

The report's conclusion states in part:

... the central theme of what we learned is that the federal government cannot consistently and effectively replicate success stories throughout the nation in the form of federal programs. Instead, federal education dollars should support effective State and local initiatives, ensuring that neither impedes local innovation and control, nor diverts dollars from the classroom through burdensome regulations and overhead.

The report goes on to give specific steps for Congress to take to improve education in America. The report advocates increasing the ability of States and local communities to waive federal education regulations, reducing the tax burden on families, passing tax-free education savings account legislation, improving federal support for charter schools, and otherwise encouraging more parental choice in education.

I have long been an advocate of many of the suggestions outlined in this report. I hope that my colleagues in the Senate will take the time to review the report Congressman HOEKSTRA's subcommittee has prepared and consider where they stand on these issues. It is long past time for both parties in Congress to stop simply giving lip service to the idea of local control of education, and to put our money where our mouths are.

Finally, I want to remind my colleagues that although I have introduced and passed twice in the last year an amendment that would allow States and local school districts increased control over the education of their children. Because of the insistence of Democrats in the Senate, the President, and even some Members of my own party this legislation has not yet survived a conference committee. Although I have not yet been successful in passing this legislation into law to give States and local communities the relief they deserve and need to improve education in America, I will again in the near future propose legislation that moves us toward this goal. Whether through block grants or some other means, I am committed to the belief that real education reform will not take place through "... guidance from above ...", but from parents and educators in communities across this land as they are empowered to direct the education of their children.

Mr. President, I note also present on the floor is Senator FRIST, the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee task force on education, whose work is of equal importance to that of Congressman HOEKSTRA's and whose report I also commend to the Members of this body. He is our great expert on health care, but he is also a major leader in education reform in the U.S. Senate, and we all owe him a great debt of gratitude.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Thursday,

July 23, 1998, the federal debt stood at \$5,537,084,024,142.92 (Five trillion, five hundred thirty-seven billion, eighty-four million, twenty-four thousand, one hundred forty-two dollars and ninety-two cents).

One year ago, July 23, 1997, the federal debt stood at \$5,367,623,000,000 (Five trillion, three hundred sixty-seven billion, six hundred twenty-three million).

Five years ago, July 23, 1993, the federal debt stood at \$4,342,543,000,000 (Four trillion, three hundred forty-two billion, five hundred forty-three million).

Twenty-five years ago, July 23, 1973, the federal debt stood at \$455,892,000,000 (Four hundred fifty-five billion, eight hundred ninety-two million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,081,192,024,142.92 (Five trillion, eighty-one billion, one hundred ninety-two million, twenty-four thousand, one hundred forty-two dollars and ninety-two cents) during the past 25 years.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-6165. A communication from the Associate Managing Director for Performance Evaluation and Records Management, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule regarding measures to expedite resolution of certain common carrier formal complaint proceedings (Docket 98-154) received on July 22, 1998; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6166. A communication from the Associate Managing Director for Performance Evaluation and Records Management, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Pauls Valley, Ratliff City, and Sulphur, Oklahoma, Abilene, Bowie, Highland Village, Mt. Pleasant and Overton, Texas)" (Docket 97-84) received on July 22, 1998; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6167. A communication from the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's annual report for 1997; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-6168. A communication from the Chairman of the Appraisal Subcommittee, Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Subcommittee's annual report; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-6169. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting, notice of military retirements; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-6170. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, transmitting, pursuant to law, certification that full-up live-fire test and evaluation of the Department of the Navy's CH-60 Fleet Combat Support Helicopter would be unreasonably expensive and impractical; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-6171. A communication from the Administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Limes and Avocados Grown in Florida; Relaxation of Container Dimension, Weight, and Marking Requirements" (Docket FV98-911-2) received on July 22, 1998; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6172. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Importation of Tomatoes from France, Morocco and Western Sahara, Chile, and Spain" (Docket 97-016-2) received on July 22, 1998; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6173. A communication from the Administrator of the Rural Housing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Guaranteed Rural Rental Housing Program" (RIN0575-AC14) received on July 22, 1998; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6174. A communication from the Secretary of Agriculture, transmitting, a draft of proposed legislation entitled "The State Meat and Poultry Inspection Assistance Act"; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6175. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, copies of D.C. Act 12-383 adopted by the Council on June 2, 1998; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-6176. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, copies of D.C. Act 12-384 adopted by the Council on June 2, 1998; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-6177. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, copies of D.C. Act 12-385 adopted by the Council on June 2, 1998; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-6178. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, copies of D.C. Act 12-386 adopted by the Council on June 2, 1998; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-6179. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, copies of D.C. Act 12-393 adopted by the Council on June 2, 1998; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-6180. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, copies of D.C. Act 12-398 adopted by the Council on June 2, 1998; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-6181. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, copies of D.C. Act 12-402 adopted by the Council on June 16, 1998; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-6182. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, copies of D.C. Act 12-404 adopted by the Council on June 16, 1998; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-6183. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, copies of D.C. Act 12-405 adopted by the Council on June 16, 1998; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.