H. Res. 411) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6) to extend the authorization of programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DEAL of Georgia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, today is April 28. Tomorrow will be April 29. A major event will take place on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Tomorrow we shall begin the consideration of the Higher Education Assistance Act, the reauthorization of the Higher Education Assistance Act. I think that I would like to proclaim to the American people, to the public, to everybody who cares in this Nation, that this is no small event.

Reauthorization of the Higher Education Assistance Act is a major event. We only do it once every 5 years. And the role of the Federal Government in higher education has been no small one. It is very important. In fact, it is quite unfortunate that there has been so little discussion and so little debate up to this point. We should have had more dialogue, more interaction with the people who are involved, students, faculties, presidents of colleges. It has been a very quiet reauthorization process.

I have been here now for 16 years, and this is the third reauthorization I have gone through, and I have never seen it so quiet. It is part of the process that has been forced upon us by the leadership, the Republican majority leadership here in the House, that everything is kept at a low profile, everything important is kept at a very low profile.

This session, this second year of the 105th Congress, the art of forcing the low profile, the art of forcing a low visibility for important issues has been perfected. Never before have we been in a session where we have had as many recesses as we have had this year, as short a workweek as we have had this year.

A decision was made by the ruling Republican majority that the less visibility this Congress had, the less the people of the United States see their Legislature at work, the better. So we have minimized a very important discussion on education, as we minimize all discussions. We are in a situation now where we have not even passed a

budget. And I suppose one is being prepared in secret like everything else. It is a process where most things go on behind closed doors, and very little participation is encouraged.

In the case of the Higher Education Assistance Act, I found it very difficult as a member of the committee, I am a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and I found it difficult to find out how things were moving as the preparation of this very important piece of legislation took place at the committee level. I have heard my colleagues in other committees complain about the same process. Even the Members of Congress are not invited to participate. We have to sort of force our way into the dialogue. Therefore, it is not surprising that the same ruling majority here does not provide opportunities for the public to know very much about what is going on, the voters.

I suppose this is a result of what happened in the 104th Congress in terms of a very well-publicized, highly visible agenda in the form of the Contract with America. We had maximum debate. The Democratic Minority had a chance to answer the proposals put forth by the Republican majority. We had out on the table the intentions of the Republican party, especially in the area of education. They clearly had intentions that were in confrontation with the majority of the American people. They wanted to abolish the Department of Education. They wanted to drastically cut certain education programs, even cut Head Start, school lunches.

It was a situation where we appreciated the honesty of the majority. The majority was honest. They put their cards on the table; and the American people, in their wisdom, rejected them. They knew that these ideas had been rejected as we approached the election date in November of 1996. They knew that with respect to education, they had miscalculated, and they ran very fast and used their power to make amends.

At the last minute during the appropriations process, the Republican majority increased the budget for education programs by \$4 billion. Whereas they had been threatening to cut as much as \$4 billion in the previous year in 1995, in 1996 they increased it by the same amount, \$4 billion increase, instead of a cut. So they understood, they understood through the focus groups, they understood through the public opinion polls all of the barometers that we use to measure opinions and to determine where the voters are. They understood that the common-sense wisdom of the American people was not with them.

Education is a high priority, and anyone who threatens to abolish the Department of Education and greatly cripple the involvement of the Federal Government in education matters has to pay the price for that kind of position. Fortunately for them, and unfor-

tunate for the Democratic Minority, they changed radically at the last minute, and they went out, after giving us a \$4 billion increase in education, they went out as the friends of education, as the champions of education.

Unfortunately, in this 105th Congress, that is not the case. The kind of last-minute conversion did not carry over. We are back to business as usual when it comes to the Republican majority. First of all, they have the old proposals for school vouchers and privatization of education on the table with greater gusto than ever before. Block granting and vouchers and all of those old items that did not sit well with the American people in the last Congress have been resurrected. We do not hear any more of the talk of the abolishment of the Department of Education. The extremism is not there anymore. They do not put it out on the table.

If they feel the Department of Education should be abolished, then that is a covert matter; they do not talk about it in public. If they feel that Head Start should be cut, that is a covert matter.

They actually have been very civil in this process of reauthorizing the Higher Education Assistance Act. The Higher Education Assistance Act has come forward. It will go to the floor tomorrow from the committee. And the Republican majority on that committee is to be commended, I suppose, for not proposing any drastic cuts. There are no drastic cuts in the previous higher education programs.

