

age, this mature workforce is breaking down the negative stereotypes that cast older workers as frail, unproductive, and resistant to technological advances. Today's older generation of Americans has persevered through economic hard times and flourished in prosperity, endured war and enjoyed peace, and embraced more dramatic technological advances in science, medicine, transportation and communications than any other generation in our history. This breadth of experience should be viewed as a valuable asset bridging this country's past and future. National Employ Older Workers Week is our opportunity to recognize the wealth of experience older Americans have acquired and can contribute to the 21st century workplace, as well as the importance of work in helping seniors maintain their independence, health, and well-being.

Mr. President, I encourage my colleagues to join me in recognition of National Employ Older Workers Week. As chairman of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, I look forward to working with my colleagues to encourage the hiring and retention of older workers. We honor these workers for their experience and the contributions they have made throughout their lifetimes, and look forward to their continued contributions to our country's prosperity.

#### IMPROVING ELECTION PRACTICES FOR NOVEMBER 7TH

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, there has been much discussion and debate over the last 6 years on the best way to modernize the way we run Federal elections. As a result of the Help America Vote Act of 2002, HAVA, the Election Assistance Commission, EAC, a bipartisan independent agency, was created. One of the EAC's duties is to serve as a clearinghouse of election administration information for the use of election officials, the information of voters, and the good of our democracy.

The Election Assistance Commission has recently released four documents that serve as an overview on good election administration practices in preparation for the November 7 Federal elections. States are making the final push to implement the new election administration requirements enacted in HAVA which must be in place by November. As with any new Federal requirements, it is anticipated that there may be problems with new technologies, administrative failures, or human error. In light of some of the challenges faced by election officials in primaries over the last few weeks, these best practices guidelines are both timely and instructive for those who are responsible for conducting our Federal elections this fall.

The first document, "Quick Start Management Guide for New Voting Systems," covers basic polling place planning and management operations for those jurisdictions that have re-

cently purchased new voting equipment. This document includes recommendations on contingency plans, testing procedures, and security.

The second document, "Quick Start Management Guide for Poll Workers," discusses best practices for recruiting, training, and retaining poll workers. These best practices include election day recommendations for establishing a dedicated phone line for poll workers and creating a troubleshooting guide for problems at the polls.

A third guide, "Quick Start Management Guide for Voting System Security," discusses methods of assessing technological or procedural flaws in election security, and suggests protocols on how to improve the secure functioning of the elections process. These protocols include installing only certified software, implementing procedures and systems to control physical access to voting systems, and maintaining an inventory of all election materials.

Finally, the fourth guide, "Quick Start Management Guide for Ballot Preparation/Printing and Pre-election Testing," provides recommendations for ballot preparation and logic and accuracy testing of systems. These best practices include testing all components of the system prior to election day, replacing all batteries before each election, and ensuring that all state laws and procedures for logic and accuracy testing have been followed.

These guides have been developed based on best practices used successfully by election officials across this Nation. While many jurisdictions may already be considering these procedures, I wanted to bring these guides to the attention of my colleagues in the hope that they will pass this information on to their state and local election officials for use in the November Federal elections.

These recommendations may not cover every potential election problem faced by poll workers and voters in the fall elections. State law in some jurisdictions may even preclude election officials from implementing some of these best practices. However, these documents raise potential issues for everyone involved in the elections process to consider, and offer concrete solutions to the challenging administrative problems that impact state and local election officials. Most importantly, these procedures can help ensure that every eligible American will have an equal opportunity to cast a vote and have that vote counted in the November Federal elections.

The text of these four Quick Start Guides can be accessed on the Election Assistance Commission Internet Web site, <http://www.eac.gov> by following links to: Guide for New Voting Systems; Voting System Security Guide; Poll Workers Guide; and Ballot Preparation/Printing & Pre-Election Testing Guide.

#### THE KYOTO DECLARATION OF RELIGIONS FOR PEACE

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, the organization known as Religions for Peace constitutes a global network of inter-religious councils and affiliated groups, harnessed to encourage cooperation among the world's religious communities to transform conflict, build peace and advance sustainable development.

