

would also see a note that reads, "United We Stand. Never be forgotten. Always to be loved. A symbol of silence that needs to be broken."

That memorial has been erected outside the home of Clinton Scott Risetter, 37, the victim of a hate crime.

On February 24, 2002, Clint Risetter awoke in his apartment engulfed in flames and then tried to escape as he was burning. When firefighters arrived, they found him dead on his patio. Two days later, Martin Thomas Hartmann walked into the Santa Barbara Police Department and admitted to entering Clint's apartment, pouring gasoline on him as he slept, and then setting him on fire.

Martin Hartmann had known Clint for several months but had learned just recently that Clint was gay. He told police about his hatred toward gays and how he "... decided to put [Clint] out of his misery," because he was gay. He believed that he was doing the right thing and that Clint deserved to die.

The note on the tree outside Clint Risetter's apartment expresses not only the views of its author, but also the views of the more than 500 people that joined together Monday night in Santa Barbara to light candles in a vigil for Clint. One of the vigil's attendees, Russ Chaffin, said, "I can't be silent. This is my community. I cannot stand it that something like this could happen in my community."

I simply cannot stand silent when such a violent act is committed against an innocent person. I was deeply saddened and disturbed to hear the horrific details of Clint's death. It's hard for me to imagine a more heinous act of hatred than to set another human being on fire. Unfortunately, Clint's death is characteristic of many hate crimes in America; where an attacker repeatedly beats, stabs or severely burns his victim as if he is removing whatever it is he hates out of the person. And the attacker feels justified in doing so, as if he is doing a great service to humanity by killing the person.

In California, I have seen, first-hand, the devastating impact hate crimes have on victims, their families and their communities. A hate crime divides neighborhoods and breeds a sense of mistrust and fear within a community, just like it has in Santa Barbara. This is why I have long supported legislation aimed at protecting citizens from crimes based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.

According to the FBI's latest statistics, hate crimes based on sexual orientation rose every year between 1994 and 2000. Yet, current Federal hate crimes law does not include crimes against others because of sexual orientation. It only covers crimes motivated by bias on the basis of race, color, religion or national origin. The current law also limits Federal hate crime prosecutions to instances in which the victim was targeted because he or she was exercising one of six nar-

rowly defined federally-protected activities, such as serving on a jury, voting, attending a public school, eating at a restaurant or lodging at a hotel.

The limitations of current law prevent it from reaching many cases where individuals are killed or injured by just walking down the street, or, as we have now seen, even sleeping in their own homes. It does not extend basic civil rights protections to every American, only to a few and under certain circumstances. Updating the current law would not provide special rights, it would ensure equal protection.

"The Local Law Enforcement Act of 2001," legislation of which I am an original cosponsor, would expand current Federal protections against hate crimes based on race, color, religion, and national origin; amend the criminal code to cover hate crimes based on gender, disability, and sexual orientation; authorize grants for State and local programs designed to combat and prevent hate crimes; and enable the federal government to assist State and local law enforcement in investigating and prosecuting hate crimes.

Final passage of "The Local Law Enforcement Act of 2001," is long overdue. It is necessary for the safety and well being of millions of Americans. No American should have to live in fear because of his or her disability. No American should be afraid to walk down the street for fear of a gender-motivated attack. And certainly, no American should be afraid to sleep in their own home because of his or her sexual orientation.

We have had strong bipartisan support for this legislation in the past, and it continues to receive bipartisan support. We just have not been able to get it to the President's desk for his consideration. Today, I ask all of my colleagues to work to ensure that this legislation is not simply supported, but actually gets passed and signed into law. Let's send a signal to Clint Risetter's family, and to all Americans, that our nation will no longer turn a blind eye to hate crimes in this country.

#### CONFIRMATION OF SHERIFF STEPHEN FITZGERALD TO BE U.S. MARSHAL FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the confirmation of Sheriff Stephen Fitzgerald to be United States Marshal for the Western District of Wisconsin.

Sheriff Fitzgerald's qualifications for this position are impressive. He has served as the Sheriff of Dodge County since 1989 and as a detective and patrol officer with the Chicago Police Department before seeing the light and moving to the greener pastures of Wisconsin to continue his lifelong devotion to law enforcement and public service.

Sheriff Fitzgerald received a unanimous vote of the Judiciary Committee

yesterday and deserves the support of the full Senate today. We look forward to his service to the Western District of Wisconsin.

#### FLORIDA'S 2002 OLYMPIC MEDALISTS

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize five athletes who recently represented our Nation at the 19th Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City.

While the accomplishments of these competitors are exceptional by any measure, this group deserves special recognition; that's because Garrett Hines, Derek Parra, Jennifer Rodriguez, Brian Shimer and Chris Thorpe are Floridians. For the record, Florida sees snow a little more often than once every ice age, and the State's highest mountain is but a bunny hill compared to the terrain these athletes saw in Utah.

Nevertheless, these five Floridians won seven medals in the luge, the bobsled and on the speed skating oval.

Garrett Hines, along with teammate Randy Jones, became the first black American male to win a medal in the Winter Olympics, as the United States took silver in the four-man bobsled. Garrett is the pride of Sanford, FL, and I'd like to wish him luck in his future endeavors.

Similarly, Derek Parra achieved a barrier-breaking milestone, becoming the first Hispanic American to medal in the Winter Olympics as he won both a gold and silver in speed skating.

These two pioneers have left a lasting mark on their sports, and I am proud to call them Floridians.

Also, Jennifer Rodriguez, known as "Miami Ice," showed the world that South Florida has a place on the Winter Olympic map. After becoming the first Hispanic American to compete for the United States Winter Olympic Team during the 1998 Games in Japan, Rodriguez not only competed in Salt Lake City, she won two speed skating bronze medals.

Brian Shimer continued the South Florida success, as the Naples native took home a bronze in the four-man bobsled. This five-time Olympian had never before won a medal, but as the driver in this year's bronze medal winning sled, he has realized a career-long goal.

Finally, Daytona Beach resident Chris Thorpe, added a bronze medal in doubles luge to the silver he won four years ago in the Nagano Games. Chris has said this will be his last Olympics, and I'd like to wish him luck as he finishes his undergraduate degree at the University of Florida, Gainesville.

I applaud the commitment these athletes have shown in reaching the pinnacle of their respective sports, and I hope their willingness to sacrifice and their determination to succeed motivates all Americans to exceed expectations and achieve the extraordinary.

I would ask to have printed in the RECORD the names and hometowns of