

Hoax Improvements Act and the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act—which are designed to improve public safety.

Specifically, title I would improve the safety and security of students both at the elementary and secondary school level, and on college and university campuses. The K-12 improvements are drawn from a bill that Senator BOXER introduced in April, and I want to thank Senator BOXER for her hard work on this issue. The improvements include increased funding for much-needed infrastructure changes to improve security as well as the establishment of hotlines and tip-lines, which will enable students to report potentially dangerous situations to school administrators before they occur.

These improvements can save lives. After the four students and teachers were wounded last week at SuccessTech Academy, the press reported that parents had been petitioning to get a metal detector installed and additional security personnel added, and that the guard who was previously assigned to the school had been removed 3 years ago. In fact, the entire City of Cleveland has just 10 metal detectors that are rotated throughout the city's more than 100 schools. Title I of the bill would enhance the ability of a school district to apply for and receive grant money to fund the installation of metal detectors and the training and hiring of security personnel to keep our kids safe. Over the past 4 years, this administration has spent over \$15 billion to equip, train, and build facilities for the Iraqi security forces. Surely, Congress can stand up for American kids who face unrelenting school violence by supporting just a small fraction of this figure for much-needed school safety improvements.

To address the new realities of campus safety in the wake of Virginia Tech and more recent college incidents, title I also creates a matching grant program for campus safety and security to be administered out of the COPS Office of the Department of Justice. The grant program would allow institutions of higher education to apply, for the first time, directly for Federal funds to make school safety and security improvements. The program is authorized to be appropriated at \$50,000,000 for the next 2 fiscal years. While this amounts to just \$3 per student each year, it will enable schools to more effectively respond to dangerous situations on campus.

Title II of the bill seeks to improve the NICS system. The senseless loss of life at Virginia Tech revealed deep flaws in the transfer of information relevant to gun purchases between the States and the Federal Government. The defects in the current system permitted the perpetrator of this terrible crime to obtain a firearm even though a judge had declared him to be a danger to himself and thus ineligible under Federal law. Seung-Hui Cho was not el-

igible to buy a weapon given his mental health history, but he was still able to pass a background check because data was missing from the system. We are working to close gaps in the NICS system. Title II will correct these problems, and for the first time will create a legal regime in which disqualifying mental health records, both at the State and Federal level, would regularly be reported into the NICS system.

Title III would make sworn law enforcement officers who work for private institutions of higher education and rail carriers eligible for death and disability benefits, and for funds administered under the Byrne grant program and the bulletproof vest partnership grant program. Providing this equitable treatment is in the best interest of our Nation's educators and students and will serve to place the support of the Federal Government behind the dedicated law enforcement officers who serve and protect private colleges and universities nationwide. I commend Senator JACK REED for his leadership in this area.

Title IV of the bill makes improvements to the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act of 2003. These amendments to existing law will streamline the system by which qualified retired and active officers can be certified under LEOSA. It serves us all when we permit qualified officers, with a demonstrated commitment to law enforcement and no adverse employment history, to protect themselves and their families wherever they may be.

Title V incorporates the PRECAUTION Act, which Senators FEINGOLD and SPECTER asked to have included. This provision authorizes grants to develop prevention and intervention programs for our schools.

Finally, title VI incorporates the Terrorist Hoax Improvements Act of 2007, at the request of Senator KENNEDY.

Let us go forward and act now on this important bill. The Virginia Tech Review Panel—a body commissioned by Governor Tim Kaine to study the Virginia Tech tragedy—recently issued its findings based on a 4-month long investigation of the incident and its aftermath. This bill would adopt a number of recommendations from the review panel aimed at improving school safety planning and reporting information to NICS. We must not miss this opportunity to implement these initiatives nationwide, and to take concrete steps to ensure the safety of our kids.

I recognize that there is no solution to fully end the sad phenomenon of school violence. But the recent tragedies should prompt us to respond in realistic and meaningful ways when we are presented with such challenges. I hope the Senate can promptly move this bill forward to invest in the safety of our students and better support law enforcement officers across the country.