Founded in 1970 as an international, nonsectarian organization, Religions for Peace is now the largest coalition of the world's religious communities.

President of Religions for Peace is His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan.

Secretary General of WCRP, as the organization is known, is Dr. William F. Vendley, of the United States.

Our former colleague and my fellow Hoosier, John Brademas, who served in the House of Representatives from Indiana for 22 years and then became president of New York University, which he now serves as President Emeritus, is an International Trustee of Religions for Peace.

Last month, in Kyoto, Japan, more than 800 religious leaders, from all major traditions and over 100 countries, met at the Eighth World Assembly of the World Conference of Religions for Peace.

The theme of this assembly was Confronting Violence and Advancing Shared Security.

At the request of our former colleague Representative Brademas, I ask unanimous consent to have the final statement issued by the Kyoto Assembly printed in the RECORD.

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

#### THE KYOTO DECLARATION ON CONFRONTING VIOLENCE AND ADVANCING SHARED SECURITY—RELIGIONS FOR PEACE EIGHTH WORLD ASSEMBLY

##### PREAMBLE

Representing all major religious traditions and every region of the world, more than eight hundred religious leaders from over one hundred countries convened in Kyoto, Japan as the Eighth World Assembly of the World Conference of Religions for Peace to address the theme, "Confronting Violence and Advancing Shared Security." We, the Assembly Delegates, come from the global Religions for Peace network of local, national, regional, and international inter-religious councils and groups, as well as networks of youth and women of faith. We recognize and build on the significant contributions and statements of youth and women of faith made in their respective assemblies.

The first Religions for Peace World Assembly that convened in Kyoto in 1970, and every Assembly since, affirmed deeply held and widely shared religious principles that still inspire our search for peace with justice today. We share a conviction of the fundamental unity of the human family, and the equality and dignity of all human beings. We affirm the sacredness of the individual person and the importance of his or her freedom of conscience. We are committed to the ethical values and attitudes commonly shared by our religious traditions. We uphold the value of life manifest in human community

and in all creation. We acknowledge the importance of the environment to sustain life for the human family. We realize that human power is neither self-sufficient nor absolute, and that the spirit of love, compassion, selflessness, and the force of inner truthfulness ultimately have greater power than prejudice, hate, enmity or violence. Meeting in Japan, the nation that experienced the horrors of nuclear attacks, we commit ourselves to continue to struggle toward comprehensive nuclear disarmament and against the proliferation of arms.

The first Assembly of Religions for Peace declared: "As men and women of religions, we confess in humility and penitence that we have very often betrayed our religious ideals and our commitment to peace. It is not religion that has failed the cause of peace, but religious people. This betrayal of religion can and must be corrected." It is crucial now to engrave the reflection of our respected predecessors deeply in our hearts.

Today, we live in a world in the grip of many forms of violence, both direct and structural. Violent conflicts—within states and across borders, carried out by both state and non-state actors—take lives and destroy communities. They cause more civilian than military casualties and their disproportionate impact is on vulnerable populations.

Religious communities in particular must play a central role identifying and confronting violence in all its forms and manifestations. The world's religions have experienced abuse by those who seek to misuse religion for their own purposes. In ongoing violent conflicts around the world, religion is being used as a justification or excuse for violence. We must regretfully accept that some groups within our religious communities have indeed sought to employ violence. We must reject this and recommit religions to the way of peace. Religious communities and leaders must stand up, speak out, and take action against the misuse of religion.

The diverse and interconnected threats currently experienced by innumerable members of the human family call for a much broader understanding of violence in the world. The world's religious communities must play a central role partnering with one another and all sectors of society, to prevent and stop war, expose injustice, combat poverty, and protect the earth.

The time to do this is now; and our key to confronting violence is cooperation based on mutual respect and acceptance.

