

which were alarming even to me. I have been studying this and writing legislation on it. It has to do with a type of diabetes called type 2, adult onset diabetes. What this new research showed is that one in three Americans born right now—the date was from the year 2000, but one in three Americans who are born in the year 2000 will develop diabetes in their lifetime. That is higher than any estimate we have known to date in medical literature. In fact, the American Diabetes Association had an estimate which was generally accepted broadly, based on good data. This is three times that. One in three Americans born right now will develop diabetes.

The good news is that doesn't have to be the case. Things can be done that can reverse that. I am very interested and will continue to focus on health disparities between gender, men, women, between ethnicity, between race. And if you look at this data in terms of African Americans and Hispanic children, nearly half will develop diabetes. Women are at higher risk than men, and the disease is striking at younger ages. It used to be a little bit older. Now it is younger and younger that this type of type 2 diabetes strikes.

The number of diagnosed cases among the population as a whole has jumped 50 percent in the last 10 years hitting over 11 million in the year 2000. That figure will skyrocket to 165 percent by 2050, putting the number of Americans with type 2 diabetes at 29 million. The implications of this are severe. Diabetes leads to a whole host of chronic illnesses. It is the leading cause of kidney disease, heart disease, amputations, and blindness.

The good news is these high rates of diabetes are not inevitable. Type 2 diabetes can be prevented. That is because the leading cause of type 2 diabetes is obesity and lack of exercise.

Walking for 30 minutes a day, losing a few pounds can literally cut a person's risk by more than half.

You don't have to be a marathon runner, an iron man participant, but following that mantra of moderate exercise and moderate, even minimal weight loss can make a huge difference. You can reap huge health rewards.

That is why Senator BINGAMAN, Senator DODD, and I and many others on both sides of the aisle introduced a piece of legislation called the INPACT Act, the Improved Nutrition and Physical Activity Act, with obesity rates double what they were 30 years ago. And we are learning a lot about obesity disease scientifically almost every day. Americans need, more than ever, to be able to make and be encouraged to make healthy decisions about nutrition and physical activity. On the House side, I am pleased that Representatives MARY BONO and KAY GRANGER, along with other cosponsors, introduced companion legislation earlier this year. I will not go into the legislation now.

I encourage my colleagues who are not cosponsors to look at it so we can pass that in the future. It is a multifaceted approach. It emphasizes youth education to jump-start healthy habits early on, to prevent a future struggle with weight. It funds demonstration projects to find innovative, creative ways of improving eating and developing good exercise habits. It includes rigorous evaluations so we can learn what works best. What it does not do is outlaw certain "bad" foods in any way.

It doesn't attempt to micromanage or regulate what Americans eat or drink. It does have a modest price tag, consistent with what the appropriate role of the Federal Government should be. It doesn't attempt to replicate a billion dollar diet industry or the fitness industry that is out there. I know—we all know—there is no single solution to this growing epidemic of obesity. We know it is an epidemic. We know it is getting worse. We do know that leadership on our part can make a difference, can increase awareness of the serious medical consequences, in particular for children.

As the adults in this situation, we can and indeed we must show our determination to keep them safe by keeping them fit.

NOMINATION OF C. STEWART VERDERY, JR.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise in support of the Senate's confirmation of the nomination of C. Stewart Verdery, Jr. to be Assistant Secretary for Border and Transportation Security Policy at the Department of Homeland Security. At a time when the new Department of Homeland Security needs to have all vacancies filled, having Mr. Verdery confirmed will fill a vital position from which he will develop policy related to immigration, customs and trade, transportation security and international security issues.

As a counsel working for me on the Senate Judiciary Committee and working with me and my staff when he served for the Senate leadership, Mr. Verdery demonstrated superior political and legal skills which will serve the Department of Homeland Security and the country well.

After working for me as unit head of the Crime and Drug Policy Unit, which handles all matters related to law enforcement, including Federal crime and drug legislation and terrorism, Stewart has an invaluable knowledge of the issues which may confront him in the Border and Transportation Security Directorate. Mr. Verdery served with distinction for me and the committee at large and I know he will take his talents to the Department.

