

Mrs. McCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) and ask unanimous consent that he be allowed to control said time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER).

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman, and also want to commend his leadership on the education issue. As I was a staffer here for 10 years, 6 on the House side and 4 on the Senate, I watched as he moved Even Start through. I watched as he has tried to change Head Start back into a literacy program, to try to reach out to those who are hurting and those who are behind and actually get them up to the academic level with which to compete and to advance in school so that they have the opportunities that the rest of America has.

I simply do not understand, in bill after bill after bill, why some Members on the minority side object to having an opportunity in this mix for faith-based organizations. The faith-based organizations that we are talking about are so narrowly defined by court decisions, they cannot spend taxpayers' dollars for any type of proselytization.

In this bill, because it goes through education, they have to be cleared through the education institutions. We agreed that they have to have a separation of anything else they do, including child care, from this program.

But many of the most innovative leaders in America, particularly in the black and Hispanic and other immigrant communities, are faith based. When they first come to America, in Fort Wayne, Indiana, not a hotbed of immigration, but we do have the largest Burmese immigration in the United States. We have, like many areas, a huge Hispanic immigration. We see areas of Fort Wayne, where the black churches have worked together and are now the agent for the Federal Government in housing partnerships, and as they try to redevelop the Hannah Creighton and work with Head Start and other programs, why if the school system decides they are not the best to do Even Start, what is this opposition so much to faith-based organizations?

It is a shame for the minority leadership in this country, because they need back up at the grassroots level.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mrs. McCARTHY. Of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 4 minutes.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all of those who, of course, paid tribute to me, but I must say that we have had a wonderful

working relationship in areas of education on both sides of the aisle, and could have accomplished very little even as chairman of the committee without that kind of cooperation. The gentleman from New York has been a joy to work with.

My friend from Michigan and I have been battling for, he said 24 years. I have been battling for 26, and he has been battling with me for 24. Not battling for ourselves, as none of the committee has been doing that, but what we are trying to do is make sure that every child in this country has an equal opportunity to get a piece of the American dream.

As I indicated when we started, there is no way that can happen if they and their parents are illiterate, or even functionally illiterate in this 21st century. There was a time a parent could get a job, rear a family, and, of course, not let anyone know that he or she could not read, but that time has gone, and is gone forever.

I would hope as we continue, as I have told the committee many times, and as someone mentioned from the other side, I hope my portrait in the room, the lips will move every time they are deliberating, and the lips will say, We want to make sure that we have results, not process; we want to make sure that it is quality, not quantity, because that is the only way, in my estimation, we can be successful in preventing the fall of this great Nation, which I truly believe will happen if we cannot successfully deal with the literacy issue.

I want to thank the staffs. I have told the staffs over and over again what I will miss most of all when I leave this institution are the wonderful staffers that I have worked with for a long, long time.

Sitting next to me, I want to truly pay tribute to Lynn Selmsler. She has had to put up with me for 19 years. I do not know of anybody that has probably put up with a Member of Congress for 19 years and survived. But when there were literacy issues, she was there; if there were nutrition issues, she was there; if there were Impact Aid issues, she was there helping.

So it has been a wonderful experience in the Congress of the United States. I am not going to say that I am going to miss the rigors of the job. I am surely not missing the campaign that all of you are involved in. In fact, I sit back and smile and say, go to it; I do not have to do that any longer.

But I will miss our efforts that we jointly embarked upon to try to make sure that we do have a literate workforce, that our workforce can perform, that we do not have to rely on other countries to supply our people to do the \$40,000, \$50,000 and \$60,000 jobs.

We have lost a lot of time, because our whole effort from the very beginning was to try to make sure that we close that achievement gap, and we must close it, and I would hope that this legislation will go a long way to do that.

I just hope that, as I leave, I watch the committee still making sure that every parent and every child becomes literate, so that no child goes to the first grade without the ability to learn and without the ability to read, because they will fail, and that will be one more tragedy.

So, again I thank all the members of the committee, and thank all of the staff for the wonderful work that they have done over the years.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has 1 minute remaining.