#### CONFRONTING VIOLENCE

Today, genocide, state-sponsored repression, terrorism, and other forms of human rights abuse violate international law, target innocent civilians, and threaten the safety of many communities. State laws restricting human rights and civil liberties are also a form of violence. Conflict-related disease, famine, displacement and environmental catastrophes constitute serious threats to life. Violence against women and children, including rape, forced pregnancy, enslavement, forced labor, prostitution, the use of child soldiers, and trafficking, has become a tactic of warfare in many conflicts.

Direct physical threats are the most commonly offered definition of violence, but the reality of the diverse and interconnected chronic threats to human survival experienced by millions calls for a much broader understanding of violence in the world. Economic injustices leading to extreme poverty and hunger kill 50,000 people each day. Preventable and treatable diseases kill millions. Twenty-five million people have already died from AIDS, while approximately forty million more are living with HIV and AIDS, and the impact on our communities is dev-

astating. Many corporations, especially at the multinational level, set their business interests without concern for values that foster sustainable development. Environmental degradation and dwindling resources threaten our planet's ability to sustain life.

The poor, the powerless, and the most vulnerable populations disproportionately suffer the consequences of violence in all its forms, ranging from armed conflict to extreme poverty to environmental degradation.

Unfortunately, religion plays a significant role in some of the most intractable and violent conflicts around the world. Religion is being hijacked by extremists, and too often by politicians, and by the media. Extremists use religion to incite violence and hatred and foster sectarian conflict, contrary to our most deeply held beliefs. Religious people need to recognize the reasons why religions are being hijacked, such as through manipulation and misuse of their central principles. Politicians often exploit and manipulate sectarian differences to serve their own ends, frequently dragging religion into social, economic and political disputes. The media also contribute to the scapegoating of religions in conflict situations through disrespectful representations. They also too easily identify parties to a conflict by religious labels and present religion as a source of conflict without reporting the diversity within religious traditions and the many ways that religious communities are confronting violence and working for peace.

#### A MULTI-RELIGIOUS RESPONSE

As people of religious conviction, we hold the responsibility to effectively confront violence within our own communities whenever religion is misused as a justification or excuse for violence. Religious communities need to express their opposition whenever religion and its sacred principles are distorted in the service of violence. They should take appropriate steps to exercise their moral authority to oppose attempts to misuse religion.

There are religious and ethical imperatives for multi-religious cooperation to resist and reject violence, prevent it when possible, as well as promote reconciliation and healing.

Our religious traditions call us to care for one another and to treat the problems faced by others as our own. Violence against any individual is an attack against all and should prompt our concern. Religious communities know that they are especially called to stand on the side of the most vulnerable, including the poor, the marginalized, and the defenseless. Our religious traditions acknowledge the fundamental vulnerability of human life. The vulnerability of each person should make us recognize the need to respond to the vulnerability of all persons.

There are also practical grounds for cooperation. No group is immune to violence or its consequences. War, poverty, disease, and the destruction of the environment have direct or indirect impacts on all of us. Individuals and communities deceive themselves if they believe they are secure while others are suffering. Walls can never be high enough to insulate us from the impacts of the genuine needs and vulnerabilities of others. No nation can be secure while other nations are threatened. We are no safer than the most vulnerable among us.

The efforts of individual religious communities are made vastly more effective through multi-religious cooperation. Religious communities working together can be powerful actors to prevent violence before it erupts, diffuse conflict, mediate among armed groups in the midst of conflict, and lead their communities to rebuild war-torn societies.

Religious communities are called not only to reject war and foreign occupation, sectarian violence, weapons proliferation, and human rights abuse, but also to identify and confront the root causes of injustice, economic inequalities, governance failures, development obstacles, social exclusions, and environmental abuses.

#### SHARED SECURITY

The moral and ethical convictions of our diverse religious traditions provide a moral foundation for confronting violence in its many forms and for suggesting a vision of shared security.

Existing notions of security inadequately address violence in its many forms. National security does not necessarily ensure peace; in fact, it often promotes violence and foments insecurity. Armed conflict takes place between states, and increasingly within states and among non-state actors. Human security acknowledges the solidarity of the human family by approaching security from the perspective of human rights and needs. But defining human security in these terms fails to address adequately how these needs are to be met and who is responsible for ensuring them.

