

Christopher is a sophomore at the State University of New York (SUNY) Institute of Technology, where he is majoring in Health Services Management. He also serves as a Senator for SUNY Student Government.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to recognize this young man serving my district. As the father of two teenagers, I recognize the importance of organizations like DeMolay that encourage young people to get involved in their communities. I thank Christopher for his commitment, and would once again like to congratulate him on his election to the position of State Master Councilor.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 23, 2007

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Madam Speaker, due to the tragic death of my grandmother, Sarah "Big Mamma" Morris, I was unable to vote during the week of July 16–July 20.

Had I been present I would have voted in favor of the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill. The new Democratic-led Congress is determined to reverse the Republican pattern of disinvestment. Democrats have produced a bill that makes college more affordable, helps raise the achievement levels of America's students, expands access to health care for the uninsured and invests in the skills of America's workers and in community services.

In addition, I would have voted against the Kline amendment to the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill. This amendment is another Republican farse designed to hurt those who need help most. The Kline amendment would increase funds to the Office of Labor Management Standards, an office that has enjoyed 33 percent increase in resources over the past four years and sacrifice funding to the International Labor Affairs Bureau. This bureau oversees child labor standards abroad to make sure that other countries are not using children to undercut American manufacturing. The sponsor claims that it will help rank and file workers from so-called union abuses, but in reality, those who support this amendment are the same opponents of a minimum wage increase. This amendment does not protect the American worker and I would have voted "no".

I would have also been a part of the 310 votes for the Energy and Water Appropriations bill. The bipartisan Energy and Water bill invests \$3 billion—\$1 billion more than the President's request—to research global warming and work on new technologies and renewable energy. I hope that it's sister bill, the Water Resources Development Act Reauthorization, will soon become law so that we can continue to improve the water infrastructure in this nation.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR,
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES;
AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 19, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3043) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services; and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chairwomen, I rise in support of the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill (H.R. 3043). This legislation makes important investments in education, health care and vital scientific research.

"Last November, voters around the country called for a change in direction and this bill epitomizes the differences in priorities between the old Republican-led Congress and the new Congress. In the past five years, even as the cost of attending college skyrocketed, the previous Congress raised the maximum Pell Grant by only \$300. We said we could do better, and today we are increasing the Pell Grant by \$390, more in one year than the Republican-led Congress did in five years. President Bush submitted a budget this year to freeze funding for child care and cut funding to Head Start by \$100 million. We said we could do better, and today we are increasing both Child Care Block Grants and Head Start by \$75 million each.

"Since the inception of No Child Left Behind, it has been underfunded by more than \$55 billion, and this year the President's budget proposal fell \$14.7 billion short of full funding. We said we could do better, and today we are reversing that trend and increasing the appropriation for No Child Left Behind by \$2 billion, including a \$1.5 billion increase for Title I. As we work to reauthorize that bill this year, I hope that we will continue this positive trend and commit to mandatory funding of primary and secondary education.

"I am also pleased that today, for the first time since fiscal year 2005, we are increasing funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. In 1975, Congress passed IDEA to ensure that all students with disabilities receive a free, appropriate public education. At that time, Congress made a pledge to states—the federal government would pay 40% of the costs to educate special needs students. We have never met that commitment, and in the past several years, the Congress has actually failed to increase funding for IDEA at all. This year, the President proposed a cut in these funds. Today, we are increasing IDEA funding by \$509 million. While this is an excellent start, we must continue to work towards keeping our promise to states and fully funding IDEA. With that in mind, I urge my colleagues to join me to pass the EDUCATE Act, which creates a mandatory, fiscally responsible path to fully fund IDEA by 2015. Students and states have waited more than 30 years for Congress to fulfill its pledge, and we have a responsibility to do so.

"I am also pleased that in this bill today, we are increasing funding for many important education programs, including school counseling, afterschool programs, Even Start, Teacher training, education technology, and advanced placement. By strengthening these priorities, and putting the focus back on education at all levels, we are opening doors to students and increasing our ability as a nation to harness the energy, intelligence and ambition of our young people and keep our country in the forefront of discovery and innovation.

"The bill also addresses the fact that, in recent years, the nation's health scientists have faced shrinking laboratory budgets and dwindling research grants. Important investments need to be made today to reverse those trends. The House focuses an additional \$1 billion to fund the National Institutes of Health to accelerate research discoveries that can treat and cure many diseases.

"In spite of the all of the positives that this bill will accomplish, I am concerned about what some might consider superficially attractive but ultimately counterproductive cuts to administrative accounts at the Department of Education and elsewhere. Federal employees work hard to deliver valuable services to our nation everyday and simply can't do their jobs without the minimum amount of resources necessary. This legislation includes roughly \$175 million in funding cuts to federal employee salaries and resources. I'll be working in conference to ensure that our dedicated civil servants have the resources they need to continue providing their valuable services.

Madam Chairwoman, I am pleased to support this legislation which makes the critical investments needed to address the health, education and economic challenges we face."

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. FRANK
BATTLE

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 23, 2007

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I respectfully ask the attention of the House today to pay recognition to Mr. Frank Battle. Mr. Battle served the Federal Government for 35 years prior to his retirement on April 3, 2007.

Frank's distinguished career began in 1973 as a Management Intern at the Department of Defense. His natural ability to navigate the complexities of government management and years of experience propelled him to senior management positions at the Department of Justice, the Voice of America, the Food and Drug Administration, and the National Labor Relations Board.

I would like to thank Mr. Battle for his decades of service to the United States, and wish him the best of luck in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 23, 2007

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on Thursday, July 19, 2007 my vote