erupt and suddenly a mass outmigration of thousands and thousands of people trying to get to the United States? That is also when you need the National Guard.

Now, I have talked with the Coast Guard and the Navy, and they have a plan whereby they have an entire string line of ships that they line up, which I have questions on and we will be talking about on another occasion, about that plan, because they have only 10,000 if 100,000 were to flee. What happens if 100,000 flee? They are not prepared for that, and everybody in authority with that plan will tell you they are not prepared for it. But whatever it is, if it occurs, which we hope and pray that it will not, the National Guard is going to be a major component of trying to restore order and keep order. Their equipment has been depleted.

Now, if we end up having the typical category 1, 2, and 3 hurricanes, which are severe hurricanes, the Florida National Guard tells me they have adequate equipment, they certainly have the personnel, and they are the best trained in the country, they know how to handle hurricanes, and they are the best trained if they do not have the equipment—they tell me they do for up to a category 3—but if the big one hits, then they are going to have to rely on getting equipment from other National Guards around the country. So what is the lag time on the 48? And when they reach out to another Guard—for example, the Pennsylvania National Guard with which they have a compact to share equipment— is the Pennsylvania Guard going to have sufficient equipment that they can lend to Florida in an emergency?

These are serious questions which need to be answered before the hurricane season and before any kind of potential outmigration from the island of Cuba. As we get closer to the season, the Mississippi State National Guard is 4,400 pairs of night-vision goggles—what does that have to do with it, that the Florida Guard is 4,400 pairs of night-vision goggles short? It is because, in the aftermath of a hurricane, there is no electricity. Everything is dark at night. As troops are moving through all of that debris, they have to be able to see. That is what those night-vision goggles are for.

So this Senator will continue to sound the alarm. We will get the answers. And the good Lord willing, despite the warnings from La Nina in the Pacific that this is going to be a terribly active hurricane season in the Atlantic, the good Lord willing, we will not have that active hit on the mainland of the United States, but we better be prepared.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. NELSON of Florida. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the question be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COVER THE UNINSURED WEEK 2007

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise in recognition of Cover the Uninsured Week, which is being held this year from April 23 to 29. As many of us know, this nonpartisan initiative was created to focus the Nation’s attention on one of the most serious challenges facing our health care system—ensuring access to quality, affordable coverage.

Since the first annual Cover the Uninsured Week was observed 5 years ago, the health care crisis has, unfortunately, worsened. At last count, nearly 46 million Americans lacked coverage, including 400,000 in my home State of Nevada. More than 100,000 of these uninsured Nevadans are children. The context for these numbers, which are staggering in themselves, is even more troubling. For too many, premium costs are escalating faster than they can manage while benefits are deteriorating. Being a hard-working American is also no longer a ticket to health coverage, as shown by the fact that 8 out of 10 uninsured people either work or are in working families. Even when they can find good health insurance, many families must shortchange other basic needs to afford health care expenses or forgo necessary care altogether.

Every year we update these statistics and findings about the uninsured, but the same themes still ring true. The reasons why so many Americans can access and afford the health care they need, regardless of their income, age, employment, or health status. Sadly, we as a nation continue to fall short.

Cover the Uninsured Week is an opportunity to reflect on more than just this current state of affairs. It is also a time to call for a new direction on health care in America. Whether one is a Democrat or Republican, a member of the majority or the minority, we must all work together to heed the voices of the American people who are counting on us. So in honor of this year’s Cover the Uninsured Week, let us all renew our commitment to improving our health care system. I look forward to a strong debate in the Senate on these vital issues, including the next step of updating the State Children’s Health Insurance Program to better meet the needs of the Nation’s children and families.
their child’s problems or their grades without their student’s consent. At least one professor at Virginia Tech who was tutoring the shooter has been quoted as saying that she felt that Federal laws prevented her from going to his parents or to others about her concerns. I am sending a letter today to Senator KENNEDY and to Senator ENZI, the chairman and the ranking member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee on which I serve. I am writing them to request that our committee ask the Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings, to conduct a review of Federal laws, regulations, and relevant State laws that limit the ability of universities to tell parents or other third parties about a student without the student’s consent. I would hope that Secretary Spellings could review not only the laws and the rules, but also the implementation of these rules on campus. I am a former president of a university. I understand it may very well be that faculty members, and perhaps even some administrators, are unaware of the rules, or at least uncertain about how to apply them.

My hope is that Secretary Spellings could conduct her review within 120 days, and after that our committee might hold a hearing or roundtable to determine whether there is action we need to take.

I would like to have printed in the RECORD at this point a copy of my letters to Senator KENNEDY and Senator ENZI and an article from the New York Times dated April 19 entitled, “Laws Limit Options When a Student Is Mentally Ill,” which describes very well the situation in which many university faculty members find themselves.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Hon. EDWARD M. KENNEDY, Chairman, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, Washington, DC.

Hon. MICHAEL B. ENZI, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, Washington, DC.

DEAR TED AND MIKE, While Virginia Tech and the Commonwealth of Virginia are reviewing their responsibilities in light of the tragedy this week on the Virginia Tech campus, we government should be reviewing our responsibilities, too.

Our focus should be on whether federal laws or regulations unwise restrict or limit how universities are able to deal with students who have mental health problems or who otherwise exhibit behavior about which parents, authorities or other third parties should know. Generally, under federal law, universities cannot tell parents about their children’s problems without the student’s consent. At least one professor at Virginia Tech who was tutoring the shooter has been quoted as saying that she felt that federal laws prevented her from going to his parents or to others about her concerns.

My hope is that Secretary Spellings could conduct a review of Federal laws, regulations, and relevant State laws that limit the ability of universities to tell parents or other third parties about a student without the student’s consent. I would hope that Secretary Spellings could review not only the laws and the rules, but also the implementation of these rules on campus.

