

So, we have a budget resolution, Mr. President, that contains some strong underlying principles, and I am very, very pleased at that, because I think by maintaining a balanced budget, we can do more than almost any other single thing the Federal Government can do to reduce the cost of borrowing money. That makes going to college, buying a house, buying a car, expanding a business, hiring more employees, all more affordable. That will do more to maintain America's role as the world's great economic superpower than any other single thing we can do, and there is strong bipartisan support in that regard.

But we have these other fundamental differences that I am hopeful can be addressed, at least in part, in the course of this coming debate on the Senate budget resolution. We can create a framework for investment in our communities, investment in our kids, in our schools, in health research, in a more meaningful way than the budget resolution that we currently have on the floor allows.

We can do that. We can sustain Social Security, we can sustain Medicare, we can make other needed investments, while keeping the budget in balance. This is a remarkable point in time, one that many people thought would never occur in our lifetime. This, along with the fall of the Berlin Wall and some other events, are things that many people thought would not happen, but they are on the verge of happening. Now it is our responsibility in this body, the U.S. Senate, to make sure it happens in a responsible, sustainable way and we continue to make the key investments that will create the framework, create the foundation, for our country to prosper and to continue to grow, to create greater opportunity for all of its citizens. Not to guarantee success for anyone—that comes only about through their own labor, their own efforts, and their own talent—but to create the tools, the starting point for every American, regardless of his or her background, as an opportunity to prosper and to succeed.

Mr. President, I want to make one additional comment unrelated directly to the budget resolution but on an issue which does impact our overall economy. I wish to express great, great concern over recent action by our colleagues in the other body who have failed to extend the ethanol fuel tax incentives that the Senate, by a large bipartisan majority, included in the ISTEA legislation.

It appears, at this point, that our colleagues on the other side managed in effect to terminate a critically needed tax provision. This provision will not only allow ethanol fuel usage an opportunity to reach critical mass, a substantial benefit to farmers, but also will help clean our air and make this Nation less reliant on unstable Third World nations as sources of petroleum. At this point, however, it appears that there will not even be an opportunity

for members of the other body to vote for an extension of the ethanol tax incentives.

I am very concerned about this, and it is certainly my hope and expectation that Senate conferees, in the course of negotiating differences between the Senate and the House highway legislation, will give this a very high priority. It is important that we make the proper investments in our Nation's transportation infrastructure.

It is also important that we move forward with a commonsense, cost-efficient strategy for expanding use of clean, American alternative fuels. That can only be done by the conferees on the Senate side looking after the interests of the American people in that regard when the conference committee comes about.

So, Mr. President, this coming week should be tumultuous but very important for the American people as we deal with the fundamental issues in the budget for the coming fiscal year, as well as transportation and fuel strategy into the next century.

With that, Mr. President, I yield back my time and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). If there is no objection, time will be divided equally between both sides. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAMS. Also, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 3 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAMS. Thank you very much.

SALUTE TO THE 1997-1998 NIT CHAMPIONS, THE MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I just rise for a few moments this afternoon to pay tribute to the University of Minnesota basketball team—the Golden Gophers of Minnesota.

Just a little over a year ago I stood here on the Senate floor saluting the Minnesota Gophers basketball team for their accomplishment of winning the Big Ten championship. That was the team that eventually went on to the NCAA Final Four.

Mr. President, I want to take time to salute an equally deserving team—and that is the 1998 NIT champions, the Minnesota Golden Gophers, who defeated the Penn State Nittany Lions last night by a score of 79-72.

Now, this team overcame the loss of many key players from last year's Final Four squad, but the leadership from seniors Sam Jacobson and Eric Harris, and the excellent play from

Kevin Clark and Quincy Lewis helped the Gophers improve from their slow start this season to finish the year by winning eight of their last nine games.

Every member on the team contributed to the success of this Gopher team, leading to the Gophers' sixth consecutive 20-win season.

