

These repetitive loss properties represent an enormous cost for taxpayers. They are also a tremendous burden to residents whose lives are disrupted every time there is a flood. In many cases, these residents want to move but cannot afford to do so. By repeatedly compensating them for flood damage, current Federal law makes it easier for them to continue living where they are, rather than moving to higher ground.

I ask my colleagues to look at the bill and please comment on it.

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to exchange special order times with the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

WHAT THIS CONGRESS HAS DONE FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION AND SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, a previous speaker asked the question, what has this Congress done for education, and in particular, she said, what has this Congress done for public education? She should be very proud of what this Congress has done as far as education is concerned during the last 2 years.

Just a few of the issues that we have enacted into law, which the President has already signed: The Higher Education Act, a bipartisan effort; special education, signed into law, the second largest program from the Federal Government in relationship to elementary and secondary education; the Workforce Investment Act, signed into law; loan forgiveness for new teachers, signed into law; quality teaching grants, that is the law; emergency student loans, that is law; and yes, in a bipartisan way, prohibition on Federal school tests. That is in law.

This Congress has also, for public education, dealt with school nutrition and reauthorized the school nutrition legislation, very important to schools; charter schools for public schools, \$100 million; quality Head Start, again, bipartisan, and again, bicameral; vocational education; Community Services Block Grant; \$500 million extra for special education; and the Reading Excellence Act.

That is only 14 programs; I might say, probably more than any Congress in the history of my term in the Congress; by far anything more than I have seen in a long, long time.

The issue is not what we have done or what we may not have done; the issue is, where is the control. We believe

that if we are going to reform education and make a positive effort, it starts from the bottom up. We do not try any longer, as we have done for so many years, to say, "Here, this is coming from the Federal Government. It is good because we said it is good. We know that one-size-fits-all. You do not know anything, on the local level. You should not make any decisions. We know it all."

That is not the way it works, and it has not worked. We ought to admit that it has not worked. We are trying something different: passing 14 pieces of legislation dealing with elementary schools, secondary schools, public schools, for \$31 plus billion in this year's budget for education.

Special education got a \$750 million boost last year. It is going to get another \$500 million this year. This is the one unfunded curriculum mandate from the Federal Government, a 100 percent mandate from the Federal Government.

Thirty years ago local government was promised that they will get 40 percent of the excess costs. Whatever it costs them to educate a regular student, and all of that above to educate a special needs student, we will send them 40 percent. We sent them, until 2 years ago, 6 percent. We are about up to 12 percent.

But as I have mentioned so many times, in California, the Los Angeles Unified School District, it means \$60 million a year, every year. Now, if we talk about reforming schools, talk about the pupil-to-teacher ratio, talk about school maintenance, what they could do with \$60 million, if we would put our money where our mouth is. That is a tragedy. In the St. Louis schools there is a \$25 million increase every year, and on and on it goes.

So what we have done is tried to get money back so that they could do on the local level what they want to do to improve schools. But they cannot do it because, for instance, in Los Angeles, they have to raise \$325 million from their local taxpayers to pay for our 100 percent mandate. They would have that \$325 million, at least they would have \$60 million more at the present time.

I tried to get this point across for 20 years in the minority, and now as a member of the majority, because that is the biggest problem facing local school districts: How do we fund the 100 percent mandate? They do not know how to do that. They do not have a tax base in order to do that. The mandate came from here.

So I am pretty proud of the fact that in the last 2 years, \$750 million and another \$500 million. This will be the first year that local school districts will be able to reduce their spending on special ed so they can put it into maintenance, they can put it into new teachers, they can put it into additional teachers, reduce class size all of those things. But if they got the 40 percent of the excess costs, it is unbelievable what they could do on the local level.

I would hope that no one leaves the Congress this session without being proud of what we have been able to do in the area of public education.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BLAGOJEVICH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BLAGOJEVICH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE STATUS OF LEGISLATION RECOMMENDED BY THE WOMEN'S CONGRESSIONAL CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this afternoon in sincere gratitude and sincere regret, in my capacity as chair of this session of the Women's Congressional Caucus. In that capacity I have worked most productively with the cochair, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mrs. NANCY JOHNSON). The work we have produced I think indicates what happens when Members work together.

I want to say a word about my gratitude, and then how what we have achieved has been quite overwhelmed by what women have been denied. I want to acknowledge the innovations that we designed this year, and the must-pass agenda. It had the help of the Speaker, gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGRICH) and the minority leader, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT).

Three of our seven priorities were passed. Two were vital to women: the reauthorization of the Mammography Quality Standards Act, which assures women that both the equipment and personnel involved in mammograms are up to standards; and sections of the Violence Against Women Act. There was a third important bill on our must-pass agenda, the Commission on Women, Minorities, and People with Disabilities in Science, Engineering, and Technology Jobs.

□ 1600

Two more bills of great importance to women I want to acknowledge. We beat back an attempt to take women out of basic training and separate them from men, and we passed an Innocent Spouse Tax Relief Act. These are very important, and I do not want to denigrate what they are.

But, Mr. Speaker, these are overwhelmed by the regret that I bring to the floor this afternoon and that regret boils down to the three Cs: Choice, Contraception and Child Care.

Mr. Speaker, if we were to ask women how they would rate this Congress, I think the three Cs would give us an F. Choice, because since the majority took control, we have had a hundred votes on choice, which should be a