In sum, I believe that Mr. Verdery will be a valuable assistant to the President and to the Secretary for Homeland Security, and the administration will be well served by his confirmation. I thank my colleagues for their support of this nomination.

BUYING A HANDGUN FOR SOMEONE ELSE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, researchers at the University of California at Los Angeles published a study in the June issue of *Injury Prevention* entitled "Buying a Handgun for Someone Else: Firearm Dealer Willingness to Sell." The study found that more than half of gun dealers are willing to ignore or sidestep the law to sell a firearm. The researchers performed their test on 120 dealers in 20 cities. According to the study, the researchers at UCLA posed as potential buyers giving different reasons for wanting to buy guns. The researchers found that when they said they wanted to buy guns for an individual who needs it, 52 percent of dealers were willing to make the sale.

In addition to the first round of phone calls, the researchers randomly chose 20 dealers and again posed as prospective buyers. In the second round of calls, the researchers said they needed to buy guns for their boyfriend or girlfriend because he or she was not allowed to purchase a firearm. In 16 followup calls, the dealers responded with unequivocal nos and indicated that the purchases would be illegal. In the remaining four cases, the dealers agreed to sell the guns, but indicated to the customer that it was illegal. The researchers also interviewed law enforcement officials who concluded that such sales would amount to illegal straw purchases. A straw purchase involves a buyer with a clean record purchasing a gun for someone who is prohibited by law from doing so.

Some gun manufacturers and dealers know their practices facilitate criminal access to firearms but they do nothing about it. The Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, which recently passed the House and has been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee, would shield such negligent and reckless gun dealers and manufacturers from many legitimate civil lawsuits. Certainly, those in the industry who conduct their business negligently or recklessly should not be shielded from the consequences of their actions. This study contributes further evidence that there are some in the gun industry who could potentially avoid responsibility for their business practices under such legislation.

TRIBUTE TO BONNY O'NEIL

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join the three other sitting Senators who have served as chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, to salute a dedicated public servant, Ms. Bonny O'Neil, who is retiring after more than 34 years of meritorious service in the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

As the senior career official in the Department in charge of the Food Stamp Program, Ms. O'Neil is responsible for national oversight of policy and operations for a program that

serves over 20 million people each month at an annual cost of over \$20 billion.

Ms. O'Neil came to the Department in November of 1968 following graduation from Ohio Wesleyan University where she majored in politics and government. She has spent the majority of her career in various positions with the Food Stamp Program, with the exception of 6 years that were spent in the agency's Office of Regional Operations. She has been USDA's main career official on all Food Stamp Program legislation since 1984.

Since that time, Ms. O'Neil has worked closely with Congress to help craft food stamp legislation. She has been available at any hour of the day, including weekends, to provide her wise counsel. She spent countless hours and worked tirelessly to assist the Agriculture Committee on significant legislation, including numerous farm bills and the landmark 1996 welfare reform bill.

In 2003, due to Ms. O'Neil's exemplary work, she received a Presidential Rank Award recognizing her contribution to the reauthorization of the Food Stamp Program.

In her years of Federal service, Ms. O'Neil has overseen many program improvements, including replacing paper coupons with electronic benefit delivery, setting records for payment accuracy and extending many policy options to States to improve customer service.

Ms. O'Neil is a native of New Jersey and now resides in Alexandria, VA.

I commend Ms. Bonny O'Neil for her many years of devoted service to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and for the outstanding work she has done throughout her distinguished career. I congratulate her on the occasion of her retirement and extend my best wishes for much happiness and satisfaction in the years ahead.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I too wish to pay tribute to the accomplishments of Ms. Bonny O'Neil and thank her for her many years of dedicated service to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Ms. O'Neil has done an outstanding job as the senior career official responsible for the Food Stamp Program. Under her very capable leadership, this important program has been greatly improved.

