

We are living through the longest and strongest economic boom in American history. Since 1992, our economy has created 22 million new jobs—and Hispanics in Massachusetts and around the country are sharing in our national prosperity and contributing to this marvelous growth. Since 1993, Hispanic employment has increased by nearly one-third nationwide, and median weekly wages for Hispanics have risen more than 16 percent. The unemployment rate for Hispanics is the lowest since we began tracking it, and the median income for Hispanic households has risen 15.9 percent over the last three years.

But for all our progress, we know that many challenges remain. The dropout rate for Hispanic youth is astonishingly high. There are far too many young people with nothing to do after school, and the unemployment rate is still too high in many predominantly-Hispanic communities. We cannot ignore or turn our backs on these young people, because they are truly the future of this nation. And prosperity that is not broadly shared is not true prosperity.

In February of 1994, President Clinton signed Executive order 12900, "Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans," specifically, "To advance the development of human potential, to strengthen the Nation's capacity to provide high-quality education, and to increase opportunities for Hispanic Americans to participate in and benefit from Federal education programs." I am proud to tell you about an initiative in my state, the Massachusetts Education Initiative for Latino Students (MEILS), which was created to implement the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans in Massachusetts. MEILS created a Steering Committee responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive approach for dealing with Latino educational issues statewide. MEILS has formulated a partnership between the state, federal, and local government to ensure high-level educational achievements for Latino students, from preschoolers to lifelong learners. MEILS has already established working groups in 13 of the communities with the highest percentages of Hispanic populations in the state of Massachusetts. Last Fall, MEILS held a conference in Worcester, Massachusetts, expecting approximately 300-400 participants, but ultimately drawing 700. They are currently planning their second conference, anticipating over 1,000 participants.

By 2050, one-quarter of all Americans will be Hispanic. In Massachusetts, Hispanics comprise 6% of the population and have made significant contributions to our communities, to our workplaces, to our public schools, and to academe. One of those contributors, Juan Maldacena, an Associate Professor of Physics at Harvard University, recently secured a MacArthur Foundation "genius" grant for his

work on "string theory," a method for describing gravity in the same terms as other forces in the universe. A colleague of Mr. Maldacena's from the University of Chicago was so taken by this theory that he penned a new version of the "Macarena" called the "Maldacena."

We know that the key to growing and staying strong is making sure that every American participates in our nation's prosperity. I will continue, and I hope the Congress will continue, to work closely with the Hispanic community because, together, we bring Massachusetts and America closer to the vision of a nation where all citizens are free to reach their potential.

THE PREVENTION OF CIRCUMVENTION OF SUGAR TARIFF RATE QUOTAS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I rise in support as a cosponsor of S. 3116. The purpose of this legislation is to prevent molasses stuffed with sugar from being allowed into this country.

As others have stated, the molasses in question is stuffed with South American sugar in Canada, and then transported into the United States. The sugar is then spun out of this concoction and sold in this country while the molasses is sent right back across the border to be stuffed with more sugar—and the smuggling cycle starts over again.

This practice is a blatant circumvention of our tariff quota. The sole purpose of this process is to smuggle excess sugar into the United States, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, which will put an end to this loophole.

ENERGY POLICY

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, yesterday, the Senator from Alaska, Senator MURKOWSKI, made a reference to me which I would like to respond to and set the RECORD straight.

The Senator from Alaska said that H.R. 2884, which would reauthorize the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, is being held up by a senator from the Democratic side of the aisle who is objecting to the reauthorization of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act.

I support H.R. 2884, but I oppose Senator MURKOWSKI's substitute amendment that undermines the new oil valuation rule for royalty payments on oil produced on Federal lands. This rule took over three years to finally implement. Senator MURKOWSKI's amendment would do great damage to the rule, which just took effect a few months ago and taxpayers would be hurt.

In conclusion, I support the House bill, which sets up a heating oil reserve for the northeastern states and reauthorizes the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, but I object to the royalty provision in the substitute amendment.

I call on the Senator from Alaska to let H.R. 2884 move forward as it was

passed by the other body—without the royalty language.

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, it has been more than a year since the Columbine tragedy, but still this Republican Congress refuses to act on sensible gun legislation.

Since Columbine, thousands of Americans have been killed by gunfire. Until we act, Democrats in the Senate will read the names of some of those who have lost their lives to gun violence in the past year, and we will continue to do so every day that the Senate is in session.

In the name of those who died, we will continue this fight. Following are the names of some of the people who were killed by gunfire one year ago today.

September 27, 1999: Jermaine Allen, 26, Baltimore, MD; John Arcady, 49, Cincinnati, OH; Nathaniel Ball, 61, Tulsa, OK; Patrick Penson, 18, Fort Worth, TX; Eric Shine, 29, Charlotte, NC; Kevin Woods, 37, St. Louis, MO.

We cannot sit back and allow such senseless gun violence to continue. The deaths of these people are a reminder to all of us that we need to enact sensible gun legislation now.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, September 26, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,648,781,388,359.77, five trillion, six hundred forty-eight billion, seven hundred eighty-one million, three hundred eighty-eight thousand, three hundred fifty-nine dollars and seventy-seven cents.

Five years ago, September 26, 1995, the Federal debt stood at \$4,953,251,000,000, four trillion, nine hundred fifty-three billion, two hundred fifty-one million.

Ten years ago, September 26, 1990, the Federal debt stood at \$3,214,541,000,000, three trillion, two hundred fourteen billion, five hundred forty-one million.

Fifteen years ago, September 26, 1985, the Federal debt stood at \$1,823,103,000,000, one trillion, eight hundred twenty-three billion, one hundred three million.

Twenty-five years ago, September 26, 1975, the Federal debt stood at \$552,848,000,000, five hundred fifty-two billion, eight hundred forty-eight million, which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,095,933,388,359.77, five trillion, ninety-five billion, nine hundred thirty-three million, three hundred eighty-eight thousand, three hundred fifty-nine dollars and seventy-seven cents, during the past 25 years.