CONGRATULATING WINNERS OF THE NOBEL PRIZE

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, it is fitting that the Senate has passed S. Res. 350 which honors the scientific work and accomplishments of Mario R. Capecchi, who, along with Sir Martin J. Evans and Oliver Smithies, received the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine for their contributions to the development of gene targeting technology.

What an honor to see these great men receive this distinguished award.

As with previous Nobel winners, one of this year's recipients has waded through much difficulty in his life to go on and accomplish such an amazing feat—Dr. Mario Capecchi. I would like to take a moment to review for my colleagues some of Dr. Capecchi's background and successes.

Dr. Mario Capecchi, who has worked at the University of Utah School of Medicine for nearly 35 years, has, through both his life and work, demonstrated that hard work and determination can and will lead to good results, even in the face of overwhelming adversity.

Mario was born in Verona, Italy, in 1937. His father was an Italian soldier who, soon after Dr. Capecchi's birth, was reported missing in action while manning an anti-aircraft gun in Libya. At the age of 3, his American mother was sent to the Dachau concentration camp as punishment for her association with an anti-Fascist organization. Prior to her arrest, she sold all her belongings and gave the proceeds to a peasant family to provide housing for her son. However, 1 year later, the funds were exhausted and, at the age of 4, Dr. Capecchi was left to fend for himself on the streets of northern Italy.

After 4 years of living in orphanages and moving from town to town with different groups of homeless children, he was located by his mother who, upon her release from Dachau, had engaged in a year-long search to find her son. She found him in a hospital bed in the town of Reggio Emilia, sick with a fever and suffering from malnutrition.

In 1946, his uncle, Edward Ramberg, a prominent American physicist, arranged for Dr. Capecchi and his mother to come to the United States. At that time, he and his mother relocated from Italy to a Quaker commune in Pennsylvania, where he would begin his education, graduating from a Quaker boarding school in 1956.

Dr. Capecchi received bachelor's degrees in both chemistry and physics from Antioch College in Ohio in 1961. He then went on to earn his Ph.D. in biophysics from Harvard University in 1967. In 1969, he became an assistant professor in the Department of Biochemistry at the Harvard School of Medicine, and was promoted to associate professor in 1971. Two years later, he joined the faculty at the University of Utah, where he began the work that would eventually earn him a Nobel Prize.

Dr. Capecchi, along with Drs. Evans and Smithies, received the Nobel Prize for their discoveries of methods for introducing specific gene modifications in mice by the use of embryonic stem cells. In the late 1980s, after years of research and experimentation on mouse-derived stem cells, these doctors were able to develop the first knockout mice, genetically engineered mice that have had one or more of their genes isolated and made inoperable. Knockout mice have allowed scientists to learn more about genes that have been sequenced but have unknown functions. Through the techniques developed by these three doctors, researchers are able to inactivate specific mouse genes and study the mice for any resulting differences. From this process, they are able to infer the probable functions of the individual genes.

This gene targeting technology has led to a vast expansion of our understanding of genetics. Indeed, it has impacted virtually every area of biomedicine. The successful isolation of genes has allowed researchers to determine their roles in embryonic development, adult physiology, aging and disease. In addition, the use of knockout mice has led to the production of more than 500 different mouse models of human disorders, including cardiovascular disease, neuron-degenerative disorders, cancer and diabetes.

Drs. Capecchi, Evans, and Smithies have dedicated their lives and work to bettering mankind. Dr. Capecchi has been a key advisor to me for many years and has been a great help to me and this nation with his medical and scientific work and knowledge. I have the highest praise, not only for his work and intellect, but for his dedication and perseverance.

I am joined by Senators BENNETT, DOLE, and BURR in introducing S. Res. 350 recognizing the work and achievements of these new Nobel Laureates and congratulating them for the honor they have received and I want each of them to know how proud I am of them and their great accomplishments. I also want the entire country to know, that this is just the beginning. The work of Drs. Capecchi, Evans, and Smithies has continued to lay the groundwork and establish a strong foundation we will need to continue developing stem cell research and someday, sooner rather than later, find therapies that will heal some of the greatest afflictions suffered by millions around the world. This is the great promise of the work of these great men and I am proud to honor them.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I rise with pity and anger that this administration can be so insulated from reality that millions of American children will be denied health insurance because of the President of the United States and a small minority in the House of Representatives.