A well-developed concept of shared security articulates security needs, how they are to be met, and the necessary agents, instruments, and relationships to achieve it.

Importantly, shared security would highlight the collective responsibility of all people to meet our common need for security.

Shared security requires all sectors of society to acknowledge our common vulnerabilities and our shared responsibility to address them. It is undertaken collectively by multiple stakeholders acknowledging that every sector of society must confront violence if we hope to do so effectively. It supports participatory and democratic forms of governance. Governments, international organizations, civil society, and religious communities themselves must all advance shared security. Effective shared security spans boundaries of geography, nationality, ethnicity, and religion. It marshals human responsibility, accountability and capacity wherever it exists.

Effective shared security, at all levels of community, meets national security needs; acknowledges and addresses both direct and chronic threats to individual physical security; and protects the poor, the powerless and the most vulnerable. It strengthens governance efforts and addresses the disparities and inequities of globalization. Shared security supports religious communities and religious leaders in their efforts to oppose the abuse of religion for violent ends and to build institutions for collaboration among governments, all elements of civil society and religious communities. A commitment to shared security enables multi-religious networks, such as the global Religions for Peace network, in their efforts to transform conflict, build peace, struggle for justice, and advance sustainable development.

#### RELIGIONS FOR PEACE

Religions for Peace has become a major global multi-religious voice and agent for peace. Guided by respect for religious differences, the global Religions for Peace network fosters multi-religious collaboration harnessing the power of religious communities to transform conflict, build peace, and advance sustainable development.

We, the delegates of the Eighth World Assembly of Religions for Peace, are firmly united in our commitment to prevent and confront violence in all its forms and confident in the power of multi-religious cooperation to advance a common vision of shared security. We are determined to mobilize our religious communities to work together and with all sectors of society to stop

war, struggle to build more just communities, foster education for justice and peace, eliminate poverty and advance sustainable development for future generations.

#### A MULTI-RELIGIOUS CALL TO ACTION

As religious leaders, we commit ourselves to advance shared security through advocacy, education, and other forms of multi-religious action, and to share this Kyoto Declaration within our religious communities.

We call on all sectors of society—public and private, religious and secular—to work together to achieve shared security for the human family.

Specifically, the Religions for Peace World Assembly calls on:

##### (1) Religious communities to:

Resist and confront any misuse of religion for violent purposes;

Become effective educators, advocates and actors for conflict transformation, fostering justice, peacebuilding, and sustainable development;

Draw upon their individual spiritual traditions to educate their members on our shared responsibilities to advance shared security;

Strengthen peace education on all levels;

Hold governments accountable for the commitments they make on behalf of their peoples;

Network locally, nationally, regionally and globally to foster multi-religious cooperation among the world's religious bodies; and

Partner with governments, international organizations and other sectors of society to confront violence and advance a new notion of shared security.

(2) The global network of Religions for Peace to:

Foster high-level multi-religious cooperation around the issue of shared security;

Build, equip, and network inter-religious councils locally, nationally, and regionally;

Strengthen the global Religions for Peace network as a platform for collaboration to advance shared security;

Further commit to actions for women's empowerment and women's human rights within its structures at all levels;

Embrace the central position of religious women and place gender concerns at the center of the shared security agenda;

Keep religious youth and their concerns at the center of its agenda and promote their full involvement in advancing shared security;

Support and collaborate with the Peacebuilding Commission of the United Nations;

Advocate practices that advance sustainable development and environmental protection; and

Partner with all sectors of society, especially in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

(3) Governments, International Organizations, and the Business Sector to:

Support the efforts of religious leaders to address violence within and beyond their communities, and include them as appropriate in political negotiations surrounding conflict situations;

Forge partnerships with religious communities to achieve the Millennium Development Goals to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, combat disease, and advance sustainable development;

Harness advances in science and technology toward peaceful purposes and to eliminate poverty and advance sustainable development; and

Seek out religious networks for their ability to reach vast numbers of people and their capacity to effect change.

We ask all people of goodwill to support and collaborate with religious communities as we work toward shared security for all.

These commitments and the calls to action that arise from them express our most deeply held and widely shared religious beliefs.—  
Kyoto, Japan, August 29, 2006.

#### TELECOM REFORM

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I rise today to highlight the critical need we have in this country for broadband deployment. We are currently ranked 12th in the world in broadband deployment, and we must improve on this meager standing to be competitive in the world market.

The telecom reform legislation that has been reported by the Senate Commerce Committee is the right step in encouraging more broadband. I applaud Chairman STEVENS and the rest of the committee for reporting this important bill. We need to end bureaucratic regulation on the video and broadband markets so that more competition will come to the marketplace. Americans deserve to have choices in who provides their telephone service, their cable service, and their broadband internet service. We have the opportunity to get this done for our constituents, and I urge the Senate to pass H.R. 5252, The Advanced Telecommunications and Opportunity Reform Act of 2006, expeditiously.

Telecom reform has hit the national stage, and I was proud to support the Advanced Telecommunications and Opportunity Reform Act of 2006 when the Commerce Committee carefully considered the legislation. Our committee voted on this bill over 10 weeks ago, so it's time for the Senate to act. This is our chance to get it right on telecom reform and save cable consumers money on their bills. Despite the hard work of the Commerce Committee, some of our colleagues are holding up this important bill. I believe it is past time to bring this bill to the floor for a debate and a vote.

This legislation will usher video competition into communities across the U.S., and it will catapult rural areas into the 21st century digital era. By setting national franchise standards, negotiations between video service providers and local authorities will change from a years-long struggle to a maximum of 90 days. Accelerating the entrance of new companies into our communities will increase television choices, which ultimately lead providers to lower their rates and improve their service.

By doing away with the unnecessarily long local franchise process, current and new companies can quickly reach rural communities, where we need it most. Small companies that can't possibly break through the existing red tape will be able to quickly roll out quality service to cable- and high-speed-deprived areas. At the same time, larger companies will have opportunities to increase their investment and build better services to reach even more customers. This is a win-win situation for my State and the country.

Also, this bill has numerous other critical components—one of which being the assistance it provides to our Nation's first responders. The First Responder Coalition, a group consisting of tens of thousands of concerned citizens and first responders, strongly supports this legislation as it delivers key assistance for interoperability. "Interoperability" is a term that refers to local, State, and Federal agencies being able to communicate effectively during the time of a crisis. This legislation will allocate up to \$1 billion in much-needed funds to first responders specifically for interoperable communications, and my amendment adopted in committee will speed up the delivery of that important funding. As we witnessed in last year's devastating hurricane season, local governments need dedicated and easily accessible technology so they can communicate with each other, as well as State and Federal authorities in the event of similar circumstances that require critical early responses. In Louisiana, nothing could be more important for us.

I am asking us today to heed the call for the entire country deserving for the great benefits of this bill. We have an opportunity to get the job done right—once and for all—for America's consumers. We need choices in television providers, more broadband deployment, vital interoperability funding, and more technology to rural areas. The Advanced Telecommunications Opportunity Reform Act of 2006 is the right next step for us.

#### HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, today and throughout Hispanic Heritage Month, we honor the proud history of our Nation's Hispanic community, and we pay tribute to the extraordinary contributions that people of Hispanic heritage have made and continue to make to the United States.

In 1968, Congress authorized President Lyndon Johnson to proclaim a week in September as National Hispanic Heritage Week. The observance was expanded in 1988 to a month-long celebration. During this month, America celebrates the culture and traditions of Spain, Mexico and the Spanish-speaking nations of Central America, South America and the Caribbean. The celebration begins on September 15 because that is the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16 and September 18, respectively.

National Hispanic Heritage Month celebrates people whose roots extend back to more than 20 different nations around the world and who are an integral part of America's communities. Currently, there are more than 43 million Hispanic Americans, the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States. Hispanic Americans are the