

to Colonel Wreath on that date in a ceremony that was held in the Reserve Officers Association of the United States Building, in Washington. It is my pleasure to join those who are congratulating Colonel Wreath on this achievement.

Since 1997, Colonel Wreath has been an active duty Reservist, assigned to the United States Air Force Office of Congressional Affairs. During part of this time, Colonel Wreath served as the Acting Director of the United States Liaison Office in the Senate, where he became known to many Senators and members of their staffs. Colonel Wreath is currently assigned to the United States Air Force Headquarters, at The Pentagon, where he is implementing the recommendations of The Commission to Assess United States National Security Space Management and Organization, as well as serving as the Air Staff Legislative Liaison for Space Integration issues.

Colonel Wreath is a graduate of the United States Air Force Academy. He has also earned the degree of Master of Science in Systems Management from the University of Colorado.

Doug Wreath began his career in the United States Air Force as a Space Shuttle Navigation Analyst in 1984, leavings, as a Space Operations Officer in 1992, when he transferred into the Reserve. While on active duty, Doug Wreath performed a variety of command and support activities at three duty stations, and as the Personal Assistant to the Commander of the Air Force Space Command, he assisted in establishing the operational plans and policies of the Air Force National Space Program.

Colonel Wreath is an outstanding American who has developed an impressive record of achievement through his service to our Nation. I am pleased to commend Colonel Wreath on his promotion and I extend my best wishes to him for much continued success.

#### LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about hate crimes legislation I introduced with Senator KENNEDY in March of last year. The Local Law Enforcement Act of 2001 would add new categories to current hate crimes legislation sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred January 25 in Washington, DC. Two minors attacked two gay men leaving a gay bar in Dupont Circle. Before attacking the victims, the assailants shouted derogatory, anti-homosexual slurs at them. Local police have arrested one of the perpetrators.

I believe that government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2001 is now a symbol

that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

#### CHRISTEN O'DONNELL EQUESTRIAN HELMET SAFETY ACT

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, last week my colleague from Rhode Island, Senator CHAFEE, and I introduced legislation to provide greater safety for children and adults who ride horses in the United States. Each year in our country, nearly 15 million people go horseback riding. Whether it be professionally or for pleasure, Americans of all ages and from all walks of life enjoy equestrian sports. And, while everyone acknowledges that horseback riding is a high-risk activity, there are serious safety issues related to equestrian sports that can and should be addressed.

I first became aware of the problem of equestrian helmets when Kemi O'Donnell, a constituent of mine in Connecticut, called my office to relate her family's tragic experience. The story she shared opened my eyes to the danger posed by certain equestrian helmets. In 1998, Kemi's daughter, Christen O'Donnell, was a young 12-year-old resident of Darien, Connecticut, and a 7th grader at New Canaan Country School. Active and sporty, Christen was a talented intermediate rider who had five years of riding experience under her belt when she mounted her horse on the morning of August 11. As always, Christen wore a helmet and was accompanied by her trainer when she began a slow walk through the ring. Suddenly, without warning, the horse she was riding shook its head, and Christen was thrown off onto 4 inches of sand. Even though her horse was only at a walk, and Christen was wearing a helmet, that helmet offered her little protection, and she sustained severe head injuries as a result of the fall. She was rushed to Stamford hospital where, despite efforts to save her, she died the next day. The magnitude of their loss has been compounded by the thought that, had Christen been wearing a better constructed helmet, it is possible she could have survived this accident.

My colleagues may be shocked to learn, as Christen's parents were, that there are no government standards in existence for the manufacturing of equestrian helmets. Some helmets are voluntarily constructed to meet strict American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) testing requirements, but the vast majority of helmets sold in the U.S. offer little or no real protection and are merely cosmetic hats—a form of apparel. Frequently, parents of young riders like Christen—and even more mature riders—do not know that they are buying an untested and unapproved item when they purchase a riding helmet. Indeed, most riders believe that when they buy a helmet at the store, they are purchasing a prod-

uct that meets standards designed to provide real and adequate head protection. Bike helmets are built to minimum safety requirements, as are motorcycle helmets.

Apparel helmets, like the one worn by Christen, offer little or no head protection, while ASTM-approved helmets are designed to significantly reduce head injury. The difference in aesthetic design between the two is minimal, but the underlying support structures of these types of helmet are substantial. ASTM-approved helmets offer a high degree of head protection, increase the survivability of equestrian accidents and, in my view, should be the standard for all equestrian helmets.

This lack of adequate safety standards in riding helmets is why USA Equestrian (USAEq), one of the largest equestrian organizations in the country, recently mandated that ASTM-approved helmets must be worn in all USAEq-sanctioned events. While this decision effectively eliminates the danger posed by "apparel helmets" at these events, each day many more students ride in lessons and in private shows that are not USAEq-sanctioned. For their safety, I believe that Congress should establish minimum safety standards for all equestrian helmets sold in the United States, so that all riders can obtain headgear that offers actual protection against head injury. This is not an unprecedented suggestion. As I stated before, Congress has already acted to similarly ensure the safety of bike helmets. The legislation that I and Senator Chafee introduce in Christen's memory today is modeled on this successful bike helmet law and would go a long way toward reducing the mortality of equestrian accidents.

The Christen O'Donnell Equestrian Helmet Safety Act would require that the Consumer Product Safety Commission establish minimum requirements, based on the already proven ASTM standard, for all equestrian helmets in the United States. Thus, there would be a uniform standard for all equestrian helmets, and riders could be confident that the helmet they buy offers real head protection. Let me be clear. This modest legislation does not mandate that riders wear helmets. That is a matter better left to individual states. But, it would take a significant step toward improving the survivability of equestrian accidents and would bring the United States in line with other industrialized countries with sizable riding populations. Countries like Australia and New Zealand have enacted similar safety legislation, and the European Union has set standards to make sure that helmets for equestrian activities meet continental standards. It is time for the United States to take similar steps.

This bill is supported by a wide-ranging coalition of equestrian, child safety, and medical groups. This bill has received the endorsement of the National SAFEKIDS coalition, an organization dedicated to preventing accidental injury to children, and the