

I want to conclude by thanking my friend from New Jersey, Senator LAUTENBERG, for his continued dedication to this issue. His hard work and perseverance have helped bring us to the point today where the Senate once again has passed legislation to strongly encourage states to enact this life-saving measure. I would also like to thank Senator RICHARD SHELBY, the Chairman of the Subcommittee, for his support of the .08 measure as the Transportation Appropriations bill was being crafting; and Senator JOHN WARNER for his continued dedication to reducing drunk driving.

Mr. President, .08 is definitely a legislative effort worth fighting for, and I hope we will succeed this time in retaining the provision in the conference report. I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

PROJECT EXILE: THE SAFE STREETS AND NEIGHBORHOODS ACT

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, there has been a lot of talk recently in this country about gun control. It is no secret that gun control measures are very controversial and are subject to a great deal of debate—as they should be. But, we have to remember that in the heat of this debate, we must not lose sight of the real issue at hand—and that's gun violence. There is nothing controversial about protecting our children, our families, our communities by keeping guns out of the wrong hands—keeping guns out of the hands of criminals and violent offenders—not law-abiding citizens, Mr. President, but criminals.

These criminals with guns are killing our children. They're killing our young adults. They're killing our friends and our neighbors. I am here on the floor today because I am very troubled by this, Mr. President, and I am troubled by the current Administration's handling of crimes committed with guns. Let me explain.

Right now, current law makes it a federal crime for a convicted felon to ever possess a firearm. So, once a person is convicted of a felony, that person can never again own a gun. It is against federal law to use a gun to commit any crime, regardless of if that crime is otherwise a state crime. And, under federal law, the sentences for these kinds of crimes are mandatory—no second chance, no parole.

In the late 1980's, President Bush made enforcement of these gun laws a priority. His Justice Department told local sheriffs, chiefs of police, and prosecutors that if they caught a felon with a gun—or if they caught someone committing a crime in which a gun was used—the federal government would take the case, and put that criminal behind bars for at least five years—no exceptions. During the last 18 months of the Bush Administration, more than 2,000 criminals with guns were put behind bars.

Consistent, effective enforcement ended once the current Administration took office. Between 1992 and 1998, for example, the number of gun cases filed for prosecution dropped from 7,048 to about 3,807—that's a 46 percent decrease. As a result, the number of federal criminal convictions for firearms offenses has fallen dramatically.

For six years, the Justice Department refused to prosecute those criminals who use a gun to commit state crimes—even though the use of a gun to commit those crimes could be charged as a federal crime. The only cases they would prosecute were those in which a federal crime was already being committed and a gun was used in the commission of that crime.

Even worse, to this very day, some federal gun laws are almost never enforced by this Administration. While Brady law background checks have stopped nearly 300,000 prohibited purchasers of firearms from buying guns, less than .1 percent have actually been prosecuted.

I have repeatedly questioned Attorney General Reno and her deputies about the decline in prosecutions, and their standard response is that the Department of Justice is focusing on so-called "high-level" offenders, instead of "low-level" offenders, who commit one crime with a gun. They say that they want to prosecute the few sharks at the top rather than the numerous guppies at the bottom of the criminal enterprise. With all due respect, that's nonsense.

Attorney General Reno recently said that she would aggressively prosecute armed criminals, but only if they commit a violent crime. Again, that type of law enforcement policy just doesn't make sense. Current law prohibits violent felons from possessing guns, and so we should aggressively prosecute these cases to take guns away from violent criminals—before they use those guns to injure and kill people. It's that simple.

Mr. President, we have often heard that six percent of the criminals commit 70 percent of the crimes—six percent of the criminals commit 70 percent of the crimes. Well, if you have a violent criminal who illegally possesses a gun, I can bet you that he is part of that six percent! He's one of the bad guys—and we should put him away before he has a chance to use that gun again.

Mr. President, we need to take all of these armed criminals off the streets. That is how we can reduce crime and save lives. Why wait for armed criminals to commit more and more heinous crimes before we prosecute them to the full extent of the law? Why wait, when we can do something before another Ohioan—or any American—becomes a victim of gun violence?

We shouldn't wait, Mr. President. That's why the House of Representatives recently passed legislation that would increase gun prosecutions. And that's why, along with a number of my

colleagues, including Senators ABRAHAM, SANTORUM, WARNER, SESSIONS, HELMS, ASHCROFT, and HUTCHINSON from Arkansas, we have introduced the companion to the House-passed bill—a bill that offers the kind of practical solution we need to thwart gun crimes.

Our bill—called "Project Exile: The Safe Streets and Neighbors Act of 2000"—would provide \$100 million in grants over five years to those states that agree to enact their own mandatory minimum five-year jail sentences for armed criminals who use or possess an illegal gun. As an alternative, a state can also qualify for the grants by turning armed criminals over for federal prosecution under existing firearms laws. Therefore, a state has the option of prosecuting armed felons in state or federal courts. Qualifying states can use their grants for any variety of purposes that would strengthen their criminal or juvenile justice systems' ability to deal with violent criminals.

This approach works, Mr. President. In Virginia, for example, the state instituted a program in 1997, also called "Project Exile." Their program is based on one simple principle: Any criminal caught with a gun will serve a minimum mandatory sentence of five years in prison. Period. End of story. As a result, gun-toting criminals are being prosecuted six times faster, and serving sentences up to four times longer than they otherwise would under state law. Moreover, the homicide rate in Richmond already has dropped 40 percent!

