

I'm pleased that the state of Ohio has stepped up to the plate and passed a farmland preservation bill. As a co-author of national legislation to preserve for agricultural production, I am gratified that our state will now join dozens of other in adopting a policy for land reuse and for the voluntary set-aside of land for agricultural production in perpetuity.

Preserving our farmlands means revitalizing the core of our cities, townships and villages. The Mayor of Fostoria, Ohio had it right recently when he said, "the best thing I can do to protect farmland is make my city worth investing in."

For America's first two centuries, our communities have grown without more constraints. We could easily cast away old city neighborhoods for the suburbs and treat prime productive land as though it were no different from asphalt. Those choices won't be the same for those who live in the 21st century as the world's population reaches eight to twelve billion people.

I'm reminded of the words of Daniel Webster:

Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered.

We must put people and vision back at the center of our planning efforts. We must be conscious of our region and the earth as an ecosystem that needs tending. A common vision for an American future that is sustainable must be our objective.

CHILDREN'S DAY IN TURKEY

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, later this week the Republic of Turkey will celebrate "Children's Day" as has been the custom every April 23rd since the early 1920s. Such festive occasions are important reminders of the wonderful blessing that children are to family and society alike. Regrettably, the joy of this celebration will not be shared by all children in Turkey. Recently, I chaired a hearing of the Helsinki Commission that reviewed human rights practices in Turkey, an original signatory to the 1975 Helsinki Final Act. The disturbing testimony presented at that hearing underscored the vulnerability of children.

Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, Harold Koh, cited the case of two-year-old Azat Tokmak to illustrate how terrible and dehumanizing the practice of torture is for everyone involved, including children. Azat was tortured, according to Mr. Koh, in an effort to secure a confession from her mother. He testified: "In April [1998] the Istanbul Chamber of Doctors certified that Azat showed physical and psychological signs of torture after detention at an Istanbul branch of the anti-terror police. Azat's mother, Fatma Tokmak, was detained in December 1996 on suspicion of membership in the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Azat was burned with cigarettes and kicked in an effort to make her mother confess." Mr. Speaker, we are talking about a two-year-old child—a baby—being tortured by police.

At the same March 18th hearing, Stephen Rickard, Director of the Washington Office of Amnesty International USA, observed, "There is something Orwellian about calling units that torture and beat children and sexually assault their victims 'anti-terror' police." Mr. Rickard displayed a photograph of Done Talun, a twelve-year-old girl from a poor neighborhood in Ankara, to give a human face to the problem of torture in Turkey. "For five days, she was beaten and tortured while her frantic family asked for information about her whereabouts and condition," Rickard said. Done was accused of stealing some bread. Her torture reportedly occurred at the Ankara Police Headquarters. "Is this young girl's case unique? Unfortunately, it is not," he concluded. Mr. Rickard presented the Commission with a recent AI report: "Gross Violations in the Name of Fighting Terror: The Human Rights Record Of Turkey's 'Anti-Terror' Police Units." The report includes a section on the torture of children.

Mr. Douglas A. Johnson, Executive Director of the Center for Victims of Torture, testified that there are thirty-seven different forms of torture practiced in Turkey today. Addressing the torture of children, Johnson observed, "twenty percent of our clients over the years were tortured when they were children, and usually that was to use them as a weapon against their parents," similar to the case of two-year-old Azat Tokmak.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Clinton Administration to press the Government of Turkey to eliminate the climate of impunity that has allowed children like Azat and Done to be subjected to such gross abuse at the hands of the police. Then, and only then, will children such as these—"the least of these"—be able to fully partake in the joy of this special Children's Day set aside to celebrate their lives and those of all children in Turkey.

PROTECT OUR CHILDREN

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, gun related violence is an issue that has, in recent years adversely affected the lives of American children and adults. We have a responsibility, as leaders and parents to address this problem and work towards creating a solution. Children should feel safe in our Nation's urban and rural areas, and in order to create an environment that is a safe one, we must deal with the issue of the misuse and abuse of guns. I feel that this issue may be addressed by requiring manufacturers to fit firearms with a child safety lock. Therefore, I felt that it was necessary to introduce the Child Safety Lock Act of 1999.

This bill will prohibit any person from transferring or selling a firearm, in the United States, unless it is sold with a child safety lock. Further, this legislation would prohibit the transfer or sale of firearms by federally licensed dealers and manufacturers unless a child safety lock is an integral component of the firearm.

A child safety lock is a locking mechanism that attaches to the trigger guard of a firearm. The device fits over the trigger guard and the

trigger, preventing the firearm from unintentionally discharging. Once the device is properly applied, it cannot be removed unless it is unlocked.

According to statistics from the Centers for Disease Control, more than 5,000 innocent boys and girls have lost their lives due to unintentional firearm related death. Between 1983 and 1994, 5,523 males between the ages of 1 and 19 were killed by the unintentional discharge of a firearm. The loss of these young lives can be prevented, which is why this legislation is necessary.

To improve the quality of life for children and adults, and avoid the continued senseless bloodshed and loss of life of children around this country, we should work together to pass the Child Safety Lock Act of 1999. It is our obligation to protect our children. This bill does just that, it protects our children and it protects their future.

SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION AS INTRODUCED

Section 1. Short title

This Act may be cited as the "Child Safety Lock Act of 1999."

Section 2. Findings

Presents findings to support the need for this legislation.

TITLE 1—CRIMINAL PROVISIONS

Section 101. Handgun safety

Defines what a locking device is, provides for locking devices and warnings on handguns and penalties related to locking devices and warnings.

TITLE 2—REGULATORY PROVISIONS

Section 201. Regulation of trigger lock devices

Establishes general authority for the Secretary of the Treasury to prescribe regulations governing trigger lock devices.

Section 202. Orders inspections

Allows the Secretary of the Treasury to issue an order and/or inspections regarding a trigger lock device which is in violation of this title.

Section 203. Enforcement

Allows the Secretary of the Treasury to assess civil penalties and/or criminal penalties for violation of a provision of this title.

Section 204. No effect on State law

This title does not annul, alter, impair, or affect, or exempt any person subject to the provisions of this title from complying with, any provision of the law of any State or any political subdivision thereof, except to the extent that such provisions of State law are inconsistent with any provision of this title, and then only to the extent of the inconsistency.

Section 205. Definitions

Defines terms used in this title.

TITLE 3—EDUCATION PROVISIONS

Section 301. Portion of firearms tax revenue to be used for public education on safe storage of firearms

Uses 2 percent of the firearms tax revenue and uses it for public education on the safe storage and use of firearms.

HONORING MR. JOHN P. VASSAK FOR 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. SUE W. KELLY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a very special person. This morning I have the