We should rejoice. We should applaud this. Let us give credit where credit is due. The jackals of the 104th Congress that wanted to cut everything have left, basically, higher education assistance alone. We should be rejoicing. And I do rejoice.

On the other hand, as I said, on the occasion of the markup of this important piece of legislation, it is most unfortunate that given the fact that we reauthorize higher education assistance acts only once every 5 years, in a 5-year period, whatever we legislate tomorrow, whatever comes out of our House tomorrow and goes to the Senate and conference and signed by the President, that will be in effect for 5 years.

□ 2000

It is unfortunate that a bill which is going to carry us through the next 5 years into the 21st century and beyond is really a status quo bill. We can applaud the fact that they did not cut anything, we can applaud the fact that there was no attempt to roll back history, but we cannot applaud the fact that there are no innovations in the bill tomorrow, there is nothing new, there is nothing that looks at the 21st century and says that our thrust should be different, our commitment to higher education should be enhanced, we should meet some of the problems that have surfaced and are clear on the

horizon, we should meet these problems in this Higher Education Assistance Act or project a way to begin to deal with them. This is a status quo bill.

I complained at the level of the committee and I will complain again tomorrow that it is most unfortunate that at a time when we are enjoying the greatest prosperity the Nation probably has ever known, at a time when there is no war to absorb resources, at a time when the window of opportunity is wide open, we cannot come up with some more creative and imaginative proposals as to how we are going to proceed to educate the population. We have a lot of problems below the level of high school graduation. But certainly we have always committed ourselves and always been praised for the fact that higher education in America is exceptional. We are ahead of most of the industrialized nations when they begin to make comparisons between the higher education systems among the countries. Not so with our elementary and secondary school systems. But at a time like this when we are ahead and it is clear that our higher education system has played a major role in our ability to quickly take advantage of the scientific revolution and to apply science and technology in many areas of life, including, of course, in the military area where the American people invested billions and billions of dollars in the military research and development, a situation which is very relevant because right now the kind of prosperity we are enjoying is partially fueled and pushed by the revolution in information technology. The companies that are newest and making the greatest amount of money on Wall Street are information technology companies, Intel, Microsoft, you name it, the newest companies, by the way who are not dependent on defense contracts or government contracts, they are all information technology related. That information technology that they have chosen to make great profits off of did not happen overnight and it did not happen by magic. It did not come directly from God. Everything comes from God indirectly but it did not come as a natural resource. It is not like an oil well, striking it rich with a diamond mine or a gold mine. Information technology and the state of the art right now is a direct result of the investment of the American people in great amounts of research and development for military purposes.

Information technology was really developed by the American people through their military services seeking ways to accomplish the jobs that they have to accomplish. The Internet was created by the American military forces. The Internet was created to assist and aid and speed up the exchange of information throughout the world, scientific information. The Internet is the creation of the American people through their military services. Something called the Defense Technical In-

formation Center, another way for saying the world's greatest system of libraries, was created by the Defense Department. One of the by-products of that tremendous system for research and for development was the Internet. We are the beneficiaries of a system which was produced and financed by the American people which was conceived and operated and all the details have been put in place by American science and technology. Yes, we might have had some foreign scientists participate, we will not take that away from them, but basically the technicians and the scientists, the theoreticians and the philosophers who put this great technological revolution together in terms of information technology were products of our education system, mainly our higher education system, our higher education system which is still like all other higher education systems in the world basically an elitist system. Only a small percentage of people go to college. Only a small percentage of people totally still enjoy higher education opportunities throughout the world. That group and what they do and how they do it is critical to the advancement of our society and the continued prosperity that we enjoy. So if we are authorizing a piece of legislation called the Higher Education Assistance Act, then we ought to look at it in terms of this is a critical piece of legislation which will have a great impact on what we are doing in the future, how can we make this a better piece of legislation.