During the writing of the recent farm bill, which took almost 2 years, Ms. O'Neil worked tirelessly with the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry on the food stamp provisions. Her expertise in this area was invaluable and she was always available to provide assistance. After the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 was signed into law, Ms. O'Neil worked to implement the food stamp provisions, including the large number of State flexibility sections contained in the act.

The quality of her efforts in this regard are obvious. In the one year since the farm bill passed, numerous States

have already implemented or are planning to implement important State options that significantly improve the Food Stamp Program. As a result, we are helping working Americans in their efforts to enter and stay in the workforce and also making sure that, for millions of American children, the shadow of hunger does not loom so darkly.

In always remembering that her job is to serve Americans and to better their lives, rather than just to run a program from an office in Washington, Bonny meets and surpasses the highest ideals of civil service.

I thank Ms. O'Neil for her years of service to our Nation and wish her well in her retirement.

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I join my colleagues in expressing my sincere gratitude to Ms. Bonny O'Neil for her more than 34 years of devoted service to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. As a result of her wealth of knowledge and experience with the Food Stamp Program, Ms. O'Neil was an invaluable resource to the entire Congress as we crafted the 1996 welfare reform law. Ms. O'Neil's wisdom, patience and good humor were vitally important during the long process of writing that landmark legislation.

I thank Ms. O'Neil for her many accomplishments and for her honorable service to this Nation.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I, too, join my colleagues today to recognize and honor Ms. Bonny O'Neil upon her retirement from the Federal Government. Ms. O'Neil is a true public servant—in all the best sense of that phrase—diligent, hardworking, attentive to details, willing to dig in and truly analyze both sides of each issue, smart, totally honest, a woman of her word, and driven by a desire to do the right thing.

She is to be commended for serving her Nation and the U.S. Department of Agriculture so well. She also served the Congress well by providing us with clear and informative answers, and guiding us through complex issues. I know that she worked closely with my nutrition counsel Ed Barron for many years—both when he was at USDA and while he worked for me starting in 1987. On many occasions late at night during a conference, I would hear someone say: "Let's call Bonny to get the facts."

Bonny spent all but six of those years in various positions with the Food Stamp Program, where she currently serves as the Associate Deputy Administrator.

Ms. O'Neil provided valuable assistance during our work on nutrition programs, food stamp amendments and several farm bills. Anyone who has ever worked on a farm bill knows that it is an extremely complicated task that requires many long hours, including nights and weekends. Her attention to detail and willingness to be available at any time, day or night, was most appreciated.

I thank Ms. Bonny O'Neil for her distinguished service to the public good and wish her well in her retirement.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, 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 in Farwest, WA. On September 13, 2001, a Sikh cab driver was stopped by a 21-year-old man who had hailed his cab. Once inside the cab, the passenger verbally accosted the driver accusing him of being a terrorist and that he had no right to be in the United States. The passenger subsequently grabbed the driver around the neck and choked him. Before the driver was able to escape, the passenger punched the victim in the face, grabbed fistfuls of his beard and ripped off parts of his turban. The attacker was eventually arrested by a passing police officer.

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.

ORBIT ACT

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I would like to take a few moments to comment on H.R. 2312, which allows for some technical corrections to the ORBIT Act. Although neither Inmarsat nor Intelsat has yet conducted the IPO that the ORBIT Act provided for, there is one satellite provider that has fulfilled the ORBIT Act's original requirements in this regard. That provider is New Skies Satellites, which has separated itself from its one-time parent Intelsat, conducted an IPO under challenging market conditions, substantially diluted its shareholder base through both the IPO and a recent 10 percent share buyback, and become a full-fledged competitor in the satellite marketplace. New Skies has asked that we consider some amendments to the Act that would acknowledge and recognize its fully independent status. While the abbreviated process leading to the Senate's consideration of this bill today did not permit full consideration of those issues, I am open to listening to the arguments for such changes in the context of a broader review of the ORBIT Act and its implementation.

WEST VIRGINIA DAY

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today I rise to commemorate the 140th