

in the United States could prevent nearly 120,000 additional illegal gun sales every year."

Prevention of unintentional shooting and suicide by children requires that proactive steps be taken to reduce access to dangerous firearms. A study published last year in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that the risk of unintentional shooting or suicide by minors using a gun can be reduced by 61 percent when ammunition in the home is locked up. Simply storing ammunition separately from the gun reduces such occurrences by more than 50 percent.

Prosecution of gun violence perpetrators alone is not an effective means of preventing injury or death caused by guns, although opponents of common-sense gun safety legislation argue that it is. Unfortunately, our gun safety laws do not include many proactive measures that would reduce the likelihood that a gun is used to kill or injure. I hope my colleagues will join me in working to address this problem.

HONORING COACH EDWARD THOMAS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am proud to say that I have recently discovered, almost literally in my own backyard, an Iowan who has received an honor of national significance. Mr. Edward Thomas, the head football coach at Aplington-Parkersburg High School, is the recipient of the 2005 NFL High School Coach of the Year award. He was honored with tickets to Super Bowl XL as well as monetary awards for himself and his football program.

Coach Thomas has been coaching for 34 years, 31 of those at Aplington-Parkersburg. His overall record at Aplington-Parkersburg is 249 wins and 58 losses. He has guided his teams to the State playoffs 15 times, winning 2 State titles and has won 15 conference or district championships during that time. In his 34 years of coaching, he has won such awards as the National Federation High School Football Coach of the Year in 2004, Northeast Iowa Coach of the Year 5 times and was inducted into the Iowa High School Football Coaches' Association Hall of Fame in 1990. With an enrollment of almost 300 at Aplington-Parkersburg, Coach Thomas has produced 4 active NFL players—Detroit Lions defensive end Jared DeVries, Jacksonville Jaguars guard Brad Meester, Kansas City Chiefs center Casey Wiegmann and Green Bay Packers defensive end Aaron Kampman.

Coach Thomas also teaches life lessons and Christian principles while emphasizing the adversity and teamwork of football as a reflection of life in the real world. As Aaron Kampman put it, "He strives to make men better through the game of football." Kampman also stated, "You get goosebumps playing for the guy, the essence of playing under the lights on Friday night he brought that to the forefront."

While the Aplington-Parkersburg Falcons are rivals to my hometown team, the Dike-New Hartford Wolverines, I am very proud that an Iowan has been honored in this way. I offer my sincere congratulations to Coach Thomas on this most prestigious honor and wish him continued success.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

KIMMIE MEISSNER

• Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Kimmie Meissner, a great Olympian and the pride of Bel Air, MD. We in Maryland are so proud of Kimmie. Sixth at the Olympics at the age of 16 is a monumental achievement.

Like many of my colleagues, I was glued to the television set to watch our U.S. athletes in Torino. I was so impressed with Kimmie's performance, I only wish I could have been there to lead the applause for our hometown girl. She may have come in sixth in Torino, but she came in first in the hearts of the people of my great State.

But Kimmie's accomplishments didn't begin in Torino. She began her figure skating career 10 years ago at the age of 6. At the age of 6. She has been a true student athlete for almost her entire life, balancing her school work with her training. Kimmie goes to Fallston High School in Harford County every day, and when school is over she drives to Delaware to train for her second shift as a competitive figure skater.

Kimmie shows maturity far beyond her years, both on and off the ice. She supports the Leukemia Society and the Johns Hopkins Hospital Children's Center, taking time out of her life to visit with sick young people.

On the ice, Kimmie couldn't have a better attitude. She says her motto is, "enjoy what you do; do what you enjoy." I can think of few young people who have such a thoughtful approach to life. At 16 years old, she has the brightest future of anyone of our Olympic skaters, and I can't wait for the Vancouver Olympics in 2010.

March is Women's History Month and the time when we celebrate the achievements and struggles of women in America. Frequently, we point to those who have come before us and who have paved the way for current advances. But it is only right and proper that in this 2006 Women's History Month, we salute young women like Kimmie and the honor she brought the United States with her talent, skill, and sportsmanship.

Thank you, Kimmie, for making us so proud. Thank you for representing all that is good and true about America's young people. And though I cannot tell a salchow from an axel, let alone a loop from a lutz, even I could recognize your grit, grace, and promise of an even more glittering future.●

TRIBUTE TO REGINA RUSH-KITTLE
• Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a dedicated public servant and a groundbreaker in her field, Lieutenant Regina Rush-Kittle. On March 3, Lieutenant Rush-Kittle will receive the Officer of the Year award from the Connecticut Association of Women Police.

Regina Rush-Kittle's long and distinguished law enforcement career began in 1983. After graduating from the University of Connecticut with a degree in political science, Lieutenant Rush-Kittle served as a correctional officer at a high security correctional institution for 2 years. She then joined the Middletown Police Department, becoming the first African-American female police officer on the force. She served as a patrol officer for 2 years prior to being accepted into the Connecticut State Police Academy.

Regina Rush-Kittle has been a trailblazer for African-American women in Connecticut law enforcement. After serving as the first African-American woman on the Middletown police force, she went on to become the first African-American woman to attain the rank of sergeant in the Connecticut State Police Department. Most recently, after scoring number one on both the lieutenants exam and master sergeants exam, Regina Rush-Kittle was promoted to lieutenant, the first African-American female to attain that rank in the department's 100-year history. Her current assignment as commander of the Bethany barracks makes her the first African-American woman in State history to command a barracks.

Lieutenant Rush-Kittle's tireless commitment to her community, her State, and her country extends beyond her achievements in Connecticut law enforcement. She is a long-serving Marine and Army Reservist. In 2003, she was deployed to Kuwait for a year, serving with the 804th Medical Brigade out of Fort Devens, MA. Upon her return in February 2004, she attained the rank of sergeant major, taking on responsibilities far beyond the normal obligations to serve 1 weekend per month and 2 weeks in the summer. Despite being eligible for retirement from the Reserves, Lieutenant Rush-Kittle continues to serve.

Regina Rush-Kittle is an outstanding citizen who goes above and beyond to protect her fellow citizens, her State, and her country. I commend her for her continued dedication, and congratulate her, her husband William, and her two children Jorrell and Gianna on this wonderful occasion.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 1:33 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 449. An act to facilitate shareholder consideration of proposals to make Settlement