My first concern was that the legislation did not take advantage of an opportunity to increase greatly the amount of opportunities for Americans to go to college. The opportunities need to be increased for many reasons. We need more educated people. It is clear that there is a correlation between the number of educated people and our progress. If that is the case, then there should not be any question about having more people who have college education or higher education opportunities. Maybe some of them will only go to community colleges for 2 years but the principle of the value added, education adds value to everybody who participates, higher education adds very extensive, very great value to anybody who participates in higher education. A person coming out of a higher education institution is going to earn income and really pay back the investment that society has made in them. The person who comes out of a higher education institution is definitely not going to be dependent on subsidies. They will contribute to the process instead of absorbing any resources. We know all of this. It should not be difficult to conceive of the necessity of increasing the number. However, there are some people who balk at the idea that we need more college graduates and we need more college students. There is some notion that always runs throughout deliberations about higher education that, hey, you

may get too many educated people and if you get too many educated people, you will drive down the standards and the salaries and the quality of life of the people who are educated. That has been a stream running through decision-making in America for a long time. It is not new. Fifty or 75 years ago they were talking about the possibility of having too many educated people, but it has never happened. We have never yet reached a point where we have too many educated people. People with college degrees may have some difficulty in the job market nowadays or they may have always had some difficulty, but generally they land on their feet, and generally people with college degrees do not end up being dependent on society. It is true now, it was true 25 years ago, it is going to be true in the year 2010.

Right now we are seeing an explosion of the need for people in the information technology sector. Information technology involves work with telecommunications apparatus, computers. It involves a lot of things which require higher education. Most people do not know it, but it also requires imagination, it also requires people who have some conception of spatial relationships, not just in terms of engineering but also in terms of artistic presentations. If you look at Web sites and you look at the kind of things that they are doing with Web sites, you know that these are not just mathematicians, these are not just physical scientists. The successful Web sites are being generated by people with imagination. They have imagination, they have some background beyond math and science or they are working in teams, so a person who is in drama and who is in art illustration or in just social science, understanding psychology of people, they may be on a team of people, some of whom have math and physics backgrounds, to produce what has to be produced in terms of software or in terms of Web sites, et cetera. We do not know, we cannot pick exactly who is going to be most successful in this area. But we should assume that all education can be fitted in somewhere. The psychologist may be as valuable as the physicist. We should have as much education as possible across the whole spectrum. We understood that briefly when the Russians outpaced us in space. The Russians put up Sputnik and began to put up one space rocket and one space satellite after another. We went to work in this country to deal with the fact that you can only compete in that arena if you have more and more people in the area of science. They did not all have to be geniuses and Einsteins. Some were theoretical scientists, some were applied scientists, some were technicians and technologists, some were good mechanics. The entire array of people needed to produce the kind of military hardware and the military processes that matched the Soviet Union and eventually made it spend itself to death in the

area of military technology, that was produced through the education process. We understood it then.

We are facing now a situation where there is a survey that tells us that information technology workers are in great shortage. This new revolution, these information technology companies that are producing such great profits on the stock market, these are the places where we have vacancies appearing at a great rate. There is some debate about it but some pretty thorough and credible surveys have been done which shows we are talking about 300,000 people in this area right now who are needed and are not there, 300,000 vacancies exist out there now. That will only get worse, because the reading of the survey of where students are in college, how many are majoring in the appropriate fields, generally what the education pool is in our colleges and universities, that survey leads the information technology experts to project that you may have a million vacancies 5 or 6 years from now trying to cope with an expanded enterprise, not only in business. Right now the great investment is in business. Profit-making businesses want to be on top of the latest technology, information technology. The state of the art is always being sought by these profit-making businesses that have lots and lots of money to spend because they are making great amounts of profit, so the money is being spent now in the business arena. They have not even started yet to really apply information technology en masse to higher education institutions, and further down the public schools which the President, President Clinton and Vice President Gore certainly have seen the vision to include in this information technology revolution. The public schools are way, way down the chain. Even in some places like California where they led the country in showing us how to get schools wired using volunteers and put schools on the Internet, even there we are talking about a situation where every school that was wired by volunteers on a Saturday afternoon, we called them wired if they wired the library and five classrooms. The library and five classrooms was the extent of the wiring. There is a lot more to be done even in the places where we have been most successful. But in my hometown, New York City, and home State, the big cities in New York have nothing close to anything like 10 percent of the schools wired. We have a project going in our area where it has taken us almost 2 years to get 22 schools wired using our volunteers on Saturday. Even with the cooperation of the Board of Education, Bell Atlantic and a lot of private sector people have participated, it is a slow process. Of course in the suburbs surrounding New York City, they have dealt with the process. They have not depended on volunteers. They have wired their schools. They have state of the art media in some of those places. Where the largest number

of poor people go to school in the inner cities, we are way behind.

