So I urge my leaders to consider bringing the Hate Crimes Prevention Act to the floor so that we can debate this in the well, in this Chamber, and pass it on behalf of all Americans.

HATE CRIMES PREVENTION LEGISLATION

(Mr. NADLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, hate crimes are a form of terrorism, and they demand a national response from this Congress. My own State of New York is expected to pass a hate crimes bill later today. But Congress stays silent. The Federal hate crimes bill should be marked up in the Committee on the Judiciary and debated on this floor as soon as possible. We should stand together to ensure the safety of our citizens and to punish those who terrorize large groups of people with vicious acts of hatred.

Some people say that all crimes are hate crimes, that this bill would seek to punish thoughts. That is simply not true. The bill does not create a new crime for thinking racist or homophobic thoughts, it simply strengthens laws to punish those who physically attack others based on their perceived race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, or gender. It punishes action and intent, not thoughts.

Hate crimes are especially odious because they victimize more than just the individual victim. They are acts of terrorism directed against an entire class of citizens. They are intended to terrify people simply because of who they are.

We should act now before new names join those of Matthew Shepard and James Byrd as victims of hate crimes. We should pass a sensible hate crimes bill this year.

PRESERVATION OF STILTSVILLE

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN), the chairman of the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands for holding a hearing calling for the preservation of Stiltsville.

Stiltsville is a group of seven homes located south of Key Biscayne, Florida, located in my congressional district that has been part of the landscape and seascape of our young community since the 1930s.

Mother Nature has destroyed many of these homes, but now the Federal bureaucracy seeks to do what previous hurricanes have not succeeded in doing, which is to tear down these beautiful homes.

The homeowners have gathered a powerful coalition to help them with the causes of saving Stiltsville, and they obtained over 60,000 signatures and resolutions of support from the Dade Heritage Trust, almost all of the municipalities in the Miami-Dade County, the Dade County Commission, the Florida House of Representatives, and the South Florida Congressional Delegation.

Governor Jeb Bush also supports the preservation of Stiltsville, and I thank the gentleman from Utah (Chairman HANSEN) for his help to our cause.

We will continue to negotiate with the Department of Interior on finding a solution that meets the goals of the National Park Service while saving this remarkable landmark that we call Stiltsville.

HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT

(Mr. CONYERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am the author of the Hate Crimes Prevention Act. We have 191 cosponsors. Today is the day that marks the senseless death, lynching of James Byrd, Jr. in Jasper, Texas, when he was dragged for miles over a country road, chained by the ankles to a pickup truck. His body was shredded and ripped in the 2-hour ordeal.

Since the 2 years of his murder, the House has done nothing to address the nationwide outburst of hate violence. So my bill really should be taken up by the Committee on the Judiciary. We should stop the stalling.

We know that the year of 1999 was called the summer of hate. Events of violence have occurred throughout the country. So we cannot, as a body, dismiss these atrocities as anonymous agents of lunatics. We need a hate crimes prevention law.

SUPPORT ESTATE TAX RELIEF

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, in 1978, Susan Tagera left her corporate job at IBM and decided to pursue her American dream of owning her own business, a bicycle shop. She worked real hard over the 21 years to build up this shop and get a good clientele. Unfortunately, now she has breast cancer. She has to do something about the shop. She is passing it on to her son.

Only one problem. It has got an estate tax problem. See Uncle Sam has got it so that enterprising businesswoman like Susan cannot successfully pass their business on to the next generation.

That is why we need estate tax relief so that small business owners like Susan and millions all over America and family farmers can pass on what they have worked hard and struggled for and dreamed about, just pass it on to the next generation.

At the same time, they will be economically independent so that they will not have to depend on tax dollars for their livelihood and long-term care in the future. They have become independent. Why does our Tax Code penalize them?

This week, Congress has a chance to help Susan out by voting for estate tax relief. I hope that all Members on both sides support this legislation.

HATE CRIMES LEGISLATION

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest this morning to people talking about the anniversary of the BYRD death, and I started to think, why is it that we sit here in Congress and profess how far America has come, how great the prosperity is, and how we have grown economically and socially? Is it not time, then, for America to grow morally? For those who fear to answer this question, I will answer it for them. The time is now.

Over a year ago, the bipartisan Hate Crimes Prevention Act was introduced. This legislation will make it easier for Federal authorities to assist in the prosecution of racial, religious, and ethnic violence. It has been referred to a subcommittee. Why have we not done more? Instead of doing more to strengthen hate crime legislation, members of society with no sense of remorse are killing those who they believe to be inferior to them.

Most people that are born do not have anything to do with their race, not a whole lot to do with their religion because their parents are the ones who help to determine that, and certainly not their sexual orientation.

Let us move, Mr. Speaker. Let us pass this legislation.

WORKING TO SOLVE PROBLEMS WITH USE AND ABUSE OF PUBLIC LANDS

(Mr. CANNON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CANNON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to invite our colleagues to join with us and listen to the debate on what I think is a remarkable piece of legislation that will, I believe, significantly affect the course of public lands and legislation in America.

I want to thank the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN), the chairman of the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands for his work on this bill. I encourage all of our colleagues to take a look at what we can actually do to solve the problems of use and abuse of our public lands.