There was a critical vote in the House today: whether to override the President's veto of the children's health insurance bill.

Two hundred and eighty six votes were needed to override this veto, but we fell 13 votes short: 273 to 156.

One hundred and fifty six Members of the House of Representatives cowered to the President and turned their back on our children.

They turned their back on almost 4 million kids nationwide who would have gotten health care, including 100,000 in my home State of New Jersey.

And they cast these harmful votes against the will of the American people.

Eighty-one percent of the public supports this bill.

Yet the President's puppets in the House said no. They chose ideology over children.

They choose tax breaks for millionaires over a doctor's visit for a sick child.

They are more than willing to spend \$12 billion a month on Iraq, but not \$7 billion a year for children's health.

You have to question the moral priorities of those who oppose funding children's health care in America.

Civilized societies take care of their children. I believe we are a civilized society. I just think we have the wrong person in the White House.

It is time to put aside ideology and put the needs of American families first.

The only good news today is that the bill on the floor of the Senate right now puts families first.

This Labor-HHS appropriations bill will help children live longer, healthier, and more productive lives. It increases Head Start funding, medical research gets a boost and we are doing more to support critical education programs.

But despite all of these benefits, President Bush says he will veto this bill too.

I say: "shame."

SHERIDAN CONSERVATION EASEMENT DEDICATION

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, recently I got to participate in the dedication of the first conservation easement in Sheridan County, WY. I attended grade school in Sheridan and graduated from high school there. I earned the Boy Scout merit badges I needed to become an Eagle Scout while I lived there. One of the badges was bicycling. It required several 25-mile rides. My first ride of that length went from Sheridan to Big Horn and beyond. That ride was on the highway. Today it would be much more dangerous as the area has developed and more people drive. So I am glad for this new conservation easement—what I hope will be the first of many conservation easements—that will make it possible to go from Sheridan to Big Horn on a scenic path by the river that will provide safety and great views.

I want to congratulate the Volunteers of America for their great role in this achievement and "first." I want to thank and congratulate the Sheridan County Commission and the city of Sheridan, mayor and council for their great cooperation. I especially want to thank the members of the Sheridan Land Trust for their effort and vision. This is the kind of community, the kind of people, I remember growing up in Sheridan.

I was glad to play a small role in getting the 501c(3) certification for non-profit status pushed through the system. I also did some work for conservation easements in, of all places, the pension bill last year. I got to chair the conference committee for the pension bill last year. At the end of the process, leadership from both sides of the aisle brought me a small tax package to include. I mentioned that I had a couple of small provisions I wanted included. One was a provision to get Wyoming abandoned mine land money released back to Wyoming. I found the power of a chairmanship. The abandoned mine land money will amount to \$1.6 billion for Wyoming. Another provision included was for conservation easements—conservation easements that would make it possible for the average person to participate as well as those with a lot of money. The bad news is that act is available only until Dec 31 of this year—unless it gets extended. The good news is this bicycle-hiking-running-nature path could be finished from Sheridan to Big Horn this year with some tax incentives. I will be working to extend the incentive.

It is very important that I share with the Nation the words of Mayor Kinsky at the dedication of this first conservation easement in Sheridan County. It is the finest description of what we are trying to do that I have heard. Here is what he said:

Look about you—the mountains, the creek, the wildlife. It is as God made it. This is how it was before we came. Because of what we do here today—preserving this place as it is, unspoiled—it will be here for those who follow us.

There are those who say we inherited this place from our grandparents. I believe we are borrowing it from our grandchildren.

As such, we have a duty to preserve—for them—the beauty that had drawn us here, and holds us here.

Fifty years from now, the town will have changed. Coffeen Avenue will look different, our downtown will look different. But this area will look as we see it today.

Future generations will not recall who we are, or what we say. But they will recap the benefit of what we do here today. We may hope that they will look out on what we have left them and say, "These were people of vision. These were people who cared about the future."

It is proper that this be done in a manner fitting of the character of our people. This easement comes about not as a mandate of government, but as a gift—given with love—to the community and future.

The purpose of the Sheridan Community Land Trust is to hold such gifts, preserving them for our heirs. It is our hope that many more in the community may be moved to make similar gifts to generations to come.