In this Higher Education Assistance Act, my point is we have not taken into full consideration the fact that right now there are tremendous amounts of vacancies in the information technology sector, 300,000 vacancies right now, and a projection that there will be many more, these people have to go through higher education even if it is only 2 years of college in many cases. We have not taken that into consideration. Just to meet that need, we should have special programs in colleges and universities at increasing the number of students in the pool.

□ 2015

We have to replenish the number of doctors and lawyers and MBAs. You know, there is a whole society demanding more and more educated people. One of our biggest exports is not goods but services, the services supplied by experts, and these are experts that come out of our colleges and universities that export services around the world. There will be a more greater demand for services from highly educated people in the future.

Mr. Speaker, let me just recapitulate. I do not want anybody to get lost. I am talking about the fact that there is a great demand for people with higher education, and the demand will increase, and we should have taken that into consideration when we considered this Higher Education Assistance Act.

The act that we will be considering tomorrow on the floor of the House is a status quo bill. It maintains things pretty much as they are. And while we applaud the fact that there are no drastic cuts, it is unfortunate that we have not taken advantage of a window of opportunity to go forward and deal with needs that are obvious in our work force.

I also complained about the fact that, at the time that we considered this bill in our committee, about the fact that the great debate right now with respect to affirmative action and the problem of trying to provide diversity on higher education campuses by taking into consideration certain matters that go beyond just the scores on the SATs and the averages in courses in high school and that great debate, which is escalating, and certainly in California, has led to some real disasters in terms of the policy changes made by the board of regents of California.

You have a drastic reduction in the number of Hispanics and African American students who are in the higher education freshman class. You have an even more drastic reduction in the higher education graduate institutions. Texas has had a similar problem, and across the country there are more discussions and referendums and policy changes now in process with respect to ending efforts to promote diversity by considering the ethnicity of a particular student and the need to achieve balance in the student body.

If we are going to go that route, and there are people who argue that affirmative action is not good, but if we have proposals and programs that seek to provide more help for people who are disadvantaged, people who need help because they are poor, well, that is across the board. You know, consider race. You do not consider ethnicity, you just consider the fact that they are disadvantaged, they need help, that that is the way to go.

I have heard proponents of ending affirmative action. The people want very much to end affirmative action, including the Speaker of the House. They argue that we do not want any consideration on the basis of ethnicity. Let us forget about the 232 years of slavery and the descendants of slavery who did not have a chance to accumulate any wealth, and if you did not have a chance to accumulate any wealth, the whole family structure and the whole supportive atmosphere that breeds, that creates, middle-class people who are more successful in the formal education structure, forget about that they said.

Let us just consider everybody equal and take care of those who happen to be unfortunate economically all across the board so that white poor and the African American poor and the Hispanic poor are all treated equally.

I do not concede that affirmative action is not important. I do not concede you should forget about 232 years of slavery and the impact of that on the descendants of slaves, the impact of a hundred and some years of oppression as second-class citizens that followed the Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments. I do not concede that, but let us for a moment lay it aside. Let us consider the arguments that are made by these people who want to get rid of affirmative action. They say they are ready to be fair to everybody.

If you are honest about that assertion, then you will create more opportunities. We should be considering how the Education Act, which had a tremendous increase in the amount of money available in order to create more opportunity for more people regardless of their race, creed or color.

We should have the Pell grants greatly increased. They are increased somewhat, but the Pell grants should be greatly increased in terms of the number of people covered. The amount for Pell grants, the number of people covered should be greatly increased.

We should have great increases in all of the loan programs, in the TRIO programs and every program that is designed to promote higher education. Because we should anticipate a great increase in the number of students coming in who have been denied an opportunity because of the fact that they are poor.

That requires money, that requires appropriations and commitments. In the authorization of this bill, we have not dealt with that.

Oh, yes, there is a lot of money involved here, but it is status quo, you know. It is taking into consideration the fact that we are throwing out affirmative action programs and, therefore, the affirmative action programs ought to be replaced with greater opportunity programs. There should be more opportunity programs.

You know, consider the constellation that we are dealing with here. In America now, there are roughly about 15 million students in college and universities, 15 million students in colleges and universities. That includes the community colleges and senior colleges. In America right now, there are about 3,688 institutions of higher learning, community colleges, senior colleges, et cetera.

