

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT  
OF 2001

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. In the last Congress Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred September 19, 2001 in Teaneck, NJ. An Arab-American was hanging an American flag on his car when a woman approached him and asked if he was an "Arab." He answered, "Yes, why?" to which she responded, "Because I was in the department store buying a rope to hang myself before you kill me." The man ignored her and returned to his task. When he turned his back, the woman assaulted him with her fists and her keys.

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 is 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.

88TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I rise to commemorate the 88th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, in which 1½ million men, women, and children lost their lives as a result of the brutal massacres and wholesale deportation conducted by the Ottoman Turkish rulers against their Armenian citizens. This was the first genocide of the 20th century. Today, as we remember the bravery and sacrifice of the Armenian people in the face of great suffering, we renew our commitment to protecting the fundamental rights and freedoms of all humanity.

As time passes, we must not forget the terrible blows that befell the Armenians in 1915. On April 24 of that year, more than 250 Armenian intellectuals and civil leaders in Constantinople were rounded up and killed, in what was the first stage of a methodical plan to exterminate the Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire. Next, Armenian soldiers serving in the Ottoman army were segregated into labor battalions and brutally murdered. In towns and villages across Anatolia, Armenian leaders were arrested and killed. And then the remaining Armenian population, women, children, and the elderly, were driven from their homes and deported to the Syrian desert.

"Deportation" was merely a euphemism for what were, in reality, death marches. Ottoman Turkish soldiers allowed brigands and released convicts to kill and rape the deportees at will;

often the soldiers themselves participated in the attacks. Driven into the desert without food and water, weakened by the long march, hundreds of thousands of deportees succumbed to starvation. In areas of Anatolia where deportation was not deemed practicable, other vicious means were used. In the towns along the Black Sea coast, for example, thousands of Armenians were packed on boats and drowned.

The efforts to destroy the Armenian population did not pass unnoticed at the time. Leslie Davis, a U.S. diplomat stationed in eastern Anatolia, wrote in a State Department cable of July 24, 1915: "It has been no secret that the plan was to destroy the Armenian race as a race, but the methods used have been more cold-blooded and barbarous, if not more effective, than I had at first supposed."

Henry Morgenthau, the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey at the time and who personally made vigorous appeals to stop the genocide, called it "the greatest horror in history." He later wrote: "Whatever crimes the most perverted instincts of the human mind can devise, and whatever refinements of persecutions and injustice the most debased imagination can conceive, became the daily misfortunes of this devoted people. I am confident that the whole history of the human race contains no such horrible episode as this."

Despite this testimony from U.S. diplomats who were witness to the events, and the abundance of evidence documenting the Armenian genocide, the argument continues to be made in some quarters that it never occurred. Much of that evidence was collected by our diplomats, and along with survivors' accounts, is housed in our National Archives. I have no doubt that if he were told that some continue to reject it, Ambassador Morgenthau would be astonished and outraged. Coming to terms with history is a difficult and painful process, as the experiences of South Africa and the countries of the former Soviet Bloc have shown. But we have also learned how pernicious attempts to falsify history are. Not only do they insult the memory of those who suffered or perished, but they leave us all more vulnerable because they weaken the fabric of our common humanity.

Many survivors of the genocide settled in this country, built new lives for themselves, and raised families here. They have made extraordinary contributions to every aspect of our national life, while preserving their own rich faith and cultural traditions. That Americans of Armenian origin have prospered in so many different ways stands as a rebuke to those who would deny the horrors of 1915. Americans of all backgrounds join them in commemorating the tragedy of the Armenian genocide. Together we must commit to building a world in which history shall not repeat itself.

