weeks. Well these kids and their teacher, Ms. Jeanne Cameron, got together and entered the contest along with nearly 2,000 other classes, and they won. The money will probably be used to create the special reading program and to buy new books for the school.

I understand that the class and its teacher were unaware of their success until they were filmed live upon receipt of the prize last week. I ask my colleagues to join me in extending warmest congratulations to Ms. Cameron's class and the Mt. Ogden Middle School for their learning and competitive spirit, and their partner, the Channel One Network, for making this program a reality.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ''STATE INITIATIVE FAIRNESS ACT''

HON. MARY BONO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 1999

Mrs. BONO. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to reintroduce the ''State Initiative Fairness Act.'' This commonsense judicial reform is legislation that is already well-known to my colleagues and courtwatchers. It passed the House of Representatives twice in recent memory. First, it passed as the free-standing bill, H.R. 1170, during the 104th Congress in 1995. And again, it passed as part of the Judicial Reform Act in 1998 during the 105th Congress where it was one of the first issues I considered upon joining this institution. This measure gained bipartisan and broad support in the past. This procedure contained in the bill establishing a three-judge panel review is simply the restoration of a judicial procedure that was the norm in the federal system for most of the twentieth century.

Strong voting rights are the keystone of our democratic system. It is noted that ''A system which permits one judge to block with the stroke of a pen what 4,736,180 state residents voted to enact as law tests the integrity of our constitutional democracy.'' (*See The Coalition For Economic Equity* v. *Wilson,* 110 F3d 1431, 1437 (9th Cir. 1997)). The unjust effect on voting rights created by injunctions issued in California by one judge against the will of the people of the State as reflected in propositions concerning immigration, medical marijuana, and affirmative action is well-known. This bill provides that requests for injunctions in cases challenging the constitutionality of measures passed by a State referendum must be heard by a three-judge court. Like other Federal voting rights legislation containing a provision providing for a hearing by a three-judge court, the bill is designed to protect voters in the exercise of their vote and to further protect the results of that vote. It requires that any state-passed initiative or referendum voted upon and approved directly by the citizens of a State be afforded the protection of a three-judge court pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 2284 where an application for an injunction is brought in Federal court to arrest the enforcement of the referendum on the premise that the referendum is unconstitutional.

It is not my intent to change the outcome of any litigation concerning the past propositions passed by the electorate. The goal of the bill is to secure the judicial process and guarantee to the people it is as objective as possible. For example, where the entire populace of a State democratically exercises a direct vote on an issue, one Federal judge will not be able to issue an injunction preventing the enforcement of the will of the people of that State. Rather, three judges, at the trial level, according to procedures already provided by statute, will hear the application for an injunction and determine whether the requested injunction should issue. An appeal is taken directly to the Supreme Court, expediting the enforcement of the referendum if the final decision is that the referendum is constitutional. Such an expedited procedure is already provided for in other voting rights cases. It should be no different in this case, since a State is redistricted for purposes of a vote on a referendum into one voting block. The Congressional Research Service estimates that these 3-judge courts would be required less than 10 times in a decade under this bill, causing a very insubstantial burden on the Federal judiciary, while substantially protecting the rights of the voters of a State.

This bill recognizes that State referenda reflect, more than any other process, the one-person-one-vote system, and seeks to protect a fundamental part of our national foundation. This bill will implement a fair and effective policy that preserves a proper balance in Federal-State relations.

In closing, I wish to express my gratitude to my many colleagues who join me today as cosponsors and their support as we strive to amplify and secure the will of the people.

H.R. 415: EXPAND AND REBUILD AMERICA'S SCHOOLS ACT

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 1, 1999

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to one of the most pressing difficulties facing our schools: overcrowded and run-down facilities.

Last month, 53.2 million young people went back to school. The facilities that greeted them were not up to par. One-third of all public schools are in serious need of repair or replacement, and nowhere is that problem more obvious than my home district in Orange County, California.

Our schools are simply run down and out of room, and California is feeling the crunch. Facilities are so crowded in our state that we would have to spend $4 billion by 2002 in order to provide enough space. In fact, high school enrollment is projected to grow by a full one-third between 1998 and 2008.

Right now our children attend schools with leaking roofs, dangerous wiring and chipping paint, crammed into storage closets, libraries and gyms for lack of classroom space. By neglecting to provide an environment appropriate for learning and teaching, we are sending our youth a message that their academic success is unimportant to us. This tragically short-changes our students.

That's why I have introduced H.R. 415, the Expand and Rebuild America's Schools Act.

H.R. 415 will help local education agencies (LEAs) with limited financial resources by creating a new class of tax-exempt bonds, interest-free for LEAs. A financial institution that issues these bonds would receive a tax credit in the amount of the interest that would otherwise be paid by the LEA. So the school district only has to repay the principal, no interest. The Secretary of Education will be responsible for direct distribution of the bond program to the LEAs, avoiding any state bureaucracy involvement in funding decisions or program administration.

To be eligible to participate in the school construction bond program, LEAs must: (1) have at least 35 percent of students eligible for the free or reduced-cost lunch program; (2) be involved in a public/private partnership with a local private enterprise, to provide an amount equal to at least 10 percent of the interest-free capital provided; (3) maintain high educational standards; (4) have a projected growth rate at or above 10 percent over the next five years; (5) have a student-teacher ratio of 30 to 1 or higher; and (6) have already made an attempt to alleviate overcrowding.

These qualifying factors will ensure the bond program assists the most impacted, high-quality schools. Simultaneously, it will encourage schools to seek out private contributions to improve curriculum and equipment, enhancing the impact of the bond initiative. H.R. 415 will provide our children with an environment that is more conducive to learning, and prevent this facilities crisis from continuing into the next century.

SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 27, 1999

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2396, the Small Business Innovation Research Program Reauthorization Act of 1999. This important program has had a significant impact not just in Massachusetts, but many other states around the country.

Literally thousands of companies have benefited from the SBIR program since its establishment in 1982. With the exception of some Internet and biotechnology companies, small technology businesses generally do not have the financial resources necessary to develop their most innovative ideas. Many businesses, in their early years and without much of a track record, have a difficult time finding the capital necessary to bring ideas to the marketplace, regardless of how good these ideas might be. The SBIR program provides these businesses with an opportunity to develop and implement their ideas with the goal of enabling these businesses to fully realize their commercial potential. When these companies succeed, they in turn strengthen the economy by providing the type of high quality jobs our country needs to prosper.

While the SBIR program has been a tremendous help to the small business technology community, more can be done to improve upon the success of the program. Through H.R. 2396, we are promoting a number of program changes that will increase the chances of success for small businesses operating in the technological fields.

In order for SBIR recipients to achieve success, it is important that participating agencies