Right now, the expenditures of the State and local governments for higher education is approximately \$89 billion per year. These may seem like big numbers, but the cost, the amount we are spending per student in our public institutions supported by State and local governments and by the Federal Government, the Federal Government expenditure I think is around \$38 billion for cash, programs receiving cash directly, and another \$40 billion if all the tax credits and various new programs that have been established are utilized.

You are talking about \$38 billion, \$40 billion. That is a lot of money, a lot of commitment. \$38 billion, \$40 billion, you know you are talking about nearly \$80 billion of federal assistance, \$89 billion is expended by State and local governments. I suppose that comes to, you know, \$169 billion, a lot of money.

But what is our defense budget? How much money do we spend on defense? It is way, way up there at \$200 billion, almost \$300 billion. Combined events in intelligence, you are talking about \$300 billion on defense and intelligence.

So you can only compare. These figures will drown you. You will get lost quickly if you do not make comparisons. You can only compare, determine the value of what is being spent and get some perspective if you look at what modern costs are in other areas. What are we spending in defense? Close to \$300 billion. \$89 billion at the State and local level for higher education and another \$80 billion probably at the Federal level.

It seems like a lot of money, but in terms of modern costs it is not a very great expenditure.

How much does the cigarette industry make in billions of dollars per year? I mean, in terms of modern costs, our commitment to higher education is, I assure you, nothing staggering.

City University in New York, City University of New York, which probably has one of the best bargains in education, we educate students in City University for less than \$20,000 per year. I think that the recent budget cuts, they have had steady budget cuts for the last 20 years. This is a university that has been squeezed and pushed

and manipulated and very badly treated by the people who appropriate funds over the last 20, 25 years.

City University, the cost of educating one student is about \$20,000, and you might say \$20,000 per year to educate a student. Well, Harvard and Yale is the Ivy League. Students are above \$30,000 and climbing, and you might say those are large amounts of money, but compared to what?

The taxpayers of America spend \$120,000 per student to educate students who go to West Point. Let me repeat that figure so you will understand what I said, and I had it checked and double checked, and this is not the military training. Military training takes it up to the \$200,000 range. Just the academic training of every student that goes to West Point costs the taxpayers of America \$120,000.

Now get the perspective in place. I would say that we are spending much too much to educate a student at West Point, but I would say at the same time we are spending much too little to educate a student at City University, or maybe it is not relevant unless you look at how the money is being spent.

City University has 200,000 students. You know, the economies of scale would allow you to do things cheaper, but City University also has students jammed into classrooms and college classes with 40 and 45 students; you know, are not conducive to learning.

City University has an antiquated infrastructure. Only recently, last 10 years, did some of the colleges get phones, push-button phones. You know they had rotary phones. In many cases the buildings have, the academic buildings, have only a few phones, let alone lines that could connect computers to the Internet.

The higher education establishments and City University are way, way behind the state-of-the-art higher education institutions in respect to computers and information technology. They need a great infusion of capital just for that purpose.

I am not saying that New York State and New York City should spend \$120,000 per student as they do at West Point. But I think that, instead of the present rage that is being promoted by certain editorials in certain papers and certain of our political figures, the rage against City University for trying to educate too many students and having too much remediation and needing to raise its standards by locking out large numbers of students from the opportunity in higher education provides all of that is going in the direction which is counter to where we ought to be going as we move toward the 21st century.

So I want to reemphasize the fact that it is probably one of the most important bills that we consider in this Congress. The Higher Education Assistance Act that we will be considering tomorrow is probably one of the most important bills that we will consider. We only do it once every 5 years.

There are very real problems out there related to affirmative action and the way opportunities for higher education are being cut off, smothered in our various States, the Hopwood decision in Texas and the City University of New York.

If they end remediation, they would be accomplishing what California has accomplished through a back-door means. They do not talk about affirmative action, but it is large numbers of poor students, beginning with the poor students who are African American, the poor students who are Hispanic, but large numbers of white students also who are poor will be cut out of the opportunity to go to a higher education institution, that kind of opportunity provided by City University.

□ 2030

At a time when we ought to be considering how to have more of a pool of people upon which we can draw to meet the challenges of the 21st century, we are going in the opposite direction. There are some midget minds at work; there are some timid spirits that are moving things, and people that have power do not have any vision about where we are going.

