

PROJECT SPONSORSHIP
CORRECTION

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, as Chairwoman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, science, and Related Agencies, I rise today to clarify for the record the sponsorship of a congressionally-designated project included in the explanatory statement accompanying H.R. 1105, the Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2009, Public Law 111-8.

Specifically: Senator FEINSTEIN should not be listed as a cosponsor of the San Francisco district attorney "Back on Track" Byrne discretionary grant through the Department of Justice, since she did not request this funding. Senator FEINSTEIN's name was added as a cosponsor of this project through a clerical error.

MATTHEW SHEPARD HATE CRIMES
PREVENTION ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today to show my support for the Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009.

On June 15, 2009, Stephen Johns was killed in the U.S. Holocaust Museum. On February 12, 2008, Lawrence King, a 15-year-old student, was murdered in his high school because he was gay. On election night 2008, two men went on an assault spree to find African Americans, because then-Senator Obama won the Presidential election. In July 2008, four teenagers brutally beat and killed a Mexican immigrant while yelling racial epithets. Hate crimes continue to occur in our country every day. According to recent FBI data, there were over 7,600 reported hate crimes in 2007. That's nearly one every hour of every day. Over 150 of those incidents occurred in my own home State of Maryland.

The number of hate crimes occurring across the country is likely underestimated. At least 21 agencies in cities with populations between 100,000 and 250,000 did not participate in the FBI data collection effort for the 2007 report. Additionally, victims may be fearful of authorities and may not report these crimes. Local authorities may define what constitutes a hate crime differently than other jurisdictions. But what we do know is that hate crimes are occurring and have increased toward certain groups of individuals.

According to the recent Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund Report, entitled "Confronting the New Faces of Hate," hate crimes against Latinos has been increasing steadily since 2003. This marked increase also closely correlates with the increasing heated debate over comprehensive immigration reform. There was also a five year high in victimization rates in 2007 toward lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered individuals. That number has increased by almost 6 percent. The number of White suprema-

cist groups has increased by 54 percent and African Americans continue to experience the largest number of hate crimes, with an annual number essentially unchanged over the past 10 years. While religion based offenses decreased, the number of reported anti-Jewish crimes increased slightly between 2006 and 2007.

The Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act is a necessary and appropriate response to this ongoing threat to our communities. Currently, 45 States and the District of Columbia have enacted hate crime laws and have taken a stand against hate in their States. Thirty-one of those States have already included sexual orientation in their definition of what constitutes a hate crime. Twenty-seven States and the District of Columbia prohibit violent crimes based upon a victim's gender. States have a patchwork of hate crimes statutes which leaves gaps which need to be filled in order to have an effective response and prosecution of these crimes. The Federal Government has a clear responsibility to respond to hate crimes. Current Federal hate crime laws are based only on race, color, national origin and religion. We need to include gender, disability, gender identity, and sexual orientation. Current law also requires the victim to be participating in a federally protected activity, like attending school or voting. Those who commit hate crimes are not bound to certain jurisdictions and neither should the people who prosecute them, which is why this legislation removes the requirement that a victim be participating in a federally protected activity. The Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act will make sure all Americans are equally protected against hate crimes.

The American public supports this goal. According to a Gallup poll from 2007, 68 percent of all Americans support extending hate crime protection to groups based on sexual orientation and gender identity, including 60 percent of Republicans, and 62 percent of individuals who frequently attend church. This legislation also enjoys the support of 43 Senators from both sides of the aisle. The legislation has also already passed the House of Representatives.

This legislation will also provide necessary resources to our State and local governments to fight hate crimes. Specifically, it will provide grants for State, local and tribal law enforcement entities for prosecution, programming and education related to hate crime prosecution and prevention. The bill will assist States and provide them with additional resources, not diminish their role in managing criminal activity within their State. The bill supplements state and local law enforcement efforts.

Additionally, and most importantly, the legislation was carefully drafted to maintain protections for Americans' first amendment rights. Nothing in this legislation diminishes any Ameri-

can's freedom of religion, freedom of speech or press, or the freedom to assemble. The Supreme Court has already ruled that such laws do not obstruct free speech. Let me be clear, the Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act targets violent acts, not speech.

Hate crimes affect not just the victims; they victimize entire communities and make residents fearful. We cannot allow our communities to be terrorized by hatred and violence. I encourage my fellow colleagues to support the Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICINE
BOW, WYOMING

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of the town of Medicine Bow, WY. The town eventually became the setting for the classic Western novel by Owen Wister, "The Virginian."

Medicine Bow's history began decades before its incorporation on June 26, 1909. The town's name originates from the mountains surrounding the area. American Indians would annually travel to the foot of the Medicine Bow Mountains to obtain wood that was excellent for arrows. According to the Native Americans, anything that is perfect for the purpose for which it is intended is called "good medicine."

The Union Pacific Railroad routed tracks through the valley because the Medicine Bow River was an ideal place for a pumping station. Steam engines would pause to take on a load of water before roaring across the prairie to the east or over the mountains to the west. The railroad not only produced what is now known as the town of Medicine Bow, but it also created economic opportunities. Wyoming's booming cattle industry necessitated stock yards in Medicine Bow. The town became an important shipping center for cattle headed to the eastern market and a great place for cowboys to congregate after gathering their herds.

The wood in the Medicine Bow forest was excellent not only for arrows but also for railroad ties. Every year, tie hacks cut hundreds of thousands of railroad ties and mining props from the mountains at the head of the river. The material was then floated down to a river boom, a mile from the Medicine Bow Station. These ties were pulled from the river and shipped to supply America's swiftly expanding railroad network.

The tie hacks and the cowboys played a vital role in the development of Medicine Bow's untamed reputation. It was this reputation as one of the West's wildest towns that brought famous novelist Owen Wister to Medicine Bow. Following his stay in Medicine Bow, Wister authored the classic Western novel, "The Virginian." In his novel, he mirrored more than just the setting of the town. His plot was a fictionalized story about the Johnson