Mrs. McCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close again saying there are many of us that support this amendment. I will also say that I have only been on the committee chaired by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Chairman GOODLING) for 4 years.

Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for him, for the work he has done, and I know he has always put the children first. I support what he is trying to do with this amendment. The gentleman and I agree 100 percent that if our children and parents cannot read, then we cannot lift up everyone.

Again, it has been a pleasure working with the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING). I am sure when I first got there he had no idea what kind of person I was going to be, but he found out I was actually the strong, quiet type, and only spoke when I found it was extremely important. He appreciated that, because I saved him time. We will miss you, Chairman GOODLING, and it has been a pleasure being with you and learning from you over these 4 years.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to explain why Congress should reject the Literacy Involves Families Together (LIFT) Act (House Resolution 3222), which aims to increase "family literacy" by directing money from the American taxpayer to Washington and funneling a small percentage of it back to the states and localities to spend on education programs that meet the specifications of DC-based bureaucrats. While all support the goal of promoting adult literacy, especially among parents with young children, Congress should not endorse supporting the unconstitutional and ineffective means included in this bill. If Congress were serious about meaningful education reform, we would not even be debating bills like H.R. 3222. Rather, we would be discussing the best way to return control over the education dollar to the people so they can develop the education programs that best suit their needs.

Several of my colleagues on the Education and Workforce Committee have expressed opposition to the LIFT Act's dramatic increase in authorized expenditures for the Even Start family literacy programs. Of course, I share their opposition to the increased expenditure, however, my opposition to this bill is based not as much on the authorized amount but on the bill's underlying premise: that the American people either cannot or will not provide

educational services to those who need them unless they are forced to do so by the federal government.

In contrast to the drafters of the LIFT bill, I do not trust the Congress to develop an education program that can match the needs of every community in the United States. Instead, I trust the American people to provide the type of education system that best suits their needs, and the needs of their fellow citizens, provided Congress gives them back control over the education dollar.

The drafters of the United States Constitution understood that the federal government was incapable of effectively providing services such as education. This is why they carefully limited the federal government's powers to a few narrowly defined areas. This understanding of the proper role of the federal government was reinforced by the tenth amendment which forbids the Federal Government from controlling education, instead leaving authority over education in the hands of states, local communities and parents.

Reinforcing that the scariest words in the English language are "I'm from the federal government and I am here to help you," the American education system has deteriorated in the years since Congress disregarded the constitutional limitations on centralizing education in order to "improve the schools." One could argue that if the federally-controlled schools did a better job of educating children to read, perhaps there would not be a great demand for "adult literacy programs!"

Of course, family literacy programs do serve a vital purpose in society, but I would suggest that not only would family literacy programs exist, they would better serve those families in need of assistance if they were not controlled by the federal government. Because of the generosity of the American people, the issue is not whether family literacy programs will be funded but who should control the education dollars; the American people or the federal government?

Mr. Speaker, rather than give more control over education to the people, H.R. 3222 actually further centralizes education by attaching new requirements to those communities receiving taxpayer dollars for adult literacy programs. For example, under this bill, federally-funded Even Start programs must use instructional methods based on "scientific research." While none question the value of research into various educational methodologies, it is doubtful that the best way to teach reading can be totally determined through laboratory experiments. Learning to read is a complex process, involving many variables, not the least of which are the skills and abilities of the individual.

Many effective techniques may not be readily supported by "scientific research." Therefore, this program may end up preventing the use of many effective means of reading instruction. The requirement that recipients of federal funds use only those reading techniques based on "scientific research," (which in practice means those methods approved by the federally-funded "experts") ensures that a limited number of reading methodologies will, in essence, be "stamped with federal approval."