Governor Rockefeller, who was a Republican, laid out a vision for the university systems of New York's SUNY and CUNY, which catapulted them into a whole new stratosphere in terms of the kind of activities they are involved in now. Now we are under a Republican Governor going in the opposite direction in terms of that vision and understanding of the role of higher education at a time when we should be going in the opposite direction.

Consider the history of higher education in this country. Consider the fact that if we had not had visionaries who understood the importance of education in the overall achievement of prosperity in this country, in the establishment of circumstances which would allow our people to pursue happiness, if that vision had not been there, we would be in serious trouble. We do not realize how much education and the initiatives taken by a few legislators, people in power, has meant over the years.

First, Thomas Jefferson and the University of Virginia. It probably did not become the model he wanted it to become, but it certainly planted the seed at the University of Virginia as a State institution and as one of the first of its kind in terms of being established and run with public funds, not being burdened with the necessity to heavily weight its courses, courses related to theology and philosophy, et cetera. There is nothing wrong with theology and philosophy, but the mission of the University of Virginia was to learn everything that they could learn about everything that was useful. Maybe it did not achieve that, but it planted a seed.

A man named Justice Smith Morrill, M-O-R-R-I-L-L, the Morrill Act, people

who have tossed off that term, the Morrill Act, the land grant colleges, Justice Smith Morrill was a Congressman from Vermont, first as a Member of the House of Representatives, and then he became a Senator in 1862. He was here during the period of the Civil War and the period shortly after the Civil War. He served in the Senate until 1898, and he came forward several times with proposals to establish institutions that would go beyond the usual parameters of education at that time, the agricultural and the mechanical colleges which would deal with a scientific approach to farming, a scientific approach to the practical matters of our Nation, and eventually Morrill was able to prevail, and we established land grant colleges in every State in the Union.

The land grant colleges came out of the Morrill Act. It was later on improved and doctored by other actions by Congress, but the whole conception that the government should participate in the process of educating the population was institutionalized in the Morrill Act and the land grant colleges that flowed from that action.

The kind of education provided by the land grant colleges proved to be the greatest thing that ever happened to America in terms of the production of people who understood how to apply learning and knowledge and science to farming, to engineering, and a whole core of people were created who moved us forward. In the area of agriculture in particular, they moved us forward in a way that no other industrial power, none of the leading nations in the world, have ever been able to match. We are way ahead in terms of production of food at low cost for the population as a result of the Morrill Act and the land grant colleges.

Mr. Speaker, we need that kind of vision now. We need an innovation, an initiative now which would match the Morrill Act initiative. It has to go in a different direction, but it is not so different. Information technology alone offers a challenge just to move so that our colleges and universities are the premier agents for the development of the human capital. Information technology demands human capital. We do not have to have oil or gold or natural resources, coal, but we must have human beings who have been very well-educated. We should have some initiative which understands that and applies it across the board to all of our institutions of higher learning so that they can begin in a systematic way to meet the needs.

Mr. Speaker, we had another innovation that took place in 1944. The GI Bill, which established the right for every returning GI, every veteran of World War II, to receive an education, was signed first by Franklin D. Roosevelt on June 22nd, 1944, called the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944. During the past five decades the law has made possible the investment of billions of dollars in education and

training for millions of veterans. The Nation has in return earned many times its investment in increased taxes and a dramatically changed society. The law also made possible the loan of billions of dollars to purchase homes for millions of veterans and helped transform the majority of Americans from renters to homeowners.

But the education part of it, the fact that returning veterans were able to go into colleges and universities and come out with the kind of training and know-how put us in a position after World War II to mount the kind of industrial revolution that we have now, the information technology revolution, the research and development revolution, and the military which led the way, allowed us to bring the competing Soviet empire to its knees. All of that could not have happened if we had not had a Morrill Act, a GI Bill of Rights, and the subsequent opportunities that that provided.

The American Legion is credited with designing the main features of the GI Bill. These ideas are not radical, they are part of a consensus that has been developed in America, and Republicans and Democrats have participated. The American Legion is credited with designing the main features of the GI Bill and pushing it through Congress. The Legion overcame objections that the proposed bill was too sweeping and could jeopardize veterans getting help at all. At the time Congress had already failed to act on about 640 bills concerning veterans.

