common-sense gun safety legislation passed. The American people deserve no less.

Many Members have strongly supported efforts to keep guns from falling into the wrong hands, and I applaud them for their efforts. Among those who have been the most committed to protecting children from gun violence have been the women in the House of Representatives, and that is not an accident. Women are in tune to the devastating effects that gun violence has on American families and have rightly lead the charge to improve gun safety. We will keep the pressure on House leaders to ensure that effective measures are taken to protect children from violence. House leaders should act quickly to negotiate a compromise that includes the Senate-passed gun safety measures. But if the House leaders once again fail to take a strong stand to keep guns from criminals and kids, then we will keep searching for opportunities to pass the legislation that is called for by the American people.

I call on my Republican colleagues to stand up for gun safety measures. Each time that Congress has passed legislation to keep criminals from getting their hands on weapons, it is because there has been bipartisan support. I am disappointed that a much smaller share of Republicans voted for real gun safety legislation last week than when the House passed the successful Brady law that has blocked hundreds of thousands of gun sales to criminals.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join other members of the Congressional Women's Caucus expressing our disappointment with the gun safety debate of last week. It distresses me both as a mother and as a former County Prosecutor and judge. With the increase in youth violence at schools across America and the countless instances of children killed in gun related accidents, I believe there is a need for increased gun safety.

Parents across America are more concerned about their children's safety after the Columbine incident. We send our children to school to get an education and improve their citizenship, not to be threatened by classmates.

I recognize the fact that legislation restricting the access children have to guns is not the only answer to this epidemic of cultural values. Parents must take a greater responsibility for ensuring children learn right from wrong and how to resolve their problems with others in a non-violent way. Violence should not be a child's first impulse when life does not go the way they expect.

I believe that a combination of greater parental involvement in children's lives coupled with tighter restrictions on access children have to deadly weapons is necessary. As a person matures they learn better control of their emotions, and how to deal with others.

Lask week we tried to close the loophole exploited by several known criminals. Unfortunately that initiative was filled with amendments seeking to loosen, not tighten, restrictions on gun purchases. Because of the action taken to weaken the legislation I was unable to support it. I care about our children and families, that is why I took the action I did.

Gun shows have become a haven for criminals and underage gun purchasers as well as those collectors seeking to buy guns. The two young men who attacked their classmates at Columbine High School bought some of the weapons used in that tragedy through a gun show. Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols, the two men convicted of bombing the Oklahoma Federal Building, financed their attack through illegal sales at gun shows.

I do not favor closing gun shows. Rather, I think we need to restrict a person's ability to go to a gun show and avoid the background checks on their purchase. A background check is not an assault on a person's Second Amendment rights. We seek to protect innocent people from the risk of gun violence by criminals and children. The law is clear and right, if you do not pass a background check you cannot legally own a gun.

An issue raised by gun advocates about background checks was the waiting period. The fact is that the majority of safety checks takes no more than a few hours. About 70 percent of these checks goes through immediately. Law enforcement is concerned about those checks that require more time, the minority of background checks. By limiting the time law enforcement has to check a person's record we allow people who are not supposed to own guns to actually buy weapons.

I do not want to prevent law-abiding citizens from seeking a weapon legally for protection, sport, or personal collection from buying a gun. Had we passed the legislation including the amendment offered by Representative DINGELL there would have been 17,000 people allowed to purchase guns who would not have been able to under current law.

I support maintaining the Brady Law background checks in order to prevent criminals and children from buying guns. It is safe to say that those who do not have access to guns and have the will to strike out against others cannot shoot another person. We need to keep it that way.

I am a mother and like all mothers I worry about my son's safety. He should not be at risk from friends who could buy a gun through the loophole in the gun show law. I support true and meaningful gun safety legislation, not taking guns away from law-abiding citizens.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, let us protect our children. Gun violence is not a partisan issue. American children deserve no less.

H.R. 659: PROTECTING AMERICA'S TREASURES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, earlier this afternoon we passed a bill regarding the Paoli and Brandywine Battlefields and the visitors' center at Valley Forge. I had planned to do a 5-minute this afternoon where I touched on some of the points in my comments regarding that bill, regarding a dispute that has arisen in the development regarding Gettysburg National Historical Park.

This past weekend, my son Zachary, who is in fifth grade, was here with the Deer Ridge Elementary School, and among other things they went to Antietam, and on my way back to Indiana I joined them and then went on up to Gettysburg. We had a 3-hour hearing of the Subcommittee on National Parks at Gettysburg that I sat through and found the debate fascinating. Partly it is the struggles between a community that does not want to see the visitors' center moved away from where many of the retail attractions are and the National Park Service.

I came away from that, A, not fully understanding the community's opposition. While I understood some concern if the visitors' center moves a half mile, in fact as a former retailer, and actually still own and lease out our retail businesses, it looks to me like this would be a huge advantage to every retailer in the town of Gettysburg, because the increased length of stay, the repeat visits, the more things to see and do will lead to more dollars being spent in the community.

But beyond that, this is a national area, and it raises a number of questions that we have to sort through specifically on Gettysburg, which I hope will move ahead rapidly. This report was just released last week on the final general management plan, and I hope we can proceed. It has been held up for some time, and they have gone through all the procedures, but we need to get going on this. Also, some national debates, the differences between a historical park and a National Park.

For example, this is not a wilderness area. One of the things, when we look at the basic purpose of a historical park is that it should look like it did at the time of the historic event, or at least have the feel of that historic event, and one of the problems that we have on some of our battlefields is, quite frankly, they are overgrown.

One of the points that they make in this report on page 44 is that the peach orchard, which was a very critical point in the second day of the battle at Gettysburg, that it is now fashioned for fruit production, and then it does not look like the current peach orchard.