Mr. President, Coach Clem Haskins received many coach-of-the-year awards last year. But I must say, the job he did this year is equally impressive and truly deserves recognition today.

So, again, Mr. President, I rise to salute the 1997-1998 NIT champions, the Golden Gophers of the University of Minnesota.

Thank you very much. I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no objection, the time utilized by the Senator from Minnesota will be taken from each side equally, and the clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. I seek recognition as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Thank you, Mr. President.

CHILDREN AND GUNS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the tragedy which occurred in Jonesboro, AR, this week raises many questions. Two come to mind immediately. Why do children kill? I do not know the answer to that. I have heard a variety of opinions from people who suggest that violent television and violent movies are somehow contributing to this. There are others who say, if the children would just pray in school, it would make all the difference in the world. Some look to the families more than the schools; others think the schools have a greater role to play.

We will debate at length, and I am sure many of us will come up with a lot of different explanations as to why children reach that point in their young lives when they would take the life of another.

But the tragedy in Jonesboro raised another question which I think we can address because it is a simpler question. It is a question of, how do children at that young age come to possess lethal weapons? Think about it. An 11-year-old and a 13-year-old with 10 firearms—rifles, shotguns, and handguns, and 3,000 rounds of ammunition—went into the woods behind that middle school, tricked the students out with a fake fire alarm, opened fire and shot off somewhere in the range of 30 to 40 rounds before they were finally stopped.

Four little girls were killed. A teacher, who deserves all of our recognition and praise for her courage, stood in the line of fire to protect one of those little girls and lost her own life. This teacher, the mother of a 2-year-old, lost her life defending her students.

How do kids come into possession of firearms? They do not buy them. In most States it is unthinkable that they would even approach a counter and try. And yet, day after day in America there is further evidence of children, younger and younger, being found with firearms.

The day after the Jonesboro, AR, tragedy, in Cleveland, OH, it is reported a 4-year-old showed up at a day-care center with a loaded handgun.

In my home State of Illinois, in Marion, IL, a high school student showed up at school the next day with a handgun.

In Daly City, CA, the day after Jonesboro, a 13-year-old was arrested for attempting to murder his principal with a semiautomatic pistol.

There is something we can do about this. I am not sure that it will solve the problem completely, but it can help. Fifteen States have already recognized this problem and done something about it. These States have passed a childhood access prevention law which is known as a CAP law, saying to those who purchase and own handguns, it is not enough for you to follow the law in purchasing them and to use those guns safely; you have another responsibility. If you are going to own a firearm in your home, you have to keep it safely and securely so that children do not have access to it.

Should we consider this as a national model? I think the obvious answer is yes, because the tragedy in Jonesboro, which we will not forget for a long, long time, unfortunately, is not unique. Every day in America 14 young people, ages 19 and under, are killed in gun homicides, suicides and unintentional shootings, with many more wounded.

The scourge of gun violence frequently attacks the most helpless members of our society—our children.

Here is what I am proposing. I am proposing Federal legislation that will apply to every State, not just 15, but every State. And this is what it says. If you want to own a handgun, a rifle or shotgun, and it is legal to do so, you can; but if you own it, you have a responsibility to make certain that it is kept securely and safely. You may buy a trigger lock. Senator HERB KOHL of Wisconsin has a proposal that all handguns be sold with trigger locks. I support it. I am a cosponsor of it. It makes sense.

How many times do you read in the paper, how many times do you listen on TV, to kids with their playmates and the gun goes off and someone is killed? A trigger lock, as Senator KOHL has proposed, is sensible. It should be required. It shouldn't even be debated. I think that legislation will go a long

way toward reducing gun violence. Beyond that, we say to every gunowner, if it is not a trigger lock, put that gun in a place where that child cannot get to it.