Members of the American Legion met first in Washington on December 15, 1943, and by January 6 had completed the first draft of the GI Bill, and on and on the story goes. The bill was another one of those landmarks in American history that produced a great leap forward, a great leap forward in our society. The GI Bill, the Morrill Act, they are the kinds of actions that have propelled us forward, and they ought to be celebrated and understood.

It is a pity that at a time like this, when probably the Members of Congress are better educated than ever before and understand more about the dynamics of our society and the need for some kind of comprehensive approach to where we are going in the next century, it is a pity that those forces are all, for the moment, either paralyzed or oppressed or lulled to sleep or blocked, and that we have the Higher Education Assistance Act which makes no great steps forward.

This Higher Education Assistance Act, as I said before, is at least not a bill that is going to take us backwards, but it really is pathetic in terms of its understanding of the need for the next 5 years as we go into the 21st century.

The bill that we will be considering on the floor tomorrow reauthorizes Federal student loans, Pell grants and other student financial aid programs for 5 years. It resolves a controversy over cutting interest rates on student

loans, which took us a lot of time. Banks were accused of trying to make a killing off student loans, and that was resolved.

Pell grants in this bill, the bill authorizes an increase in the maximum Pell grant award. It stands at \$3,000 in the current academic year, and it will go to \$4,500 in the year 1999-2000 academic year. It is a slow, incremental set of increases, not keeping pace with the cost of living, but at least nobody proposed that we cut it out or back. It authorizes annual increases of \$200 until the 2003-2004 academic year when the authorized maximum amount would be up to \$5,300. So it is an incremental movement forward in the area of student aid, which is the hallmark of the bill in terms of providing opportunity for the poor, the Pell grants.

The bill makes a number of changes to the formula used to calculate how much financial aid students receive. The bill denies Federal student aid to those convicted or possessing or selling illegal drugs, an amendment which had a great deal of discussion. I do not approve of cutting off opportunity for young people so early in life. There is one factor that must always be considered is that children are children. They are not adults. The aging process, anybody who is as old as I am, I am almost 62, one understands that one just could not know at age 18 or 20 or 22 what one knows later on. One cannot make the same judgments. And practically every young person is in danger of at some vulnerable moment making a mistake of some kind that is quite serious, but we should not set up situations where that mistake becomes a trap that is eternal for that person. Not to be able to get a college education because one made a mistake is a little too harsh, but that is part of the legislation at this point. Of course, I think it will be debated on the floor to some extent, but the majority has prevailed thus far on that matter.

It has many other good features before I talk about the negative. It does have loan forgiveness for people who teach in low-income communities; it does have a number of features that are improvements, slight improvements over what was there before. There is a provision related to the whole matter of affirmative action that will be on the floor tomorrow. Again, we will have to debate this whole matter of no efforts whatsoever can be made to diversify campuses, and we will have to deal with the fact that more stringent national standards will be applied; there will be an attempt to apply stringent national standards that are similar to the California anti-affirmative action program.

Of the amendments that have been noticed, there will be an amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. RIGGS), an amendment to prohibit any institution of higher education that participates in any higher education program from discriminating against or granting preferential

treatment to any person or group in admissions based on, in whole or in part, on race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin. The amendment exempts from its ban any private institution of undergraduate higher education that traditionally and continually from its establishment admitted students to schools on the basis of sex. The amendment also specifies that it does not prohibit or limit any institution from encouraging or recruiting qualified women and minorities from seeking admission, provided that such recruitment and encouragement does not involve granting preferential treatment in selecting any person for admission based, in whole or in part, on race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin.

This is an amendment which, in very nice language, coats the fact that what it is saying is that we do not want any effort to encourage and promote diversity on a campus. The world is diverse. The United States is diverse. The number of people who are minorities, the proportion keeps increasing. To have diversity on campus, of course, is only to have students live on campus in a world that is very similar to the world outside. But this language, however civil it may seem on paper, seeks to wipe all of that out in one stroke. It would do what the University of California has done across the Nation. Because practically every higher education institution does receive some Federal funds, every higher education institution would have its hands tied in terms of promotion of diversity through its own affirmative action programs.

□ 2045

So the Riggs amendment will be debated, and I hope that we will prevail and not have the Federal Government participate in the blocking of opportunities for large numbers of deserving students who need to go to college.

Unfortunately, as a New York City resident, a New York State resident, I will be participating in the argument knowing fully well that an effort is being made in my own city and my own State to accomplish the same action, to accomplish the same ends through the back door. We are going to close off opportunity to large numbers of people.