Every state should have the opportunity to implement Project Exile in their high-crime communities. The bill that we have introduced will make this proven, commonsense approach to reducing gun violence available to every state. It will take guns out of the hands of violent criminals. It will make our neighborhoods safer. It will save lives.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support and pass this legislation. It's time to protect our children, our families, and our country from armed and dangerous criminals. It's time to get guns out of the wrong hands. It's time we take back our neighborhoods and our communities from the criminals and take action to stop gun-toting criminals.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, July 11, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,665,065,032,353.04 (Five trillion, six hundred sixty-five billion, sixty-five million, thirty-two thousand, three hundred fifty-three dollars and four cents).

Five years ago, July 11, 1995, the Federal debt stood at \$4,925,464,000,000 (Four trillion, nine hundred twenty-five billion, four hundred sixty-four million).

Ten years ago, July 11, 1990, the Federal debt stood at \$3,149,532,000,000

(Three trillion, one hundred forty-nine billion, five hundred thirty-two million).

Fifteen years ago, July 11, 1985, the Federal debt stood at \$1,793,175,000,000 (One trillion, seven hundred ninety-three billion, one hundred seventy-five million).

Twenty-five years ago, July 11, 1975, the Federal debt stood at \$531,808,000,000 (Five hundred thirty-one billion, eight hundred eight million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,133,257,032,353.04 (Five trillion, one hundred thirty-three billion, two hundred fifty-seven million, thirty-two thousand, three hundred fifty-three dollars and four cents) during the past 25 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TOWN OF JACKSON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

● Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in commemorating the Town of Jackson, New Hampshire on the occasion of its Bicentennial and in appreciation of the contributions its citizens have made to our nation. Jackson is the only New Hampshire town celebrating its Bicentennial in the Year 2000.

Founded by settlers as New Madbury circa 1775 and incorporated on December 4, 1800, Jackson proudly traces its roots deep into the history of our state and nation. Originally named Adams, in honor of then President John Adams, Jackson selected its current name on July 4, 1829 to honor President Andrew Jackson. It is here, settled gently into the awe inspiring beauty of New Hampshire's Presidential Mountain Range, at the foot of Mount Washington, where Jackson, a quiet farming community with an abundance of open space and spectacular scenic views, evolved into a popular American resort destination for artists and summer vacationers.

The centuries have been bridged by generations of old and new Jackson families. Today, visitors come year round, joining local residents, to enjoy its pastoral vistas, timeless ridge lines, wild and scenic rivers, covered bridge, water falls, white steepled church, mountains, rolling farmland and outdoor recreation amidst the magnificence and splendor of New Hampshire's world famous White Mountain National Forest.

On the occasion of its 200th Birthday in the Year 2000 please join me to proudly salute and celebrate Jackson, New Hampshire, a classic American community with a unique character, spirit and old world charm which has enriched the State of New Hampshire and our Nation.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:22 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by

Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 894: An act to encourage States to incarcerate individuals convicted of murder, rape, or child molestation.

H.R. 3909: An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4691 South Cottage Grove Avenue in Chicago, Illinois, as the "Henry W. McGee Post Office Building."

H.R. 4063: An act to establish the Rosie the Riveter-World War II Home Front National Historical Park in the State of California, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4391: An act to amend title 4 of the United States Code to establish sourcing requirements for State and local taxation of mobile telecommunications services.

H.R. 4442: An act to establish a commission to promote awareness of the National Wildlife Refuge System among the American public as the System celebrates its centennial anniversary in 2003, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4461: An act making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4528: An act to establish an undergraduate grant program of the Department of State to assist students of limited financial means from the United States to pursue studies at foreign institutions of higher education.

H.R. 4579: An act to provide for the exchange of certain lands within the State of Utah.

H.R. 4658: An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 301 Green Street in Fayetteville, North Carolina, as the "J.L. Dawkins Post Office Building."

H.R. 4681: An act to provide for the adjustment of status of certain Syrian nationals.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 253: Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress strongly objecting to any effort to expel the Holy See from the United Nations as a state participant by removing its status as a Permanent Observer.

H. Con. Res. 348: Concurrent resolution expressing condemnation of the use of children as soldiers and expressing the belief that the United States should support and, where possible, lead efforts to end this abuse of human rights.

At 4:50 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4810: An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 103(a)(1) of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2001.

At 9:40 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by one of its reading clerks, announced that the House disagreed to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 4576) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes, and agree to the con-

ference asked by the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon; and appoints Mr. LEWIS of California, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. SKEEN, Mr. HOBSON, Mr. BONILLA, Mr. NETHERCUTT, Mr. ISTOOK, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Mr. DICKEY, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. MURTHA, Mr. DICKS, Mr. SABO, Mr. DIXON, Mr. VISCLOSKEY, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, and Mr. OBEY, as the managers of the conference on the part of the House.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1892: An act to authorize the acquisition of the Valles Caldera, to provide for an effective land and wildlife management program for this resource within the Department of Agriculture, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 3909: An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4601 South Cottage Grove Avenue in Chicago, Illinois, as the "Henry W. McGee Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4063: An act to establish the Rosie the Riveter-World War II Home Front National Historical Park in the State of California, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4391: An act to amend title 4 of the United States Code to establish sourcing requirements for State and local taxation of mobile telecommunication services.

H.R. 4442: An act to establish a commission to promote awareness of the National Wildlife Refuge System among the American public as the System celebrates its centennial anniversary in 2003, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 4528: An act to establish an undergraduate grant program of the Department of State to assist students of limited financial means from the United States to pursue studies at foreign institutions of higher education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 4579: An act to provide for the exchange of certain lands within the State of Utah; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4658: An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 301 Green Street in Fayetteville, North Carolina, as the "J.L. Dawkins Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4681: An act to provide for the adjustment of status of certain Syrian nationals.

The following concurrent resolution was read, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 348: Concurrent resolution expressing condemnation of the use of children as soldiers and expressing the belief that the United States should support and, where possible, lead efforts to end this abuse of human rights; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar: