partnership, provide opportunities for livestock coverage—so that livestock farmers will have the same opportunity to better manage risk as crop producers have had in the past—and last, but certainly not least, equalize subsidies for revenue-based products.

This means a lot for my State of Iowa. Eighty-one percent of all corn and soybeans are insured in the State of Iowa; in other words, meaning 81 percent of the acreage that is planted to corn and soybeans is insured. 85 percent of the insured acres are covered by buy-up policies. And 65 percent of the insured acres in Iowa are covered by a revenue insurance product.

Iowa has the highest percentage of revenue coverage in the United States. This might reflect the idea that farmers in my home State of Iowa distrust Congress to respond with disaster relief more than farmers in any other State in the Nation. My farmers are taking the bull by the horns, making the independent judgment that each one of the 97,000 farmers in my State has an opportunity to make. They are managing their own risks by purchasing crop insurance and not relying upon the Congress to cover their losses.

This bill makes crop insurance more affordable, especially when it comes to revenue products. Iowa farmers will use the improved subsidy formula to benefit from the highest subsidy at the highest level of coverage. The higher levels of coverage will help to support family farmers in poor years and alleviate some of the need for what is becoming an annual economic relief payment. Economic relief payments will only end when we stop losing our foreign market share and increase agricultural exports for the one-third of our agricultural products that we produce beyond the necessity of domestic consumption.

If we do not export, we will shut down one-third of our production. By shutting down one-third of our production, we would not only be hurting farm income but obviously endangering our manufacturers. We would be manufacturing fewer John Deere tractors with fewer jobs at ''John Deeres,'' having less market for feed, for seed, fertilizer, and chemicals. There would be less income for farmers to buy products from the retail merchants of the small towns of America, and more of those small businesses in the small towns of America would go out of business.

When we talk about the necessity of exporting one-third of our products—because that is what we produce in excess of domestic production—we are talking not only about enhancing the income of the family farmers of America, but we are also showing the ripple effect that positive cash-flow has through the economy of rural America. We must reverse this trend to preserve small businesses and preserve numerous other enterprises in America, including the union jobs at John Deere and other farm manufacturers.

This program we have before us won't open new markets abroad for new commodities, but it will stabilize the potential losses my friends and neighbors could experience due to poor exports. This legislation will provide the security necessary to help farmers through lean years so they will be around to experience better prices and increased revenue in the future.

We have an opportunity tomorrow at 11 o'clock, when we vote on this bill, to provide the agricultural community with a tool, a very important tool to better manage the risks inherent in farming. Improving the Crop Insurance Program and ensuring that quality coverage is more affordable and better suited to the needs of farmers will only serve to provide much needed stability in rural America, not just stability among the family farms.

While we have more to accomplish to guarantee stability for the family farmer, this is a very important first step, a step that should have been accomplished in 1996 but wasn't. In so doing, it would have provided the farm bill more of the safety net as we promised. Today we are taking an important additional step. I appreciate the opportunity of fulfilling some of the unfulfilled promises made in 1996, to make the 1996 farm bill the landmark measure it was meant to be.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

TWO-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF JONESBORO

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, this week we remember another tragedy in America's history, the 2-year anniversary of the school shooting in Jonesboro, AR. Two years ago this Friday, the Nation watched two boys, ages 11 and 13, open fire on their classmates, killing four young people and a teacher.

At the time the school shooting in Jonesboro had the distinction of being one of the Nation's bloodiest. We were stunned that two boys so young had so much anger in them, anger that was made deadly by access to more than a half a dozen guns and 3,000 rounds of ammunition. In 1998, the pastor of a church attended by one of the four children shot to death in Jonesboro said:

> Nothing touches us more than when our children are hurt. There's never been anything you could possibly compare this to.

He didn't know that over the next 2 years there would be school shootings in Georgia, Colorado, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and recently in my own home State of Michigan.

Sadly, these tragedies have not convinced Congress to act to try to take guns out of the hands of children. In the aftermath of Columbine, almost a year ago, the Senate passed a juvenile justice bill with moderate gun safety amendments designed to reduce juvenile access to guns. That bill has been stuck in conference committee for months, and legislative proposals to prevent juvenile access to guns has been stymied by this Congress.

Americans cannot understand why Congress has done nothing to prevent the tide of shootings in our schools and public places. Americans do not believe the National Rifle Association's rhetoric—the argument that guns don't kill people, people kill people. They are absolutely and utterly appalled by the most recent statement of the NRA that the President is ''willing to accept a certain level of killing to further his political agenda.''

I believe the NRA owes an apology to the American people for those incendiary comments by Wayne LaPierre, its executive vice president. His words represent the lowest level of personal attack that has been hurled against any President that I can remember. They cross the line of acceptable political debate. There should be an outpouring of revulsion, not just from persons who disagree with policies supported by the NRA but from the NRA's own members and from those who agree with its positions.

Americans may be divided on the need to pass gun-related legislation but are surely united when it comes to protecting the lives of our fellow citizens and our children.

I yield the floor.

TRIBUTE TO HERMAN WELLS

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, a beloved gentleman, Herman Wells, the former president of Indiana University, has passed away. We are thoughtful about Herman Wells in our State of Indiana, as are all Americans who were touched by this remarkable man.

I have mentioned the legion of Hoosiers who have talked about the profound and inspirational influence of Herman Wells on Indiana University and on individual student lives. Herman Wells made a big difference in my life. He chaired the Indiana Rhodes Scholar Selection Committee in 1953, which included, at the same time, President Fred Hovde of Purdue and Byron Trippett, the president of Wabash. This committee sent me to the scholarship finals in Chicago, where ultimately I was successful.

During the past 46 years, I visited frequently with President Wells about that selection committee, about our first meeting. He wrote about it in his memoirs. He has been extraordinarily supportive throughout that period of time in all of my aspirations.

I thank President Wells for all the opportunities we had to work together for Indiana University and for my State. I thank him for the extraordinary vision he had for this country. I counted on his counsel and his generous enthusiasm. I will miss him very much, as will all Hoosiers.