

instruction while waiting to be placed in a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) program. First and foremost, our primary concern for this measure is to ensure that the best needs of students are being served. So, that important instructional support to LEP children are not delayed.

Finally, I urge members to strongly consider the reauthorization of the Bilingual Education Act (BEA). The BEA serves as one of the most meaningful tools a teacher can use to provide meaningful academic instruction to students. However, I believe that the BEA must allow schools the flexibility to choose instructional methods that are best suited for their students.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, Congress is once again preparing to exceed its constitutional limits as well as ignore the true lesson of the last thirty years of education failure by reauthorizing Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (SEA). Like most federal programs, Title I was launched with the best of intentions, however, good intentions are no excuse for Congress to exceed its constitutional limitations by depriving parents, local communities and states of their rightful authority over education. The tenth amendment does not contain an exception for "good intentions!"

The Congress that created Title I promised the American public that, in exchange for giving up control over their schools and submitting to increased levels of taxation, federally-empowered "experts" would create an educational utopia. However, rather than ushering in a new golden age of education, increased federal involvement in education has, not coincidentally, coincided with a decline in American public education. In 1963, when federal spending on education was less than nine hundred thousand dollars, the average Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) score was approximately 980. Thirty years later, when federal education spending ballooned to 19 billion dollars, the average SAT score had fallen to 902. Furthermore, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 1992 Survey, only 37% of America's 12th graders were actually able to read at a 12th grade level!

Supporters of a constitutional education policy should be heartened that Congress has finally recognized that simply throwing federal taxpayer money at local schools will not improve education. However, too many in Congress continue to cling to the belief that the "right federal program" conceived by enlightened members and staffers will lead to educational nirvana. In fact, a cursory review of this legislation reveals at least five new mandates imposed on the states by this bill; this bill also increases federal expenditures by \$27.7 billion over the next five years—yet the drafters of this legislation somehow manage to claim with a straight face that this bill promotes local control!

One mandate requires states to give priority to K-6 education programs in allocating their Title I dollars. At first glance this may seem reasonable, however, many school districts may need to devote an equal, or greater, amount of resources to high school education. In fact, the principal of a rural school in my district has expressed concern that they may have to stop offering programs that use Title I funds if this provision becomes law! What makes DC-based politicians and bureaucrats better judges of the needs of this small East

Texas school district than that school's principal?

Another mandate requires teacher aides to be "fully qualified" if the aides are to be involved in instructing students. Again, while this may appear to be simply a matter of following sound practice, the cost of hiring qualified teaching assistants will add a great burden to many small and rural school districts. Many of these districts may have to go without teachers aides, placing another burden on our already overworked public school teachers.

Some may claim that this bill does not contain "mandates" as no state must accept federal funds. However, since obeying federal eductrands is the only way states and localities can retrieve any of the education funds unjustly taken from their citizens by oppressive taxation, it is the rare state that will not submit to federal specifications.

One of the mantras of those who promote marginal reforms of federal education programs is the need to "hold schools accountable for their use of federal funds." This is the justification for requiring Title I schools to produce "report cards" listing various indicators of school performance. Of course, no one would argue against holding schools should be accountable, but accountable to whom? The Federal Government? Simply requiring schools to provide information about the schools, without giving parents the opportunity to directly control their child's education does not hold schools accountable to parents. As long as education dollars remain in the hands of bureaucrats not parents, schools will remain accountable to bureaucrats instead of parents.

Furthermore, maximum decentralization is the key to increasing education quality. This is because decentralized systems are controlled by those who know the unique needs of an individual child, whereas centralized systems are controlled by bureaucrats who impose a "one-size fits all" model. The model favored by bureaucrats can never meet the special needs of individual children in the local community because the bureaucrats have no way of knowing those particular needs. Small wonder that students in states with decentralized education score 10 percentage points higher on the NAEP tests in math and reading than students in states with centralized education.

Fortunately there is an alternative educational policy to the one before us today that respects the Constitution and improves education by restoring true accountability to America's education system. Returning real control to the American people by returning direct control of the education dollars to America's parents and concerned citizens is the only proper solution. This is precisely why I have introduced the Family Education Freedom Act (HR 935). The Family Education Freedom Act provides parents with a \$3,000 per child tax credit for the K-12 education expenses. I have also introduced the Education Tax Credit Act (HR 936), which provides a \$3,000 tax credit for cash contributions to scholarships as well as any cash and in-kind contribution to public, private, or religious schools.

By placing control of education funding directly into the hands of parents and concerned citizens, my bills restore true accountability to education. When parents control education funding, schools must respond to the parents' desire for a quality education, otherwise the parent will seek other educational options for their child.

Instead of fighting over what type of federal intervention is best for education, Congress should honor their constitutional oath and give complete control over America's educational system to the states and people. Therefore, Congress should reject this legislation and instead work to restore true accountability to America's parents by defunding the education bureaucracy and returning control of the education dollar to America's parents.

Mr. WU. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the Crowley/Etheridge/Wu amendment.

Our sense-of-the-Congress amendment recognizes the fact that certain communities across the country are facing growing student populations. It shows our schools that Congress is aware of the problems of overcrowding and the need for financial support from Federal, State, and local agencies to assist these school districts.

All across this country, more and more students are entering schools. According to the Baby Boom Echo Report issued by the Department of Education, 52.7 million students are enrolled in both public and private schools. A new national enrollment record.

Schools are literally bursting at their seams with overcrowded classrooms. As I travel throughout my District, I see this first-hand. At Findley Elementary School in Beaverton, Oregon, students have outgrown a 5-year-old school and are now being taught in trailers.

In Washington County, one of the fastest growing counties in the nation, students are being taught in overcrowded classrooms. A report that I had commissioned showed that only 4 percent of K-3 students in Washington County were taught in classes of 18 or fewer students. In addition, approximately two out of every five Washington county K-3 students were taught in classes that significantly exceeded federal class size objectives.

Studies show that when you reduce class size in the early grades, and give students the attention they deserve, the learning gains last a lifetime.

Last year, Congress made a down payment on the administration's plan to hire 100,000 new teachers over a period of 7 years in order to reduce average class size to eighteen students in grades one through three. But that was only a down payment. We are now in the process of determining if we will keep our promise, and continue to fund the program.

Until we finalize the Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations bill, we need to send a message to our schools that we are aware of the problems of overcrowding and will work to fix it.

Support the Crowley/Etheridge/Wu amendment. Show your schools that you care.

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Chairman, I would like to encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 2, the Student Results Act of 1999. Educating America's youth is essential to the future of our nation. This legislation focuses on improving accountability and quality in our education system. The Student Results Act gives parents more control over key decisions for their children's education, including school choice, and academic accountability.

Education decisions belong at the local level, where parents and educators can be involved. H.R. 2 achieves this by authorizing greater local control and more choice for parents. It also provides aid to state and local educational agencies to help educationally disadvantaged children achieve the same high performance standards as every other student.