

measures such as posting in-school police officers, installing security cameras and metal detectors, and developing emergency response programs. But a recent report from the National School Safety and Security Services, a firm specializing in school security and school safety for K-12 schools, found an increase in school-related violent deaths in the 2003-2004 school year. According to the report, there have been 43 violent deaths nationwide this school year, more than the previous 2 years combined and more than any school year prior to Columbine. In addition, there have been more than 60 non-fatal shootings this year and more than 160 other incidents of high-profile violence, such as stabbings and riots. This is simply not acceptable.

Despite continued school violence, the President has not led on this issue and Congress has also failed to enact sensible gun safety laws that could help to turn the tide. In fact, President Bush's budget proposes eliminating funding for the COPS school resource officer program. We have yet to close the gun show loophole, despite bipartisan support in the Senate. And, while the President has said he supports reauthorizing the assault weapons ban and a bipartisan majority in the Senate is on the record supporting reauthorization there are no plans to consider this important legislation before it expires on September 13 of this year.

America's schools need our help and these are simple, commonsense steps we can take to improve school safety. I urge my colleagues to close the gun show loophole, keep the ban on assault weapons, and restore funding for COPS school resource officers. As the end of another school year approaches, the push to enact sensible gun safety legislation must continue.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to rise today recognizing the 100th anniversary of the American Lung Association.

For a century, the American Lung Association has been addressing some of the Nation's most pressing health issues. In 1904, a dedicated and hard-working group of physicians, nurses, and volunteers came together with the goal of eradicating tuberculosis. The result was one of the Nation's oldest community-based, voluntary health organizations, and its fight against tuberculosis has produced amazing results throughout the 20th century.

When the American Lung Association realized there was a new and dangerous problem facing the Nation—that of chronic lung disease—it began to shift focus away from TB and toward healthy lungs. Soon, the Lung Association had one of the most extensive programs for fighting lung disease in the Nation.

Using a multi-faceted approach, the American Lung Association works in

the areas of research, education, and advocacy. It has courageously battled tobacco companies for the past 40 years, though its position was not always a popular one. Furthermore, the Lung Association, concerned about environmental factors such as air pollution, was a leader in passing the 1970s Clean Air Act.

Our Nation is a better place and our families are healthier because of the work of the American Lung Association. I am proud to congratulate the association, and I ask my colleagues to join me in formally acknowledging their fine work.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO THE CITY OF ASHLAND, KY

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate the leaders in Ashland, KY who contributed to the downtown revitalization of the city. Ashland was one of 31 cities in Kentucky that received national recognition for its efforts in historic preservation on Tuesday, April 20, 2004.

First Lady Laura Bush presented the Preserve America recognition award to Ashland Mayor, Steve Gilmore, and Main Street Board President, Larry Jones. The initiative recognizes communities that protect and celebrate their heritage, use their historic assets for economic development and community revitalization and encourage people to experience and appreciate historic resources through education and tourism programs.

Of the 65 "Preserve America" U.S. communities that the First Lady Laura Bush has designated, 31 are in Kentucky. In President Bush's proposed budget for fiscal year 2005, he included \$10 million for Preserve America communities. Ashland will be eligible to compete for some of the money Congress appropriates.

The large number of Kentucky communities honored by the First Lady shows how important preservation is in Kentucky, and I commend these communities for their hard work and dedication to the various projects. I join all Kentuckians in congratulating Mayor Gilmore and the city of Ashland on their beautiful downtown revitalization.●

RECOGNITION OF DANIEL T. BRANTON

• Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to commend Daniel T. Branton of Leland, MS, for his distinguished service as president of Delta Council this year.

Delta Council is an economic development organization representing the 18 Delta and part-Delta counties of Northwest Mississippi. Organized in 1935, Delta Council has worked to bring together the agriculture and business

leadership of the region to focus on the challenges which face the economy and the people of the Mississippi delta.

Ad president of Delta Council and a farm leader, Dan has been a strong proponent of maintaining the agricultural policies which were adopted in the 2002 Farm Law. As a representative voice of farmers from the Delta region which produces more than \$3 billion of agricultural goods annually, Dan's advice on matters affecting agriculture has been invaluable to me and my staff as we attempt to address those issues which will ensure the future viability of American agriculture.

Dan has been a strong proponent of Delta Council's programs in education and health care. During Dan's year as president, the teacher shortage programs which evolved from earlier Delta Council policies have expanded in a way that is having a meaningful impact on the problem of attracting school teachers to rural areas.

I am pleased that I have had the opportunity to work with Dan and Delta Council to make certain that special health care needs in areas such as the Mississippi Delta, where there is a large underserved population, have been enhanced. Through Delta Council's efforts to establish the Delta Health Alliance, a new Federal and local partnership is now producing extraordinary outcomes. In the area of transportation and water resource improvement, Dan has coordinated the activities of Delta Council in a manner which has brought local consensus to very touch issues facing the Delta's economic future. Dan has been a leader in all aspects of Delta Council's work while maintaining a successful family farming operation.

Dan has also been a leader in his community. He currently serves as president of Burdette Gin Company and is a director of Leland Compress. He is also a delegate and has served as a director of the National Cotton Council. Dan serves on the Black Bayou Drainage Commission and is a former member of the Advisory Board for the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce.

I congratulate Dan Branton for his contributions to the Delta region, the State of Mississippi, and the Nation. I look forward to his future contributions in improving the quality of life for our citizens.●

IN TRIBUTE TO JOHN PALMS

• Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, John Palms, the former president of the University of South Carolina, will be honored this week with Mepkin Abbey's newly established Wisdom Award.

All of us in the Senate would be a little wiser ourselves to read the following article from the April 10 Charleston Post and Courier, on Dr. Palms. He is an inspiration to all that the American dream is alive and well. I ask that the article be printed in the RECORD.