In addition to violating the United States Constitution, the LIFT bill raises some serious questions regarding the relationship between the state and the family. Promoting family lit-

eracy is a noble goal but programs such as these may promote undue governmental interference in family life. Many people around the country have expressed concern that "parenting improvement" programs have become excuses for the government bureaucrats to intimidate parents into ceding effective control over child-rearing to the government. While none of these complaints are directly related to the Even Start program Even Start does rest on the premise that it is legitimate for the federal government to interfere with the parent-child relationship to "improve" parenting. Once one accepts that premise, it is a short jump to interfering in all aspects of family life in order to promote the federal government's vision of "quality parenting."

In order to give control over education back to the American people, I have introduced several pieces of legislation that improve education by giving the American people control over their education dollar. For instance my Family Education Freedom Act (H.R. 935), provides parents with a \$3,000 per child tax credit for K-12 education expenses incurred in sending their children to public, private, or home school. I have also introduced the Education Improvement Tax Cut Act (H.R. 936), which provides a tax donation of up to \$3,000 for cash or in-kind donations to public or private schools as well as for donations to elementary and secondary scholarships. I am also cosponsoring legislation (H.R. 969) to increase the tax donations for charitable contributions, as well as several bills to provide tax credits for adult job training and education.

Unleashing the charitable impulses of the American people is the most effective means of ensuring that all Americans have access to the quality education programs they need, and to make sure that those programs are tailored to meet the particular needs of the local communities and the individuals they serve.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I call on my colleagues to reject the LIFT Act and instead embrace a program of education and charitable tax credits that will give the American people the ability to provide for the education needs of their children and families in the way that best suits the unique circumstances of their own communities.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, as the former Chairman of the Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education Subcommittee, I was one of the original supporters of the Even Start program at its inception. I rise in strong support of H.R. 3222 The Literacy Involves Families Together Act, and commend the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his hard work and dedication to our children and their literacy. It is because of his efforts that we have been able to reduce the number of illiterate individuals in our communities, and I find it a fitting tribute that this program will be named after him.

We all realize that to succeed in today's society every person must be able to read and write. It is unacceptable that in a country as advanced as ours that we have millions of people who cannot read or write. H.R. 3222 helps to address this issue in several ways.

First, it would improve the quality of Even start and other family literacy programs in several areas. It would provide training and technical assistance to local providers while at the same time assuring that the level of assistance does not decrease. It also requires that instructional programs are based on scientific-

ally researched methods of teaching reading, and provides funding for research on teaching of reading to adults in family literacy programs. Finally, it establishes qualifications for instructional staff in Even Start programs whose salaries are paid with Even Start dollars.

Additionally, H.R. 3222 provides for charitable choice by allowing government to consider religious organizations, as part of eligible partnerships on the same basis as other groups receiving funding. Our churches, Synagogues, Mosques, and other religious organizations have a long tradition of helping those in need in our country including helping those who cannot read. This legislation helps them to carry on with that tradition in ensuring every American can read.

Finally, this legislation will help communities implement the inexpensive book distribution program which helps local communities provide books for disadvantaged children.

Once again I urge passage of H.R. 3222, and yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of a very important piece of legislation, H.R. 3222, The Literacy Involves Families Together Act.

Even Start, and other family literacy programs, serve the most vulnerable families in our Nation.

According to the Department of Education, twenty-three percent of American adults were functionally illiterate in 1993.

We cannot expect these adults, and their families to become self-sufficient without literacy skills.

By helping them to break the cycle of illiteracy, family literacy programs help families lift themselves out of poverty and dependency on government programs.

H.R. 3222 ensures that Even Start, and other literacy programs are administered in the most effective way.

This legislation provides technical assistance to local providers, establishes qualifications for teaching staff, and requires that instruction be based on scientifically proven methods.

At the same time, it empowers parents to become involved in their children's education.

As we all know, this is critical to a child's educational success.

Additionally, children whose parents read to them are much better prepared to start school. They perform significantly better than those who have not been exposed to reading at home.

Passing this legislation is the first step in opening up a world of opportunities, not only for children, but their families as well.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support this legislation.

I am encouraged by the bipartisan support for this bill, and I am hopeful that both sides of the aisle can work together for the sake of all of America's families.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3222, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof)