

be allocated 5 minutes, and then the Senator from North Dakota be recognized for his 10 minutes, and then the Senator from Massachusetts for the remainder of his time.

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

The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. I thank our assistant floor leader, Senator DURBIN, for arranging this time.

THE MILLION MOM MARCH

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I had a tremendous honor this weekend to march in the Million Mom March, along with about 750,000 citizens of this great country. They were moms; they were dads; they were grandmas and grandpas; and children in strollers.

We really all had in our hearts one wish for Mother's Day—to turn around the gun violence that is plaguing our Nation.

It was quite a march. It was quite an event because the emotion was high. The spirits were high. Perhaps the most touching part of it, for me and for many others, was the presence of so many moms and dads whose families have been touched by gun violence, whose children have been killed by gun violence, cut down by gun violence, maimed by gun violence.

The victims were there with a message: That they want to make sure other families never have feelings of pain and loss and anguish which will last all their lives.

I am embarrassed to say to my constituents that this Congress has done nothing—nothing at all—to reduce gun violence in our country. After Columbine, we passed five sensible gun measures—very modest, good, sensible gun measures—such as making sure every handgun is sold with a safety lock, and others that are very sensible: closing the gun show loophole so that a mentally imbalanced person or a criminal cannot walk into a gun show and simply be handed a gun—hand the cash over and get the gun with no background check.

We know the background checks work, but they don't apply to gun shows. So Senator LAUTENBERG offered a very important amendment and it was added to the juvenile justice bill to close that gun show loophole. Vice President AL GORE cast the tie-breaking vote. We know that will keep guns out of the criminals' hands. But what has happened in this Senate? Nothing. The power of the gun lobby can be felt in this Chamber—the power of the money of the gun lobby, the power of the threat of the gun lobby, and the gun lobby rules in this Senate, the gun lobby rules in the House of Representatives, and the gun lobby says if one of the candidates is elected President—namely, George Bush—they will run an office out of the White House.

Mr. President, enough is enough. Let's look at the deaths from gun violence in our country. There were 58,168

deaths in Vietnam over 11 years. They were tragic deaths. People were cut down in the prime of their lives. In 11 years, there were 58,168 deaths. Let's look at the last 11 years in America—the war on our streets, the war in our schools and, yes, even the war in our churches and Jewish community centers, where gunmen come in and cut people down in the prime of their lives; and they cut children down. There were 395,441 gun deaths in the 11-year period.

Now, we stopped the war in Vietnam—Democrats, Republicans, Independents, people of every race, color, and creed. We stopped that war. We can stop this war. But I will tell you, it isn't going to be easy. The gun lobby is not going to make it easy. We have to have courage. There are those of us in this Senate who are going to be on this floor from now on, in the name of the million moms who marched with the dads, the grandmas, the grandpas, and the children. We are going to be here. We are going to be here day after day. We are going to force this Senate to look this issue in the eye, to look families in the eye, to bring out the five sensible gun control measures that are in the juvenile justice bill. What excuse is there since Columbine High School, where 13 people were killed? Thirteen kids are killed every day.

Thank you, Mr. President. We will be back on this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from California. Every day in America, 13 mothers receive a phone call or a knock on the door, a word from a neighbor, and their lives are changed. Every day in America, 13 mothers learn that one of their children has been killed by a gun. Every day in America, 13 mothers have a pain in their heart that will be there for a lifetime.

This last Sunday, I went to Chicago, IL, on the banks of Lake Michigan. Our Million Mom March chapter came together, and thousands of people came out. They were inspired, of course, by the fact that it was Mother's Day and that we were addressing this issue because it is a family issue, and especially an issue that mothers take to heart because mothers, by their nature, protect their children. They came forward on the banks of Lake Michigan in Chicago and here on The Mall in Washington, DC, and in Los Angeles, and in cities across America, to say: Let us protect our children; protect our children from the gun criminals who menace our neighborhoods, our communities and our schools; protect our children from the gang bangers who spray these bullets from semiautomatic and automatic weapons across playgrounds, day care centers, and bus stops; protect our children from careless gun owners who insist on their constitutional right to own a gun but will not accept their moral responsibility to store it safely away from children; protect our children from a gun

lobby in this town that has made a mockery of democracy, which owns this Chamber and owns the House of Representatives, which stops us in our tracks; protect our children from the indifference of millions of American families who know what I say is true but who didn't come to the march, who don't call a Congressman or a Senator and just shake their heads and say, "It's politics, it's hopeless; they don't listen, they don't care."

The Million Mom March was an inspiration to so many people. It was an inspiration to me because at the end of the march in Chicago, the Bell Campaign, which sponsored it, invited the families of gun victims to come forward and literally ring a bell for their victim. They started coming slowly from the crowd, and then the numbers increased. The procession went on and on and on—black, white, brown, men, women, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, breaking down in tears as they pealed that bell for a gun victim.

I stood there, as a Member of the Senate, humbled by that experience, trying to imagine for one brief moment what it must be like to receive that telephone call or that knock on the door. I vowed I would come back to this Chamber this week and begin a personal campaign, a personal crusade to make the Senate act on this issue. To think that it is 1 year after Columbine and we have done nothing—we have not passed a bill to keep guns out of the hands of criminals or kids; we have been totally stopped by this gun lobby—it is a disgrace, a disgrace to this Chamber, to the Congress, and to this country. The million moms who came forward are watching and waiting and praying that before this ends, we will do something.

The National Rifle Association bought a full-page ad in the Washington Post Friday criticizing the Million Mom March. Here is what they said: "It is a political agenda masquerading as motherhood."

I have a message for the National Rifle Association. This was no masquerade; this was the real thing. These were real families who have endured the pain and suffering of gun violence. They are coming forward and challenging you, gun lobby, National Rifle Association, and challenging us in the Senate and in the House to do what is right for America, to reduce gun violence, reduce the pain, and reduce the suffering.

There is no excuse for the fact that, for 1 year, the Republican leadership in the House and Senate has refused to bring a bill to the floor so we could vote and send to the President a bill to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and kids. You will hear more about this issue.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized for 10 minutes.