

## MAYOR THOMAS MENINO'S YOUTH COUNCIL Congressional Record - Senate - March 30, 2000

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Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I had the privilege of meeting today with a wonderful group of courageous and dedicated young people who are members of Mayor Thomas Menino's Youth Council in Boston. This diverse group of junior and senior high school students is in town for their annual trip to Washington to discuss issues that affect today's youth. The group presented a letter signed by hundreds of Boston's young people, asking Congress to provide funding for youth summer jobs programs.

Mayor Menino's Youth Council was established in 1994 to give young people the opportunity to take an active role as advocates on issues that directly affect their lives. These dedicated volunteers from each of the neighborhoods in Boston have reached out to their community. They work closely with other organizations to hold monthly meetings and workshops, and they sponsor forums where young people can express their concerns and recommend solutions to elected officials.

This week these high school students are here to emphasize their support for increased funding for summer job programs. These programs provide valuable job experience for youths who otherwise might not have them. It helps them support their families and save money for college. Last summer, 500,000 young people were able to give back to their community, serving in such worthwhile summer programs as day camps, child care, care for the elderly, and cleaning city parks and recreation areas.

Studies show that early work experience raises lifetime earnings by ten percent. Clearly, our investment in these programs opens doors for the future by providing experience, connections in the community, and an increased prospects for their lifelong earning potential.

I commend the efforts of these young people to create jobs, and to prepare students for worthwhile careers and the important choices that lie ahead. I look forward to working with them to build on this effort and make it even more effective. I also look forward to seeing these young activists become the leaders who will make a difference whatever challenge they face. I hope that they will continue to inspire their peers and their representatives through their energy, dedication and passion on the issues that can make a difference in the lives of our nation's youth. I congratulate these future leaders, for they are truly shining examples to us all.