

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY INTERNATIONAL

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, it was 1976 in Americus, GA. Millard Fuller and his wife Linda had sold their possessions, given away their millions and rededicated themselves to their Christian faith. They had decided to express their faith by building homes for the poor. They believed, in their words, that:

What the poor need is not charity but capital, not caseworkers but co-workers. And what the rich need is a wise, honorable and just way of divesting themselves of their overabundance.

So they founded Habitat for Humanity International to build no-interest, no-profit homes for the poor and homeless.

Since then, the ecumenical, Christian-based organization has grown to serve 89 countries. It has built more than 150,000 houses providing more than three quarters of a million people with safe, decent, affordable shelter. Millard and Linda Fuller have taken a Biblical injunction and turned it into worldwide action.

Jack Kemp, former U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and a board member of the organization, says that, "When I'm asked about housing success stories from our inner cities, the first group that comes to mind is Habitat for Humanity."

I tell you all of this, because next month, I have the privilege of joining over two dozen volunteers in my home town of Nashville, TN, to help build a Habitat home for Anita Phillips, a single mom of three. Local businesses have donated supplies. Anita has taken out a no-interest mortgage. She will be working alongside us, hammering nails and hauling lumber. Anita calls her new Habitat home "a gift from God."

For nearly three decades, Habitat has shared the gift of homeownership with thousands around the world. Habitat helps organize local communities to pitch in and give hard working people like Anita the opportunity to build equity and pride.

In Tennessee, alone, Habitat has 52 affiliates and serves 61 counties. This year, Tennessee will celebrate building two thousand Habitat homes.

Social scientists tell us that homeownership is one of the most important economic and social investments we can make. Owning a home helps families build financial stability and wealth. It helps break the cycle of poverty as families accumulate equity.

Homeowners also become stakeholders in their communities. They become more invested in the civic life and health of their neighborhood. Their children are healthier and do better in school.

Owning ones' home also generates a sense of pride and belonging. It's a big

responsibility, but those four walls belong to you.

I commend Habitat for Humanity International for their tireless efforts. This past March, I was joined by over a dozen members from both sides of the aisle and both houses of Congress to build a home right here in the Nation's capital.

I encourage my colleagues to participate in Habitat builds in their home States, as well. It sends the message that Congress is committed to helping organizations like Habitat spread the good work.

This fiscal year, Congress has provided \$27 million for the Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program. Also called, "SHOP," the program requires homebuyers to contribute their labor to the construction or rehabilitation of their soon-to-be, new home. President Bush has requested \$65 million for the next fiscal year to support the SHOP initiative.

Additionally, the 108th Congress passed, and President Bush signed into law, the "American Dream Downpayment Act of 2003." This new program will help 40,000 families a year with their down payment and closing costs.

In the halls of Congress and in communities across America, we care about helping our neighbors fulfill the American dream.

Habitat for Humanity International has been at the forefront of the cause.

That is because through their faith and compassion, Millard and Linda Fuller realized decades ago that the working poor need a hand-up not a hand-out, and that a community is not just something you join, it's something you build.

HONORING BOB MICHEL

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, yesterday I introduced legislation to name the Veterans Affairs Clinic in Peoria, IL, the Bob Michel Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic in honor of former House Minority Leader Robert H. Michel.

Bob Michel's interest in veterans' affairs began when he served in the Army's 39th Infantry Regiment, fighting on Normandy Beach during World War II. Wounded by machine gun fire during the Battle of the Bulge, he was discharged from the military as a disabled veteran after earning The Purple Heart, two Bronze Stars, and four Battle Stars.

Michel began his life of public service in 1957, serving the citizens of the 18th District of Illinois in the House of Representatives. Because of his hard work and dedication to his constituents, he was elected minority whip and eventually House minority leader. He was also actively involved in the creation of several pieces of legislation that dealt with veterans' affairs, including a resolution that helped to remove obstacles to employment of partially disabled persons honorably discharged from the Armed Forces.

A veteran himself, Michel understood the need for quality health care for those who served in the military. He used his prominent position in the House of Representatives to lead the effort to establish a VA clinic in Peoria. The clinic he helped to create now serves up to 10,000 veterans a year, in as many as 12 counties in central Illinois. The clinic offers a variety of services for veterans, including medical and mental health services, ophthalmology, audiology and assistance for the homeless.

Representative RAY LAHOOD, who now holds the Congressional seat previously held by Bob Michel, has introduced companion legislation in the House. Representative LAHOOD's bill is supported by all House members of the Illinois delegation.

I hope that the Senate will act expeditiously in enacting this legislation. This bill will serve to honor Robert H. Michel who served our country through his service in the military and Congress.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Madam 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 Enhancement 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.

On January 18, 1999, a carload of men in San Francisco, CA, allegedly threw a bottle at and taunted two gay men.

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.

FOCUS HOPE'S MOBILE PARTS HOSPITAL

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, earlier this week the U.S. Army held an awards ceremony honoring the Top Ten Greatest Inventions of 2003. Looking at each of these inventions, one is reminded of the technological innovation, ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit that our Nation is able to harness in the global war on terror. These are among our Nation's greatest assets.

One of the Army's Top Ten Greatest Inventions of 2003 was the product of the U.S. Army Tank Automotive Research Development and Engineering Center, TARDEC, located in Warren, MI. This device, the Squad Automatic Weapon Pintle Mount Assembly for the Humvee is a gun mount that has been directly attributed with protecting and saving the lives of many of our soldiers who are currently deployed in Iraq.

This gun mount is a novel device that would not have been possible were