

Nancy J. Schilling, a dedicated civil servant in Evansville, Illinois, in my Congressional district.

Nancy serves as the City Clerk for the Village of Evansville and as the Randolph County Civil Defense Director. While her husband, Danny and two children, Roxie and Ryan have always known what a great wife and mother they have, Evansville has been equally blessed in benefiting from Nancy's dedication to her community.

During the flood of 1993, the citizens of Evansville realized just how fortunate they were to have Nancy Schilling as their City Clerk. At a time when Evansville was under great strain facing the damage from the flood, she became the organizing force in re-building the community. Nancy coordinated efforts with the National Guard, Army Guard and Coast Guard to assist in a rapid response flood relief plan. She was also instrumental in securing state and federal grant money to provide critical additional support for Southern Illinois.

What is most notable about Nancy Schilling is her willingness to meet any challenge presented to her with a friendly smile and determined spirit. Nancy Schilling recently recognized her as their Citizen of the Year. I commend Nancy for this well deserved tribute, honoring her integrity, compassion and outstanding commitment to Evansville.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Nancy Schilling for the fine example she has set for us all.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE FLUENCY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 10, 1998

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3829) to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to establish a program to help children and youth learn English and for other purposes:

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Chairman, there are very few people in this body who can claim to be not only a parent of children in bilingual education, but who worked in bilingual education. I am proud to be associated with bilingual education and its implementation on a nationwide basis.

There are legitimate arguments about the implementation of bilingual education and whether it fits some communities. The existing Bilingual Education Act allows for this. It does not force bilingual education on anyone, and if some communities do not want it, they do not have to have it.

There is a legitimate discussion about the length of time in bilingual instruction, and there is legitimate debate about the age factors involved in language learning.

These are important considerations and they should be discussed between parents and educators within the communities throughout the country, in the best tradition of local control and responsiveness.

These are the arguments that are not legitimate. An impression will be given (clearly unsubstantiated and based on anecdotes cir-

culated to mythical proportions) that bilingual education is not about acquiring English. It is, and those of us who support bilingual education support and acknowledge the fundamental truth that life in America without English is a life without economic options and access to the full benefits of American public life.

It is bilingual education that will provide this access to our children and young adults, and the termination of this program in our Nation's educational system will certainly be detrimental to limited English proficient (LEP) students.

On the other hand, this bill we have before us today will take us several steps backward in educating LEP students. The so-called English Language Fluency Act contains provisions unacceptable to me as a Member of Congress, as a former educator, and as a parent.

H.R. 3892 disregards the authority of parents and local schools. This legislation mandates that LEP students entering kindergarten must master English by the end of the first grade. In addition, LEP children must be moved out of specialized classrooms in 2 years, not exceeding 3 years. Because you see, if LEP students need further assistance in learning the English language, and even if school administrators and parents believe further Federal assistance is necessary, after 3 years, this bill will not give these students the educational resources they will require. Common sense would have us believe that children in different age groups will have different educational needs. H.R. 3892 says no. It requires the 3-year limit on specialized learning and will effectively slam the education doors on LEP students needing further assistance.

H.R. 3892 is a violation of the voluntary compliance agreements between the Office of Civil Rights, local schools, and parents if these agreements involve bilingual education. Parties to these agreements will not even be consulted nor will individual consent degrees be examined. These compliance agreements ensure access to quality education for LEP students and protects their civil rights under title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunity Act of 1974.

Voiding these arrangements is another affront to the authority of local schools and robs students of the opportunity to excel in other school subjects. H.R. 3892, with its main focus on English learning, ignores the priorities just as vital to the development of LEP students, such as the basic comprehension of other school subjects like math and science.

Even the funding plans under H.R. 3892 are problematic. Instead of providing funds for the most efficient programs, H.R. 3892 will utilize formula grants for each school district. This legislation means not providing funds to the neediest students, or rewarding the best efforts.

We will soon be considering the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Assessment of the Bilingual Education Program should take place within this context of comprehensive school reform. To initiate legislation at this time, which is what H.R. 3892 would do, is simply rash and foolhardy. We owe it to our children and youth to carefully evaluate and analyze the effects of bilingual education.

My colleagues, I urge you to oppose the passage of H.R. 3892. It is a shortsighted proposal which will serve more to harm LEP stu-

dents rather than aid them. Although the intentions of this legislation are notable, the language in this bill will simply not serve its purpose for it disregards the other educational priorities of LEP students, for their parents and for their teachers.

Vote "no" on H.R. 3892.

SALUTE TO DANIEL F. HALL UPON
THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 1998

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Speaker, the men and women who serve this nation as the employees of the federal government are sometimes the forgotten foot soldiers that keep our federal programs running day in and day out. Today, I want to pay tribute to one of these committed public servants, whose upcoming retirement will leave the Nashville District of the Army Corps of Engineers with tremendously large shoes to fill. Daniel Hall has been the Nashville District's Chief of Construction-Operations Division since 1992, but in October he will retire after 37 years of dedicated service to this nation.

He began his career after he graduated cum laude from Vanderbilt University in 1961 with the Bachelor of Engineering degree in Civil Engineering. As a distinguished graduate of Vanderbilt's Army ROTC program, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. His first assignment was as Platoon Leader and Company Executive Officer for the 299th Engineer Battalion in Hoecht, Germany.

After active duty, Mr. Hall joined the Vicksburg District Corps of Engineers as a civil engineer intern and was later assigned to the Operations Division. In 1965, he transferred to the Nashville District, where he has been a tireless and ardent engineer. He was handed the honor and responsibility of Chief of Construction-Operations Division in 1992.

Over the years, Mr. Hall has been recognized several times for his outstanding work and service. He received the Meritorious Civilian Service Award. He was twice selected as the Nashville District's Employee of the Year in the Engineer and Scientist Category. He was named Engineer of the Year by the Tennessee Society of Professional Engineers. He was decorated by the Secretary of the Army, who awarded him the Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service for his exceptional leadership and technical abilities.

Over the years, Mr. Hall has made an enormous impact in many of the communities in Kentucky's 5th Congressional District that are regularly flooded during times of heavy rains. He has worked on tremendous flood protection projects in Harlan, Pineville, Barbourville, Middlesboro and Williamsburg, which will help save people's lives, homes and property, and promote economic development in one of the poorest regions of the nation.

Today, I want to commend Mr. Hall for his outstanding and effective leadership. His work with the Army Corps of Engineers has made a difference in the lives of so many people, who routinely face the mud and floods of Mother Nature's fury. I wish Mr. Hall all the