□ 1900

So we look and say, how could the soldiers have used that as any type of shield as the Confederate Army moved towards the Union line?

Furthermore, the woods from McPherson Ridge, now the woods are overgrown, choked with growth, and we cannot experience the battlefield because we cannot visualize how the troops are moving. In many areas there are woods where there should not be, or farms that have been taken out so one cannot see what it was like for the soldiers to go through.

One of the important parts of the experience is to see what it was like at the time the battle was fought. The National Cemetery movement took place, of which Edward Everett and President Lincoln spoke at Gettysburg. When we had the National Cemetery movement those were places of contemplation, where we reflect what happens when people die in battles. But

the National Park itself should have the historic integrity of the battlefield. That is one of the key parts of this plan.

Part of that is when we go, and currently at Gettysburg the visitors center sits at a key point in the fishhook of the Union line. So when we try to get a feeling of the battle, there sits the visitors center, there sits a modernist-looking building, which is a very architecturally significant building but nevertheless modern, that has a cyclorama in it, not to mention this huge tower going up. We cannot possibly get a feel for what it looked like to General Pickett coming up the hill or on Little Roundtop as you are looking down on the battlefield when you have this huge tower sticking up, and the visitors center and the cyclorama right in the heart where the battle was.

The proposal would move the visitors center and the cyclorama over toward an area where the fighting did not occur. There was fighting to the east of it and fighting to the west of it, but it would be out of the center of the battlefield so we could appreciate it more.

Furthermore, the visitors center has numerous purposes, one of which is interpretation. They need more space. Gettysburg is arguably, certainly in the Civil War, the case could be made it was the most significant battle.

In addition, they have storage and display problems of artifacts and archives which are now in a non-air conditioned area. We pay sometimes hundreds of thousands or more to restore guns, or in fact have withheld restoring these because they are not in air conditioning, not in a place where you would put minor or let alone major artifacts, which we have from both armies in the Gettysburg battle.

Furthermore, support services. There has been a big dispute. The restaurant and gift shop proposals have been scaled back, but one of the fundamental questions here is where do revenues come from and how are we going to fund these parks. I think this is a good plan. I hope this Congress will support it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISAKSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Missouri (Ms. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. McCARTHY of Missouri, addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

GUN SAFETY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, last month the United States Senate courageously passed the juvenile justice bill that would begin to close loopholes that too often have resulted in guns getting into the wrong hands.

I am very deeply disappointed that this House was unable to demonstrate similar courage last week. Instead of standing up for what is right, sensible, and what the American people want, the leadership of this House pandered to the narrow interests of the gun lobby and did not even give us the opportunity to vote on the bill passed in our Senate. Instead, they presented us with two separate bills designed to kill gun safety measures in this House.

The American people deserve a better Congress than that. They deserve a Congress that places more importance on human life, more importance on our children's sense of safety in their classroom, and on the parents' peace of mind, instead of pandering to the fringe interests of the gun lobby.

Mr. Speaker, I have been a Member of this House barely more than 6 months. When I came here my mission was to serve my district and the American people and to do everything within my power to ensure their safety. Our Constitution and the Congress' primarily focus has always included the protection of our citizens safety. Last week's vote betrayed that intent, and even worse, was a great disservice to the American people.

Several Members on the other side of the debate raised concerns about upholding the Constitution's Second Amendment, the right to bear arms. Of course I and others support upholding the Constitution. However, I totally disagree with those who contend that requiring a 3-day background check on firearms buyers at gun shows or that requiring child safety locks on all gun sales is an infringement on peoples second amendment rights. What a bunch of horsefeathers. These modest gun safety measures do not prevent responsible citizens from owning guns. They simply ensure that guns do not end up in the hands of criminals likely to purchase them without adequate background checks and then misuse them.

Let us look at the known facts. In the 5 years the Brady bill has been in operation, that is the one that requires the 3-business-day waiting period for gun purchase, more than 400,000 illegal gun sales, two-thirds of which involve either convicted felons or people with a current felony indictment, were blocked. This is clear evidence that this law works and we are on the right path.

However, we still have much work to do. Vice President GORE recently told the U.S. Conference of Mayors in New Orleans that a new government study show that about two-thirds of all homicides involve the use of a handgun. Also, consider that domestic violence often turns into homicide in many instances where guns are readily available, and that law enforcement officials support gun safety because it saves police officers' lives.

It is no wonder that a recent Pew Research survey found that 65 percent of this Nation believes gun control is more important than the right to bear arms. This battle for sensible gun control is not over. Those of us who believe in closing gun loopholes will continue to fight to tighten our laws and ask for their enforcement.

Two months ago I spoke to hundreds of members of families and friends of murdered victims assembled in Rose Hills Memorial Park to honor their slain loved ones during victims' rights week. I pledged to them that I would work to ensure that we establish laws and programs that will prevent the additional loss of innocent lives, and to strengthen victims' rights.

I intend to keep that pledge. I intend to serve the American people and not special interests. I also intend to uphold the Constitution. Therefore, I proudly pledge to continue to fight and support reasonable gun safety legislation on behalf of America's children and our families.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2084, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

Mr. REYNOLDS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106–196) on the resolution (H. Res. 218) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2084) making appropriations for the Department of Transportation and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. SLAUGHTER addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ADDRESSING AMERICA'S TEACHER SHORTAGE CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, we are about to have a major problem on our hands in this country. We have more and more children entering in our schools than we have seen in a generation. At the same time, we face a massive retirement as more and more of our teachers begin to reach retirement age.

In fact, we are going to need over 2 million new teachers over the next decade. In my home, Florida, a growth