

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, Republicans and my colleagues on the left know that the biggest and best investment we can make as a nation is in the proper education of our children. But one of the greatest debates that is taking place in Washington right now concerns the future of our children's education and how scarce Federal education dollars can most effectively and efficiently be spent to improve that education.

I ask, should the money of hard-working parents be left in the pockets of Washington bureaucrats, and should every important decision be left to the red tape bureaucrats in Washington to develop the plan to educate our children in our schools across America? Of course not. We all know the answer. Local control wins out over Washington bureaucracy. As a parent, I know. I want the best education possible for my children. And I envision a national goal on education, a goal that offers every child in America the best education possible. The Republican plan puts our teachers, our parents and our school boards in the education driver's seat. Mr. Speaker, the ed flex bill gets us closer, closer to letting our parents, teachers, schools and communities accomplish this goal by reaching a higher standard of learning.

ED FLEX ACT A FLIMSY PIECE OF LEGISLATION

(Ms. DeLAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, last year Democrats were successful in passing a measure to improve education by hiring 100,000 new teachers. We are a third of the way there. This year there are 30,000 new teachers, reducing class size, improving discipline and increasing the individual attention that our kids need.

Democrats want to pass the next installment toward 100,000 teachers, but the Republican leadership is fighting us tooth and nail. The Republican leadership's ed flex act is a flimsy piece of legislation, a fig leaf to cover its barren agenda. It makes no provision for new teachers, no measure to ensure that the neediest school districts receive funds, and it has no accountability. Democrats believe that local school districts should have flexibility when they administer Federal education programs, but there should be flexibility coupled with accountability to ensure that our teachers, students and parents receive the support that they deserve. What we ought to do in this Congress is authorize 30,000 more teachers on our way to 100,000 and hold schools accountable for student performance. These are the measures that are going to make a real difference for our students, ensure that our schools have the support that they need to

make the decisions that they need and to provide our youngsters with the best possible opportunity for their future.

CONGRESS RENEWS PLEDGE TO ABIDE BY SPENDING CAPS

(Mr. GUTKNECHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, just 4 years ago when they unveiled their budget, the administration acknowledged that we would see \$200 billion deficits well into the next century. But the new Republican Congress said that that was unacceptable. Against the shrill cries of our friends on the left, we reformed welfare, saved Medicare, eliminated over 400 Federal programs, and cut the growth in Federal spending by more than half. Today our budget is balanced and we can look forward to a decade of surpluses. We can now begin to tackle the great issue of our generation, saving Social Security, if, if only we continue to exercise the fiscal discipline begun with the balanced budget agreement.

Unfortunately the President in his budget reneges on the spending caps. I am happy to report today that the congressional leaders have said that they will renew their pledge to abide by those spending caps. This means that we can secure every penny of Social Security taxes only for Social Security. It also means that American families can expect lower interest rates and a stronger economy well into the next century.

GIVING PRIORITY TO MATH AND SCIENCE EDUCATION

(Mr. HOLT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, today we will be talking about flexibility and accountability in our schools. My colleagues know that to compete in today's world and to give citizens personally fulfilling lives, we need to give students good education in science and math. International math and science study results show U.S. 12th graders lagging well behind the international average in math and science. Eisenhower funds are the only program available to all schools to help train public school teachers in math and science. If we are to give these students the education they need, we need these Eisenhower funds to help teachers at all levels prepare to teach in science and math. As we give school systems more accountability and flexibility, we need to give a priority to math and science education.

SUPPORT ED FLEX

(Mr. HILL of Montana asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HILL of Montana. Mr. Speaker, let us take a clue from successful governors across the country who have taken on the special interests in making education their top priority. The same scene has been played out in State after State. A governor proposes real education reforms, from charter schools, to school choice, to tough academic standards, to back-to-basics, to ed flex. Then the special interests rise up in indignation, they denounce those reforms and a battle forms, a public relations battle between the reform-minded governor and the special interests that have produced the terrible results in the first place.

One reform that the special interests particularly do not like is ed flex. They do not like it because it gives States and local schools the power to decide how to best spend the Federal education dollars. The special interests hate this idea because it means that Washington will no longer be telling local schools what they need, and they do not like it because it means parents and local authorities will have more control over education and the special interests will have less.

Let us give governors the power they need to improve our public schools. Let us support ed flex.

CALL FOR BIPARTISAN EDUCATION REFORM

(Mr. WEINER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, some might wonder when it became a partisan issue to support our children and our schools. If you recall after World War II there was truly a bipartisan spirit in this country that we needed to invest in education at all levels. We built more schools in communities all around this country, we encouraged more people to go into teaching, and we hired tens of thousands of new teachers. We need to do the same type of bipartisan plan now that the Cold War has ended, now that we have realized that our battles that we are going to be fighting in the future will be on the economic battlefield, not the military battlefield, thank God.

Now we have to do the same: we have to invest in modernizing those schools, we have to invest in hiring more teachers. We have to take that kind of approach. I think that we can all agree that it should be a bipartisan effort.

When a youngster in PS 254 in my district, which is dramatically overcrowded, is trying to figure out why they are learning in a gymnasium and a lunchroom, they are not thinking because it is a Democrat or a Republican, they are thinking because we simply need new spaces. This is the kind of thing we must do. We need to hire teachers, modernize schools, and make college tax deductible. We should do it in a bipartisan fashion.