And whereas I started by saying this Higher Education Assistance Act fails to increase opportunity by increasing the amount of funds and resources available so that poor people, no matter what color, race or creed they may be, will be able to take advantage of the higher education process, we do not have that. Yet we are going to have to debate an attempt to throttle even further that which exists already.

At City University of New York proposals are being made that they raise the standards of the senior colleges using SAT scores and cut off the admission of large numbers of students who cannot measure up to those SAT scores, although they are graduates of

the schools in New York City. They also want to greatly reduce the amount of remediation done in the senior colleges and in the community colleges, two-year colleges. What this will do, if we reduce remediation, if we require students to make remediation before they enter college, we will greatly reduce the number of students because remediation is needed by large numbers of students. Eighty percent of the students have some form of remediation that they participated in during the course of their time in college.

Remediation are courses in effect across the country. Most colleges and universities have some remediation programs. What we have learned about the human mind and the learning process ought to tell us that remediation is a natural thing to have in higher education, because genius and talent is not comprehensive. It is not across the board that every student who is very good in English is also going to be good in math; those who are good in science are also going to be good in foreign languages. Remediation helps to balance out a process that nature has started, and we only rule out genius if we start insisting that remediation courses should be eliminated.

Mr. Speaker, I made the following statement, and I want to close with this statement. I did want to talk a bit about one other amendment that we will have on the floor tomorrow connected with information technology, the need for information technology workers.

I will have an amendment to provide for information technology partnerships between colleges and community-based agencies in order to provide more opportunities for young people to get exposure to computers and be able to determine whether or not they want to go into computer technology. They will have a chance to practice and a chance to get excited by it, and then apply it to a community college and a college to go into a program. The college would run these local centers where students would have these opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to close with my statement before the City University Board of Trustees. I thanked them for the opportunity to testify and then I mentioned that all over the world the education of masses of youth emerging from educationally deprived backgrounds is a vital challenge to the process of building a new global society with abundant supplies of indigenous leadership. If we meet this challenge of educating those who arrive in our college classrooms with inadequate preparation in the City of New York, in the City University, if we can take freshmen from impoverished backgrounds with enormous skills deficits but who have normal brains and great potential, if we can take this kind of raw material and create productive and independent citizens able to take care of themselves and also serve as leaders, if we can seize the sit-

uation which we presently confront, then we will have a system that produces a priceless global product.

Using this method, the methods established in New York, with our great and enormously diverse population, we will have developed a blueprint, a model for higher education which would be applicable anywhere in the world. The world market for such a service is almost unlimited. It would be a product of highest value. In other words, the challenge is to take the people who have the deficits educationally for whatever reason. The New York City public schools are inadequate now and they have gotten worse over the last 10 years, so students with good brains and great potential may have skills deficits, and the only way to deal with those skills deficits is when they get to college.

What is happening in New York City is a tragedy, however. At a pivotal point in the life of the city, as we approach the dawn of the 21st century, there are confused but powerful forces in the city which are turning a time for triumph into a time for tears.

President Clinton has rightfully referred to America as an indispensable nation. It is not exaggerated to state that in this indispensable nation, New York City is the indispensable city. In order for this city to maintain its rightful place and fully realize its destiny, an open, thriving, creative City University of New York is an indispensable institution. City University of New York is the jewel in the crown of our unique urban civilization.

This is a moment at which we must truly rally our better instincts, our common sense. We must rally our well-cultivated logic and our receptivity to the evidence provided by well-known studies. Such studies show that the record of CUNY is a laudable one. City University of New York has a laudable record.

Consider the fact that the cost to educate a single student is so much greater in Harvard, and even greater at West Point, \$120,000 per year per student. Despite the shoestring budget of the City University of New York and repeated fiscal harassments, City University of New York has endured over many lean years. City University of New York still stands in the ranks of the greatest in its production of outstanding scholars, Nobel laureates, scientists and international prize winners.

The City University, as I said before, is indispensable to the life of the city. Any university anywhere in the country, all of our public institutions, following the tradition of the Morrill Act, following the tradition of the GI Bill, all of these have a great deal to offer as we go into the 21st century.

We should look at the Higher Education Act tomorrow as being inadequate but at least a start, and find ways to improve and expand on the Higher Education Assistance Act which will come before us for deliberations on the House of Representatives floor tomorrow morning.