

women and minorities in science and engineering, relative even to professions such as medicine and law, remains low.

We need to draw upon the full talent pool. Quality of education and equality of educational opportunity are central to our political future as well as to producing the workforce needed to maintain American leadership in the century ahead.

To address this challenge, the National Weather Service Forecast Offices in Aberdeen and Rapid City, with the support of local and State agencies, schools, and businesses, are co-hosting Women in Science conferences in Aberdeen, Watertown, Pierre, and Hot Springs the week of March 8 through 13, 2004. Governor Rounds has declared that week to be "Women in Science Week" in South Dakota.

These conferences provide a forum for young women and girls to learn about the virtually limitless opportunities available in math- and science-related careers and to create personal connections with professional women scientists. These positive role models encourage young women to develop or continue to cultivate an interest in science and technological careers. A total of over 700 junior and senior high school students and teachers will attend these conferences.

The work of all these individuals and organizations to inspire and mentor young women, and offer role models is crucial. My special thanks and appreciation go to everyone involved in this partnership—teachers, workers, State, local, and Federal Government, academia, and businesses—who will make this a successful and an inspiring conference.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Madam President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

In the fall of 1999 in Washington County, PA, Ira Swearingen, a 49-year-old medical consultant was abducted, beaten and murdered. After being abducted, Swearingen was stuffed inside the trunk of his car while one of the perpetrators allegedly said, "Did ya' hear it? I broke his jaw." Another perpetrator heard gurgling of blood and heard the victim screaming. They yelled "Shut up faggot!" Later, the victim was driven to an isolated area, forced to strip and marched into the woods as he pleaded for his life at which point, one perpetrator testified, he shot the victim between the eyes at close range.

Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The

Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. By passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

MILITARY SURVIVOR BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. INOUE. Madam President, I rise to encourage my colleagues to support S. 1916, the Military Survivor Benefits Improvement Act. The purpose of this legislation is to correct a long standing inequity in survivor benefits paid to the widows and widowers of our military retirees and what is afforded survivors of other Federal retirees. This legislation would balance cost and equity considerations by phasing in an increased benefit for military surviving spouses, over a 10-year period, from 35 percent to 55 percent of retired pay after age 62.

The military Survivor Benefits Plan simply does not stack up with the Federal civilian Survivor Benefit Plan either in benefits to survivors or in intended Government cost sharing to help reduce premium costs. When you compare survivor benefits you find that the military Survivor Benefit Plan provides for 55 percent of retired pay until the widow is 62, then drops payments to 35 percent of retired pay. This dramatic drop can translate to as much as one third of the previous payment.

Survivors of Federal civilian retirees under the earlier Civilian Service Retirement System receive 55 percent of retired pay—with no drop in benefits at age 62. Under the newer Federal Employee Retirement System, survivors receive 50 percent of retired pay, again with no drop at age 62. When the military Survivor Benefit Plan was enacted, the Congress intended a 40-percent Government subsidy for cost of military Survivor Benefit Plan premiums. Over time, because of conservative actuarial cost assumptions, the Government's cost share has declined to 19 percent. This means that military retirees are now paying 81 percent of program costs from their retired pay versus the intended 60 percent. This contrasts with a Government Service Retirement System and 33 percent for the current Federal Employee Retirement System.

In closing, I submit that these inequities are unfair to the deserving survivors of military retirees and should be corrected by supporting this important measure.

TIBETAN UPRISING DAY

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, March 10 has been known around the world as "Tibetan Uprising Day." Today, as Tibetans remember those who died resisting Chinese occupation, we too should reflect on the struggles that have faced Tibet since that fateful day 45 years ago. The events of that day, followed by over four decades of

struggle by the Tibetan people, is a plight that has become known to many around the world.

After Chinese invasion in 1949 and despite the 1951 Seventeen Point Agreement forced upon the Tibetans by the Chinese Government, it was clear by 1958 that they had no intention of securing the preservation of Tibetan autonomy and institutions. By March 10, 1959 so many Tibetans feared for the Dalai Lama's life that they surrounded his compound as a means of protection and began protesting Chinese occupation. Only seven days later the Dalai Lama escaped to India fearing for the lives of his vigilant people. After the crowds refused orders to leave the compound and unaware of the Dalai Lama's escape, the People's Liberation Army launched an attack killing thousands of innocent civilians. It is estimated that 87,000 Tibetans were killed, arrested or deported to labor camps during the uprising. Many attempted escaping the communist persecution to India, but only a small percentage actually survived the difficult conditions.

The United States has long supported the Tibetan right to self-determination and has declared Tibet to be an occupied territory. In 2000 this very body passed a resolution recognizing March 10 as Tibetan Uprising Day. In fact, the United States has supported the Dalai Lama's commitment to a dialogue and has commended him for his 1989 Nobel Peace Prize recognizing his efforts to work for self-determination through non-violent means. In the Dalai Lama's statement today he said, and I quote,

My hope is that this year may see a significant breakthrough in our relations with the Chinese Government. As in 1954, so also today, I am determined to leave no stone unturned for seeking a mutually beneficial solution that will address both Chinese concerns as well as achieve for the Tibetan people a life of freedom, peace and dignity.

I, like the Dalai Lama, hope that this year will be a breakthrough year for the Tibetan cause. On the eve of the 60th Session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, let us not forget or neglect the plight of Tibetans who have struggled for too long.

I ask unanimous consent that the full statement of the Dalai Lama be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATEMENT OF HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA
ON THE FORTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF TIBETAN NATIONAL UPRISING DAY

March 10, 2004

Today we commemorate the 45th anniversary of the Tibetan People's Uprising of 1959. I pay tribute to the many brave Tibetan men and women who have sacrificed their lives for the cause of Tibetan freedom. They will always be remembered.

This year marks 50 years since my visit to mainland China in 1954 to meet with the then Chinese leaders, especially Mao Tse-tung. I remember very well that I embarked on the journey with deep concerns about the future of Tibet. I was assured by all the leaders I met that the Chinese presence in Tibet was to work for the welfare of the Tibetans