

taking between 1 and 2 years to be trained to the point they are certified to go into the classroom.

I believe this is a very reasonable and prudent investment for America to make in Americans who have demonstrated their accomplishments in a first career and are now ready to share their experiences with American youth in a second career in the classroom. This will help to facilitate that transition to teaching for the 21st century.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask whether the floor is in any kind of a parliamentary situation at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time is controlled and evenly divided until 2 o'clock on the pending amendment.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business for a maximum of 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I mention to the Senator that in the context of these amendments that his side has invited Senator WELLSTONE to come to begin his amendment. If that were to come about, we would need to try to accommodate it. If the Senator would help us with that, I see no problem.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I would be pleased to do that.

Mr. COVERDELL. I have no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

GUN CONTROL

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, none of us can possibly ignore what took place yesterday in Michigan. Another child killed by gunfire. Everywhere across the country we see children killing children. And then we see members of the immediate family their faces contorted by sadness. Anyone who has a child or grandchild has to be dismayed and upset by these tragedies.

I am fortunate enough to have seven grandchildren, the oldest of whom is 6. Nothing is more joyful than to see their smiling faces—to see them learning about life, reading, playing, and singing.

And when I think of my grandchildren, and the other children across this country, I ask myself what it will take to stop the gun violence. When will this Congress say we have enough killing? What does it take to change some minds, to say that guns do kill?

I am so tired of that foolish saying: "guns don't kill people, people kill peo-

ple." Of course, people kill people, but we would see much less deadly violence if we passed common sense gun safety measures. It is getting close to the 1-year anniversary of the tragedy at Columbine. I will never forget the picture of the child hanging out of the window at that school, looking for help, trying to get away from the terror. I thought that terrible violence—12 children killed and many more seriously injured—would force this Congress to act.

And yet there has been much more gun violence since Columbine. Shootings in Georgia; in Ft. Worth, Texas, at a prayer meeting. Those young people were gathered to worship and along comes someone with a gun and kills them. And then a gunman in California attacks children at a day care. After that terrible assault, the gunman goes on to kill a postal worker because he is Filipino and not white.

When will the National Rifle Association and its friends step up to the issue, not always appealing to the extremists, and say there is a sensible way to approach this problem and reduce the proliferation of guns? They should join with us and help close the gun show loophole that allows guns to be sold without a criminal background check.

A person could be one the 10 most wanted criminals in this country and say to one of the dealers: I have \$500; give me a couple of guns. The dealer could sell them, and he would not be breaking the law. It is an outrage.

Of course, some who oppose gun safety legislation talk about the Second Amendment. But there is nothing in the Constitution that says citizens can buy a gun without identifying themselves. There is nothing in the Constitution that says, buy a gun, carry it anyplace you want. No, no; there are overriding considerations that say we have to protect our citizens. We put people in uniform to protect our citizens. Sometimes it is a military uniform, sometimes it is a police uniform. We do it to protect our citizens. Why don't we reduce the possibility that a gun might be introduced into a situation?

In 1996, Congress did pass my domestic violence gun ban. There was a huge fight on the floor of this Senate and the House. In cooperation with President Clinton, on the budget bill, we said anybody who has committed a misdemeanor of spousal abuse or abusing a child, that person should not have a gun. We fought like the devil. People said we have no right to take guns away from people who haven't done something serious.

But domestic violence is serious. And guns make domestic violence incidents even more dangerous. The trigger does not have to be pulled to traumatize a spouse or a child. Let a man put a gun to a woman's head and say: I will blow your brains out in front of your children. That is a wound that does not go away in a hurry. Doctors cannot see

that wound on the skin, but it does not go away.

Mr. President, since that law went into effect, 33,000 purchases have been prevented. 33,000 of those wife abusers, spousal abusers, could not get a gun. I feel good about it. And I still cannot understand those people who opposed it and who continue to oppose gun safety measures. They seem to want guns for everyone, wherever they want, at any age, it doesn't matter, hide them, conceal them, do what you want.

That is irresponsible. And we should not have people hiding behind empty slogans like "guns don't kill people". Or trying to distort the meaning of the Second Amendment. No one has a right to hurt another. That is not in the Constitution.

Just a few minutes ago we learned that there was another shooting near Pittsburgh. We don't have all the details, but someone shot four people in a McDonald's and then went to a Burger King and shot someone else.

So the gun violence continues, week by week, day by day, hour by hour. Yesterday it was a six-year-old in Michigan killing another child. And we ask ourselves what can be done. Do you put a 6-year-old in jail? Do you lock him up in a cell? Or do you say to a parent or a friend: It is your responsibility?

If you own a car, you have no right to give it to somebody who doesn't know how to drive and tell them to have a good time. That can be criminally prosecuted if a person has an accident. Why is a gun different? Why shouldn't all guns be protected from access by unacceptable users, children, deranged people, et cetera?

We ought to do it. We keep avoiding it with silly excuses in this place. I hope people across America understand we ought to stop this now. We can require gun manufacturers to manufacture guns that don't work except in the hands of an authorized user. Thirteen children a day die from gunshots; over 4,500 kids a year. We can pass a bill that Senator DURBIN from Illinois has authored, the Child Access Prevention Act. It imposes criminal penalties on gun owners who allow children access to their guns.

And we ought to take stronger measures to prevent easy access to guns. Closing the gun show loophole which allows criminals to purchase firearms without a background check will help. Let me give a graphic example why we cannot afford to wait any longer to do this.

Every year, several gun shows are held in Portland, OR at the Expo Center. The Expo Center is managed by a commission established by the local government, the Metropolitan Exposition-Recreation Commission, called Metro for short. Metro officials were concerned about possible criminal activity at gun shows, so they looked at police records and put together a report. Here is what they found:

Investigative reports from the Portland Police Bureau demonstrate a continuing pattern of frequent significant criminal activity

associated with the Rose City gun shows at the Expo Center.

And the report gives examples of that criminal activity. Here is an example:

Three subjects were observed in the gun show wearing gang attire. The three subjects were looking for dealers who do not do background checks. One of the subjects attempted to purchase a Glock pistol without any paperwork. The subjects bought 4 high capacity magazines and exited the show. Officers contacted the subjects and found one subject all in red to be 12 years old. The second subject all in blue had a warrant for his arrest. The last subject was found to be an ex-felon. The two adults were arrested and transported to NE precinct. At the NE precinct officers found marijuana packaged for sale and \$1,150 in the last subject's shoe. He was charged with delivery of a controlled substance.

So we have gang members—drug dealers—using a gun show as a convenience store for guns. These gang members were looking for gun sellers who were not required to do criminal background checks.

And this testimony is similar to what we heard from Robyn Anderson when she testified before the Colorado legislature. She is the young woman who went with Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold to the Tanner Gun Show in Adams County, Colorado.

She testified that Harris and Klebold went from table to table at the gun show, looking for gun sellers who were not required to complete a background check.

With her help, Harris and Klebold bought two shotguns and a rifle without a criminal background check. And everybody knows what happened after that. They used those guns to murder fellow students and a teacher at Columbine High School. How much more do we need to know before we do the sensible thing and close this loophole?

Gang members and teenagers bent on committing murder know they can go to a gun show and get a firearm if they want, without a background check. Is there anyone around here who actually thinks that is all right? Good friends on the other side, good friends on both sides will sometimes defend gun ownership blindly. But we should all agree that you should not be able to buy a gun without identifying yourself and having a criminal background check.

The gun lobby says we do not need a new law, all we need to do is enforce the current law. But that completely misses the point. There is a loophole in the law, so when you try to enforce it, criminals simply slip through the loophole. This hole in our gun laws is leaking human lives and we ought to plug it before someone else is killed with a pistol or shotgun purchased at a gun show without a background check. People ought to identify themselves when they buy a gun. Why not?

Some of our colleagues who argue against closing this loophole are the same people who go on and on about the need to get tough on crime. But when it comes to this gaping loophole in our gun laws, they are strangely

quiet. All of us know why. Those tough-on-crime Members do not hear the huge majority of the people. Ninety percent of the people in this country, according to a recent poll, are calling for us to close this loophole. They do not hear the cries, see the tears of those who have lost a child, a friend, a relative. But what do they hear? They hear the NRA making deposits to their campaign accounts. They hear the NRA saying: Do nothing and we will keep these campaign contributions coming.

I have been fighting this battle for a long time, almost a year now on this specific issue. Back on May 20, 9 months ago, the Senate passed my amendment to close the gun show loophole. It passed 51-50, with a huge struggle. But the Congress has yet to finish the job because the NRA has been putting its money to work making sure my amendment stays bottled up in a conference committee.

Let's do the right thing and set this legislation free. Let's not allow extremists in the gun lobby to prevail over the families across this country who want to stop the gun violence.

April 20 will mark 1 year since the terrible tragedy at Columbine High School. On that day, people across this country will ask, What has Congress done? What have you done to stop gun violence in this country? What have you done to protect my child, my grandchild, my brother, my sister, my parents from this mad gun violence? It is not too late to give the public the answer they want, the answer they deserve. It is not too late to show them that common sense can prevail in this distinguished place.

AWARDING JOHN CARDINAL O'CONNOR THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, it is with great honor that I rise today to thank my distinguished Senate colleagues for their support, help, consideration, and, hopefully, passage of S. 2076, legislation which will bestow upon John Cardinal O'Connor the Congressional Medal of Honor.

I, along with Senators MOYNIHAN, SPECTER, and SANTORUM, introduced this bill last week. We believe now is the perfect time for Congress to publicly thank His Eminence for his 50 years of service to America, the Catholic Church, and for his numerous contributions as an ambassador of peace, freedom, and humanitarianism around the world.

Since being ordained 54 years ago, John Cardinal O'Connor has humbly captured the hearts of millions with a message of caring and compassion for all people. He has dutifully served the Church in Philadelphia, the Diocese of Scranton, and now from the steps of the treasured St. Patrick's Cathedral serves as the spiritual guiding force for the 10-county New York Archdiocese and its more than 2.3 million Catholic members.

He is loved in New York and by Catholics across the country. He has touched the hearts of millions whose spiritual life is richer from the words and deeds of our cardinal.

Since being named by the Pope as successor to the late Cardinal Terence Cook in 1984, Cardinal O'Connor has sought to reinforce the traditional teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church while putting a human face on the problems faced not only by Catholics but all New Yorkers.

He has advocated for an increase in the minimum wage. He has advocated for farm workers. He has advocated for working people throughout New York and throughout the world.

He has worked hard to improve relationships between Catholics and Jews, knowing that is so important to the future of the area he represents and to all Americans.

He has advocated relentlessly for fairness and justice. And even while reaffirming the Church's teachings on homosexuality, he set up AIDS clinics and volunteered anonymously in them.

I have not always agreed with Cardinal O'Connor. For example, he is a strong, vocal, and impassioned voice in opposition to abortion. I have respectfully disagreed with his position. But in some instances you earn an even greater respect for someone by the way they disagree with you, how they fight for their beliefs: With vigor, passion, and conviction, but also with humility and grace.

He is a man of immense conviction. He has been unyielding in his commitment to reaffirm the priorities of the Church and his faith.

I am left with nothing but respect and admiration for the way in which Cardinal O'Connor has advocated on behalf of his beliefs.

John Cardinal O'Connor's life of spiritual service began decades ago. He had 20-plus years of distinguished service in the Armed Forces. He heeded our Nation's call in 1952, joining the ranks of the military chaplaincy during the Korean war, and provided spiritual leadership for members of the Navy and Marine Corps during Vietnam. His career continued on as chaplain to the United States Naval Academy.

Eventually he rose with distinction to become Navy chief chaplain. He served in that capacity until 1979, upon which he retired from military service with the distinguished rank of rear admiral. An international ambassador for humanity, Cardinal O'Connor has traveled the world over—Israel, Jordan, Haiti, Bosnia, and Russia—and he also accompanied Pope John Paul II on his visit to Cuba.

He has called on governments to work for social development, provide international peace, and implored governments to provide their citizens with the freedom and ability to exercise their religious beliefs.

His work in volatile 1980s Central America helped clear the way for clergy members to be allowed to visit political prisoners and also helped end