

Chicago Archdiocesan pledge to develop educated, thoughtful, and moral students.

It is my honor to commend Mrs. Dawn Gasior for her achievements as an outstanding teacher and advocate of Catholic education. She, along with countless other educators, serves to enhance our overall education system—impacting one student at a time. I thank Dawn, along with all of our Nation's teachers, for their dedication, passion, and noble service.

LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL BOARD HAS FIRST BLACK MAJORITY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD an article in the New York Times announcing a majority African American School Board in Little Rock, AR. This is the first time since Federal troops enforced integration in 1957 that African Americans have earned a majority on the Little Rock School Board. As pronounced in the article, it is good to see that people are looking for a change.

The events that took place in Little Rock still stand as a testament to the spirit of resiliency abiding deeply within the African American community. Similarly, the decision to integrate in 1957 echoes our countries commitment to ultimately ensuring equality among all of our Nation's sons and daughters. In the same way that 1957 remains such a pivotal year in our Nation's history, I hope that these more recent events continue to shape future generations—moving away from things as usual, as the article states, toward viewing issues of importance from the perspectives of the people directly affected rather than by socially engineered categories like race, gender, and class.

Central to the article are the issues faced by students, skin color notwithstanding. It is important to understand that what this article highlights is not simply the need to recognize the gains made by African Americans in winning the majority of seats on the school board but rather the changes in minds and hearts necessary to move to a space where people are voted for because of their desire to preserve and protect the interest of the people they serve.

I applaud the efforts of Little Rock School Board members as well as members of the community.

[From the New York Times, Oct. 13, 2006]

LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL BOARD HAS FIRST BLACK MAJORITY

(By the Associated Press)

LITTLE ROCK, AR.—For the first time since federal troops enforced public school integration here by escorting a group of black students into Central High School 49 years ago, the Little Rock school board has a black majority.

Dianne Curry won a runoff election on Tuesday, meaning four of the Little Rock School District's seven board members are black. Ms. Curry defeated Tom Brock, who had been appointed to fill an unexpired term in February.

The district, which has 26,000 students, has been mostly black for years, but until now

has never had a black majority on the school board.

Until 1957, Little Rock had operated separate schools for blacks and whites. Despite an order from the United States Supreme Court, Gov. Orval E. Faubus sought to prevent nine black students from entering Central High, but President Dwight D. Eisenhower sent in the 101st Airborne to enforce the court's order.

Federal courts have monitored the desegregation effort since 1965.

Sixty-eight percent of the district's students are black, 24 percent are white, and Hispanics and Asians make up most of the remaining 8 percent. The population of Little Rock is mostly white, and there are many predominantly white private schools in the area.

The school district has sought to free itself from federal monitoring, but a judge maintained partial control after ruling two years ago that the district was not adequately appraising how well its academic programs helped black students.

Superintendent Roy Brooks is black, as is Robert Daugherty, the board's president.

"I think people are looking for a change," Mr. Daugherty said. "They're tired of things as usual, business as usual. They want people who are more in tune with the community, and I think that's what you see now."

Skip Rutherford, dean of the Clinton School of Public Service and a former board president, said that a black majority on the board was "probably long overdue."

Students will still come first, said Mr. Rutherford, who is white.

"I think the board members are going to vote much more on the content of their character than the color of their skin," he said. "Most people when they get on the school board tend to view issues not by color but by what's best for the students."

INTRODUCTION OF THE MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY PERMANENT ELIMINATION ACT OF 2007

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to introduce the Marriage Tax Penalty Permanent Elimination Act of 2007. This important bill makes marriage tax relief permanent for the 48 million American married couples that benefit from the marriage tax relief enacted by Congress and signed into law in 2003.

Madam Speaker, if we do not act, in 2010 48 million hardworking married couples will face an annual tax increase which averages \$2,726. I am sure I speak for the married couples in my district and Illinois when I say that \$2,726 each year is a lot of money. In fact, if a couple were to put this money away each year to pay for the costs of a child's college education, without even earning interest they would have nearly \$50,000.

My legislation will ensure that marriage tax relief becomes permanent and 48 million American couples are not subject to a \$2,726 annual tax increase starting in 2010. I encourage my colleagues to join me in continuing the fight to guarantee that the values we hold most dear, marriage, family and hard work are treated fairly under our tax code.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JEFF FORTENBERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Madam Speaker, on Monday, February 5, 2007, I was unavoidably detained and thus I missed rollcall votes Nos. 74 and 75.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I was unable to attend two votes last night due to official business, hosting a paying for college workshop in my district.

I obtained an excused absence for this event, and I ask unanimous consent to include this personal explanation in the RECORD.

On February 5, 2007, I was unable to be present for rollcall votes No. 74 and No. 75.

On rollcall vote No. 74 to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution regarding National Consumer Protection Week, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall vote No. 75 to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, I would have voted "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 74 and No. 75 I was unable to make the vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on both No. 74 and No. 75.

TRIBUTE TO FATHER ROBERT F. DRINAN, SJ

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 5, 2007

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to memorialize the recent passing and pay tribute to a great and former Member of this House, Father Robert Drinan. Many Members of this House have already praised his advocacy of human rights and women's rights, his efforts to uphold government morality, his role as an educator, and his commitment to his Catholic faith. I rise today to highlight and honor Father Drinan for a particular element of his human and civil rights advocacy work.

In 1981, as a former Congressman and noted advocate for social justice, Father Drinan was named to the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC). This commission was formed to investigate the facts and circumstances surrounding Executive Order (EO) 9066 and the