

by 17 percent over the President's request. And in 1999 the Congress increased the level of spending over the President's request by 13 percent.

There is a pattern and a history and a commitment on the part of this Congress to see that the Federal Government honors the commitment that it has made to local school district across this country. So it is very important, I think, that this resolution expresses the will of the House that we will fully fund special ed and move in that direction.

The other thing I think is important with respect to this resolution is that whenever the Federal Government imposes mandates on local school districts and school boards, we take away and deprive them of critical decision-making authority.

I just mentioned that we have 12 people seeking the school board position for one position in the Sioux Falls School District. Using the resources that they have to fund the special ed mandate deprives them of using resources that could be allocated for other important things like building new schools, hiring new teachers, reducing class sizes, or buying more computers.

I will use my State of South Dakota as an example. If we were fully funding the mandate on special education today, we would be looking at an additional \$18 million coming into South Dakota. And if each State would look at their own statistics, I think they would find similar types of relationships between the current funding levels and where it should be if the Federal Government was living up to the mandate.

As I said earlier, there is no higher priority than providing quality education to children with disabilities and at the same time freeing up resources that local decision-makers can use to improve the quality of education for all of our students across this country.

And so I believe that the vote that we made today in the House is important, as we move down that direction and look at what we can do to further increase the funding level, to honor the commitment that the Federal Government has made to the local school boards across this country, to see that those Federal mandates that we impose upon local school boards are fully funded so that our school districts and those decision-makers at the local level have an opportunity to do what they do best, and that is try and give our children the very best education possible.

And I again would simply say that, as a matter of principle, I believe that this Republican Congress is committed to seeing that more of that decision-making authority is retained at the local level and that our parents, our teachers, our administrators and our school boards are those who are in the best position to make decisions about the quality and the funding of our children's education. And that frankly, in

my view, is where we ought to put the point of control.

And so the resolution that we acted upon today, I think, speaks loud and clear that this Congress will continue to move in the direction of seeing that the Federal mandate special education, which we have a responsibility for 40 percent of, that we continue to move in the direction, as we have here in the past few years in this Congress, to see that we honor that commitment to all of our students across this country and particularly to those who have disabilities.

I look forward to working toward that end and as we go through the appropriations process within the confines of a balanced budget agreement to see that that gets done.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 833, BANKRUPTCY REFORM ACT OF 1999

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-126) on the resolution (H. Res. 158) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 833) to amend title 11 of the United States Code, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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

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

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

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

COMMENDING OAK PARK, ILLINOIS, ON 150 YEARS OF TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, 150 years ago in 1849, Oak Park, Illinois was just 10 years old, with a total population of less than 500 people.

There were no streets lined with Frank Lloyd Wright architecture. There was no elevated train system for rapid transit to the City of Chicago. There was no light bulb, no telephone or automobile. No one had heard of the computer, Internet, or e-mail.

□ 1945

In 1849, township as a local form of government was established in Illinois, and since then, voters in 85 of Illinois'

102 counties have benefited from this most intimate form of government.

Today, Oak Park is a thriving community of more than 53,000 people, known for its architectural heritage. Within its 4.5 square miles lives a diverse mix of people with different cultures, races and ethnicities, professions, lifestyles, religions, ages and incomes.

Primarily a residential community bordering the city of Chicago, Oak Park is the birthplace and childhood home of novelist Ernest Hemingway. An annual festival has traditionally been held to celebrate his July birth date.

Architect Frank Lloyd Wright lived in Oak Park from 1889 to 1909, and 25 buildings in the village were designed by him, including his first public building, Unity Temple, a Unitarian Universalist church. His restored home and studio is open for daily hours, and there are many architecturally significant homes ranging from Victorian to prairie style in the village's two historic districts.

Other famous Oak Parkers include Edgar Rice Burroughs, the creator of Tarzan; Dr. Percy B. Julian, an outstanding African American chemist whose research led to the development of cortisone; Joseph Kerwin, an astronaut on the first NASA Skylab team; Ray Kroc, the founder of McDonald's; and Marjorie Judith Vincent, the 1991 Miss America.

Oak Park is also home to former president of the Illinois Senate and recently appointed chairman of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the honorable Phillip Rock.

The Oak Park River Forest High School is recognized as one of the best public high schools in the Nation, Fenwick is an outstanding Catholic school, and the city is currently involved in the redevelopment of downtown Oak Park with new retail anchors and an intermodal transportation facility.

In 1968, the village board approved one of the Nation's first local fair housing ordinances outlawing discrimination. In 1973, the board approved its first Oak Park diversity statement; and, in 1976, Oak Park was designated an all-American city.

One thing that has not changed in Oak Park during the past 150 years is the person-to-person service provided by township officials and township government in Illinois. When Illinois voters chose township government, they chose the oldest form of government on the North American continent. The Pilgrims brought the concept of township government with them when they landed on the eastern seaboard in 1636. More than a century before the Revolutionary War, townships were giving communities a local and independent voice in matters of government and order.

Today, as we prepare to move into the 21st century, government in Illinois still thrives. More than 8 million