As to these two kids, 11 and 13 years old, God only knows what was going through their minds when they were setting out to get the guns to go out and start shooting. They first stopped at the parents of one of the kids and wanted to pick up that parents' guns. That parent had the guns under lock and key in a vault and they couldn't get to them. So they thought about it and said, wait a minute, my grandfather has some, too; let's go over to his place. And that is where they came up with the weapons and the ammunition.

In one instance, one parent had taken the necessary steps to take the guns and keep them away from kids. Sadly, it appears—and I just say "appears" because I do not know all the details—in another case that did not happen.

Now a lot of people will say to me, "There they go again, those liberals on Capitol Hill. Another bill, another law to infringe on second amendment rights." Oh, I know I will hear from the folks from the National Rifle Association, all the other gun lobbies, screaming bloody murder about the second amendment.

Look at 15 States that have already passed these laws, these child access prevention laws, to protect kids, to say to gunowners "you have a special responsibility." You will not find a list of the most liberal States in America. The first State to pass this legislation in 1989 was Florida. The list goes on: Connecticut, Iowa, California, Nevada, New Jersey, Virginia, Wisconsin, Hawaii, Maryland, Minnesota, North Carolina, Delaware, Rhode Island, and in 1995, the last State to pass a child access prevention law, certainly no bleeding heart State by any political definition, was Texas—Texas. The Texas law says it is "unlawful to store, transport or abandon an unsecured firearm in a place where children are likely to be and can obtain access to it," and it is a criminal misdemeanor if you do it.

I am going to ask my colleagues in the Senate to not only return home this weekend, as I am sure we all will, and witness those sad events on television, the funerals in Jonesboro, the tributes, the teacher who gave a life, but to resolve to do something about it. That is what we are here for. That is why we were elected to the Senate and the House, not just to be sad as we should be, but to do something about it. Not to infringe on people's right to own firearms, but to say "Own them responsibly, put them securely in your homes, keep them safely, keep them away from children."

Mark my words, my friends, and you know this from human experience, no matter where you hide a gun or a Christmas gift, a kid is going to find it.

You can stick it in a drawer and say, "Oh, they will never look behind my socks, that is the last place in the world," or up on some shelf in the closet and believe your child can't reach that, but you know better. You know when you are gone and the house is empty those kids are scurrying around and looking—I plead guilty and did the same thing as a kid, and it helps now with tragic consequences when a gun is involved. So I hope we can address this issue.

First, Senator KOHL's legislation for these child safety devices, these trigger locks, will help. But then take the extra step, follow these 15 States and say as we address the overriding question, the big question, why do children kill, we will come to a conclusion that there are troubled children in America and we should never ignore that fact.

But please, let this Senate and this House, before we leave this year, do something to make certain that those troubled children cannot get their hands on a firearm. I think every parent in America, particularly those of children of school age, paused at least for a moment after they heard about Jonesboro and thought, could it happen to my son, my daughter, my grandson, my granddaughter? The sad reality of life in modern America, is, yes, it could. There are so many weapons being kept so carelessly that it could happen to any of us or any of our children in virtually any school in America.

Mr. President, I know that the Senate has a very busy schedule and limited opportunity this year, but I hope as part of our work we will let the lesson of the tragedy of Jonesboro result in legislation that will be designed to protect children and schoolteachers and innocent people in the future.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

CONGRATULATIONS JUDITH M. BARZILAY

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, for the Barzilay, Morgenstern and Specter families, it is a great honor for Judith M. Barzilay to become a judge on the U.S. International Court of Trade. She was nominated by the President on January 27 and confirmed by the Senate March 11, 1998.

For her immigrant grandparents, Harry and Lillie Specter and Max and Regina Morgenstern, it is an accomplishment beyond their aspirations even though they knew they came to a land of great opportunity.

In May of 1947, Max and Regina left the bar and grill which they operated on Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn to visit their son, Arthur, his wife Hilda, her parents in Russell, KS, and, most of all to see their granddaughters, Judith, age 3, and Julia, 3 months old. By then, Judy pretty much presided over her parents' household just as she had