MEDICAL RECORDS PRIVACY

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, the issue of one's privacy is something that resonates throughout each and every one of our lives on a daily basis. As Americans we enjoy the luxury of certain forms of privacy, while at the same time live within the very constraints of a society that is experiencing an erosion of our privacy rights with each passing day, consequently affecting the boundaries of individual freedoms. Jeffrey Rosen, noted author of the book called "The Unwanted Gaze, The Destruction of Privacy in America," stated that "it is surprising how recent changes in law and technology have been permitted to undermine sanctuaries of privacy that Americans took for granted throughout most of our history." Furthermore, he states that "there is nothing inevitable about the erosion of privacy, just as there is nothing inevitable about its reconstruction."

On April 14, 2003, America experienced the beginning of comprehensive guidelines governing the world of medical privacy. This day marked the final compliance for health care providers who are implementing the new regulations laid out in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, HIPAA. Originally known as the Kennedy-Kassebaum legislation, passed in 1996, this bill was the result of over a decade's worth of input regarding the privacy of patients' medical records. As we move forward with these changes, it is important to note a few of the significant alterations that will impact both health care entities and consumers.

HIPAA was enacted by the Federal Government to give patients more control over their health information as well as provide greater boundaries for the use and release of health records. As of April 14, hospitals, health care providers, health plans, and clearinghouses will be working under stricter guidelines in regards to patient records. Health care entities will be restricted from releasing information regarding inpatient, outpatient, or emergency room patients unless that patient agrees to such a release in specific written documentation. Federal law, rather than various State regulations, will now protect the confidentiality of medical files. Consumers will be able to find out who has tried to have access to their medical records. This new law will also prohibit marketers from obtaining personal medical information without an individual's consent. These are just a few of the many new regulations set to take place as a result of implementation of HIPAA law.

Health care providers have had to rearrange existing procedures, as well as yield additional funding to meet the April 14 compliance deadline. This has proven to be more challenging for some entities than others especially those in rural areas where financial and workforce constraints are often greater than for their urban counterparts.

Hailed by medical consumer groups as a significant advance in protecting the rights of consumers and the privacy of medical records, some have expressed concern that the regulations are cumbersome or don't go far enough. Before HIPAA, however, there were few rules in place to the coherence of patient safety. Consumers now will find great comfort in knowing significant protections are being undertaken to protect their personal medical information.

As we move forward with implementation of these new privacy regulations, I will continue to monitor these new rules and solicit feedback from consumers and health providers alike about medical and other privacy issues so critically important to our everyday lives.

IN RECOGNITION OF WILLIAM W. FENNIMAN, POLICE CHIEF OF DOVER, NH

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the outstanding contribution to public safety and community building made by Dover, NH, Police Chief William W. Fenniman.

Chief Fenniman was first appointed as a Dover police officer in 1981. He rose through the ranks and in 1991, just 10 years later, was appointed the chief of police in Dover. Chief Fenniman has led his Department to become only the 49th police department in the country to be nationally accredited three times by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. Under Chief Fenniman's leadership, the Dover police department has also had the distinction of being the first police department in the State of New Hampshire to be accredited through the State accreditation system. Chief Fenniman's success at the helm of the police department is a testament to his dedication, hard work and determination to strengthen the community through an expansive and effective law enforcement agency that truly is an integral part of the community.

Chief Fenniman has concentrated on fostering strong ties to and within the community. Chief Fenniman's focus on creating lasting and positive relationships between the community and law enforcement has brought crime levels down and improved community spirit. The creation of a youth safe haven and police ministration in partnership with the city housing authority to provide outlets and activities for children after school hours continues to flourish each year.

I am honored to participate in the Afterschool Alliance "Breakfast of Champions" event to present Chief William Fenniman with the 2003 Afterschool Community Champion award. Chief Fenniman has made a significant commitment to helping the children of his community find positive activities to do after their school days are over, and his work has helped to increase community ties and reduce crime.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CITIZENS BANK DOES THE RIGHT THING

• Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I welcome this opportunity to commend Citizens Bank for the strong support it is giving to its employees who have been called up for active duty in connection with the Nation's military deployments in Iraq.

Many of us in Congress continue to be concerned that many members of the National Guard and Reserves have been activated with too little of this needed support, or even none at all. We have introduced legislation, S. 647, to deal with these urgent problems for all activated Guard and Reserve members and their families.

