WE THE PEOPLE . . . THE CITIZENS AND THE CONSTITUTION

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the We the People. . . . The Citizen and the Constitution program, and applaud the outstanding East High School students that came to Washington, DC, after winning the state competition and went on to win an Honorable Mention as one of the top ten finalists in the national finals. These young scholars have worked diligently to make it to the finals and their hard work has gained them a deep knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles and values of our constitutional democracy.

The names of the students are: Adrienne Cassart, Emma Douglas, Kelly Durcan, Jill Friedman, Aaron Goldhammer, Jessica Harvey, Elizabeth Hultin, Matt Johnson, Casey Madison, Merrin McCabe, Emily Olson, Joe Pallett, Elisha Roberts, Evan Samples, Erica Simms and Grant Wylie. Additionally, I would like to commend their teacher Edna Sutton who deserves much of the credit for the success of this great team and recognize the District Coordinator, Loyal Darr, and the State Coordinator, Barbara Miller.

The We the People. . . . The Citizen and the Constitution program is the most extensive educational program in the country developed specifically to educate young people about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The three-day national competition is modeled after hearings in the United States Congress. These hearings consist of oral presentations by the students acting as constitutional experts before a ''congressional committee'' made up of a panel of judges acting as Members. The student testimony is followed by a period of questioning during which the judges probe students for their depth of understanding and ability to apply their constitutional knowledge.

I know first hand how well this program works because I was a volunteer coach for years at a high school back in my district in Denver, whose students have done extraordinarily well in the We the People. . . . competitions over the last decade. East High School has been among the top ten finalists most years since they have competed, and they won the competition in 1992.

Once again, I commend the East team for winning the state competition and winning Honorable Mention as one of the top 10 finalists in the national finals.

CELEBRATING SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

HON. RUBEN HINOJOSA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a member of the House Committee on Small Business and a former small business owner in celebration of the 37th annual Small Business Week.

What better time to recognize America's small businesses and their vital contribution to our nation's well-being. With the advent of a new economy, it is especially appropriate to talk about how high-risk, fast-growing entrepreneurial firms are creating jobs and unprecedented economic growth across the country.

Our challenge is to spread the word across the country that we must do more to support and strengthen risk taking entrepreneurs in both big cities and small towns. In so doing, we will ensure that ever-accelerating global change remains our country's ally. Then we will continue to bring the benefits of our entrepreneurial economy home to every community in America.

IN HONOR OF THE RETIREMENT OF REV. ROBERT T. STROMMEN

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, today I honor the Rev. Robert T. Strommen on the occasion of his retirement after 41 years of ministry.

Mr. Strommen graduated from Princeton University in 1956, then went on to earn a master's of divinity from Union Theological Seminary in New York City. He was ordained in 1959, and served as pastor of St. John's United Church of Christ in Larimer, Pennsylvania for the next 7 years. in 1967, Reverend Strommen was called to Philadelphia, where he served as Minister of Metropolitan Mission for the United Church of Christ.

Throughout his many years of faithful service, Reverend Strommen has been active in community affairs. He received an award from the Greenburg-Jeanette Chapter of the NAACP for his services. In Philadelphia he worked with leaders of inner city congregations and developed Conference urban strategy. He also worked with the Philadelphia Welfare Rights Organization, the Action Alliance of Senior Citizens, and other community action groups.

Reverend Strommen began working with the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries in 1976, serving as secretary for Social and Urban Concerns. He was very involved in issues related to health and welfare and also coordinated the Board for Homeland Ministries' Minister of Metropolitan Mission program. In 1987, Mr. Strommen developed a program for training for mission outreach with local churches.

Since September, 1988, Reverend Strommen has served as association minister of the Western Reserve Association of the Ohio Conference. He continues to be involved in urban issues, and has served on the steering committee of the Jobs with Justice coalition in Cleveland.

Reverend Strommen has been a dedicated advocate for the working person's right to be treated with dignity and justice. He has set an example for us all with his tireless and energetic work in defense of workers' rights.

My fellow colleagues, please join with me on the occasion of his retirement in honoring the Rev. Robert T. Strommen for his dedication, faith, and commitment.

INTRODUCTION OF THE COMMUNITY PROTECTION FROM FIREARMS GIVEAWAYS ACT

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, last year, the House of Representatives failed to consider reasonable gun control and safety measures as part of legislation to combat crime. Despite the support of a majority of the House for reasonable measures, the Republican leadership has consistently refused to debate the numerous gun proposals introduced in the House.

Common sense gun control measures such as a three business day waiting period for background checks, closing the gun show loophole, requiring gun locks to be sold with firearms, and a ban on the importation of large capacity ammunition clips are all reasonable approaches to gun control and safety. However, more can and must be done.

That is why I am being joined by Representatives TOM CAMPBELL, GREG MEEKS, BARBARA LEE, NEIL ABERCROMBIE, ELIOT ENGEL, SHEILA JACKSON-LEE, GRACE NAPOLITANO, JAN SCHAKOWSKY and LOUIS GUTIERREZ in introducing bipartisan legislation, the ''Community Protection from Firearms Giveaways Act,'' to close yet another dangerous loophole in Federal gun control laws.

As unbelievable as it may sound, our current gun control laws allow criminals to win guns at raffles without having to go through a criminal background check. This must be stopped.

Our legislation will amend U.S. law to require winners in a lottery where a firearm is the prize to pass a background check at a licensed gun dealership. The gun dealership may charge a reasonable fee as prescribed under current law for this service. Additionally, the Community Protection from Firearms Giveaways Act has a carve out exempting the background check if the lottery winner has a current gun owners permit, or if the check takes more than 5 business days.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we can all agree that giving away guns as prizes poses a serious danger to our communities. Requiring a background check on a lottery winner if a firearm is the prize is sensible and should be required under Federal law.

Our communities deserve to be protected from criminals with easy access to guns. While gun safety measures will not stop violent crime, it must be a key component of any anti-crime strategy addressed by Congress.

I would urge my colleagues to cosponsor this important legislation.

H.R.—

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Community Protection from Firearms' Giveaways Act''.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF BRADY LAW TO FIREARMS WON IN LOTTERIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 922 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after subsection (y) the following:

''(z)(1) It shall be unlawful for an individual who is not a licensed importer, licensed manufacturer, or licensed dealer to transfer a firearm won in a lottery (as defined in section 1307(d)) to the winner, unless—