Citizens Bank deserves credit for strengthening its personnel policies to support its brave men and women called to serve. Unfortunately, too many Guard and Reserve families are not as fortunate, and I hope Congress will act quickly to provide this needed relief.

I ask that a statement by Citizens on February 10 announcing its impressive policy may be printed in the RECORD.

The Statement follows.

CITIZENS FINANCIAL GROUP, INC. ENHANCES MILITARY LEAVE POLICY, FEBRUARY 10, 2003

Citizens Financial Group, Inc. announced today it has enhanced the company's existing military leave policy to offer additional support to any employee/reservist activated during Operation Enduring Freedom.

"These are difficult and uncertain times in our nation. The current situation in the Persian Gulf has made real the possibility that Citizens' colleagues or family members may be called to serve their country," said Lawrence K. Fish, Chairman, President & CEO.

"We are concerned about our employees and providing benefits that match their needs," said Fish. "We hope it won't be necessary for employees to use these benefits, but we are offering the support in the event it is needed."

In its new military leave policy, Citizens Bank will: Pay the difference between employees' Citizens pay and the military pay for the duration of the active duty. This benefit is currently only available for the annual summer camp; offer the continuance of medical, dental, vision and life insurance coverage; and provide a comparable job upon return.

Citizens will also offer support to employees whose spouse, domestic partner or child is called to duty. Citizens will grant a paid leave of absence for five consecutive days to coincide with an in-service leave by the family member. If travel is necessary, Citizens will also pay a portion of their travel expenses.

Citizens Financial Group, Inc. is a \$56.5 billion commercial bank holding company headquartered in Providence, RI. It is one of the nation's 20 largest commercial banks with 850 Citizens Bank branches, more than 1,700 ATMs and more than 15,000 employees in seven New England and Mid-Atlantic states. It operates as Citizens Bank in Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island. Citizens is owned by The Royal Bank of Scotland Group plc. •

TRIBUTE TO PULASKI COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to the Pulaski County School System for receiving the Public Education Achieves in Kentucky Award from the Kentucky School Boards Association. The Pulaski County School System has distinguished itself through its outstanding efforts to promote gifted and talented students.

The Kentucky School Boards Association's Public Education Achieves in Kentucky Award was first awarded in 1997 to bring statewide attention to public school programs that enhance the impact that elementary and secondary schools have on young people. This award was well earned by the members of the Pulaski County School System under the leadership of Superintendent Tim Eaton.

The faculty of the Pulaski County School System have demonstrated excellence in the classroom by making a difference in the lives of their students. Their commitment towards improving the quality of education in Kentucky's schools has proven their roles as educators. Furthermore, credit is also due to the Pulaski County School Board for implementing the higher standards necessary to meet the demands of gifted education.

I am glad the faculty and administration of the Pulaski County School System chose to work and make their home in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. It is a source of great pride to call attention to their excellence. The citizens of Pulaski County should be privileged to be served by such fine professionals, and their example should be followed by educators across Kentucky. •

HONORING OUR MEN AND WOMEN IN UNIFORM

• Mr. FITZGERALD. Mr. President, I rise today with great pride to pay tribute to our Armed Forces involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Thanks to the dedication and valor of more than 200,000 of our brave men and women in uniform, the Iraqi people have been liberated from the oppressive and murderous grip of Saddam Hussein and, I believe, this Nation and the world are safer today than they were a few weeks ago.

The successes of our Armed Forces in Iraq are unprecedented. In 3 short weeks, our troops marched 300 miles to the heart of Baghdad, liberated fortified Iraqi cities along the way, and removed Saddam Hussein's entrenched, brutal regime from power. All the while, they worked honorably to minimize civilian casualties, preserve Iraq's infrastructure, distribute food and medical aid to innocent Iraqis, and treat enemy POWs with dignity and respect. In short, our troops engaged in battle with purpose, determination, and compassion. They not only defended but embodied American values.