As a former university president, I understand that it very may be that faculty members, or even some administrators, are unaware of the rules, or at least uncertain about how to apply them.

My hope is that Secretary Spellings could conduct her review within 120 days, and after that our committee might hold a hearing or roundtable to determine whether there is action we need to take.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

LAMAR ALEXANDER

[From the New York Times, Apr. 19, 2007]

LAWS LIMIT OPTIONS WHEN A STUDENT IS MENTALLY ILL

(By Tamar Lewin)

Federal privacy and antidiscrimination laws restrict how universities can deal with students who have mental health problems. For the most part, universities cannot tell parents about their children’s problems without the student’s consent. They cannot release any information in a student’s medical record and they cannot put students on involuntary medical leave, just because they develop a serious mental illness. Nor is knowing when to worry about student behavior, and what action to take, always so clear.

“They can’t really kick someone out because they’re writing papers about weird topics or being withdrawn and hostile,” said Dr. Richard Kadison, chief of mental health services at Harvard University. “Most state laws are pretty clear: you can only bring students to hospitals if there is imminent risk to themselves or someone else, so universities are in a bit of a bind that way.” But, he said, some schools do mandate limited amounts of treatment in certain circumstances.

“At the University of Missouri, if someone makes a suicide attempt, they mandate four counseling sessions, for example, and if they don’t, they mandate four counseling sessions, for example, and if they fail to prevent a suicide or murder. And if they do, they have to go ahead and have the counseling service here do a session for all our instructors and faculty on what to look for, what these procedures are, and what the counseling center can do,” said Shannon Miller, chairwoman of the English department at Temple University.

At Harvard, Dr. Kadison said, dormitory resident assistants watch for signs of trouble, and are usually the first to become aware of worrisome behavior—and to call a dean.

“The dean might insist that they get an evaluation to make sure they’re healthy enough to live in a dorm,” he said. “If it’s not thought that they’re in any immediate danger, they can take or not take the recommendation.”

Last month, Virginia passed a law, the first in the nation, prohibiting public colleges and universities from expelling or punishing students solely for attempting suicide and requiring mental-health treatment for suicidal thoughts.

“In one sense, the new law doesn’t cover new territory, because discrimination against people with mental health problems is already prohibited,” said Dana L. Flemming, a lawyer in Manchester, N.H., who is an expert on education law. “But in another sense, it’s groundbreaking since it’s the first time we’ve seen states focus on student suicides and come up with some code of conduct for campuses.”

College counseling services nationwide are seeing more use. “We’re seeing more students in our service consistently every year,” said Alejandro Martinez, director for counseling and psychological services at Stanford University, which sees about 10 percent of the student body each year. “In another sense, it’s groundbreaking since it’s the first time we’ve seen states focus on student suicides and come up with some code of conduct for campuses.”

College officials say that a growing number of students arrive on campus with a history of mental-health problems and a preoccupation with self-harm. Screening for such problems would be illegal, admissions officers say.
Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today I express my sympathy and I know the sympathy of all of the Members of the Senate and the people of the United States of America on the tragic losses this week at Virginia Tech.

None of us can understand what happened in Blacksburg, VA, but all of us recognize the profound tragedy and the loss of youth in its prime.

I learned this week that one of those losses was a Georgian by the name of Christopher James “Jamie” Bishop, and I, from the floor of the Senate, send to Pine Mountain, GA, my sympathy on the tragic loss of Jamie.

Jamie, who was passionate about his art and an avid amateur photographer, grew up in Pine Mountain, GA, and was valedictorian of Harris County High School. He received his bachelor’s degree in German from Georgia in 2005. His wife, Stefanie Hofer, is an assistant professor of German at Virginia Tech. By all accounts, Jamie was an intelligent, clever and passionate individual.

I am very proud as a Georgian to have known of his accomplishments, and I send his wife Stefanie and his parents my heartfelt prayers and my hopes that they will accept our sympathy as they endure the heartbreak of the loss of Jamie.

To the families of all of those professors, employees, and students who lost their lives or were hurt in Blacksburg, VA, I extend my sympathy and my deepest prayers that we will find reconciliations out of tragedy.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, on Monday America was devastated by the deadliest shooting rampage in our Nation’s history. A gunman using two semi-automatic handguns, shot and killed 32 students and teachers and injured several dozen others before turning one of his guns on himself. Witnesses described scenes of chaos and grief, with students jumping from second-story windows to escape gunfire, while others heroically blocked their classroom doors to shield them from the gunman.

Many of us watched this tragedy unfold on the news, finding it difficult to grasp the true magnitude of it. Parents and grandparents across America were thinking about the horror of one’s child being caught in the middle of such chaos. There is little that could be worse for a parent than sending a child off to college, only to lose them to a senseless act of gun violence.

I express condolences to the family, friends, and community touched by the tragedy at Virginia Tech.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I take great pride in recognizing the Army Aviation Association of America’s contribution and in honoring their countless historic and noble contributions to the growth and strength of our Nation. Army aviation members play a critical role in every combat theater worldwide, and AAAA has proven to be a means of unwavering support. This unique organization has been the mechanism for increased communication and professional development among Army aviators throughout the history of organic Army aviation and the Army Aviation Branch. This contribution has led to vast leaps in battlefield mobility, lethality, and flexibility for the U.S. Army. AAAA and its members have distinguished themselves with thousands of volunteer hours and dollars providing direct support to Army aviation soldiers and their family members. I can say with certainty that AAAA has truly lived its mission of “Supporting the U.S. Army Aviation Soldier and Family” since its inception in 1957. I am pleased to publicly recognize this long-standing commitment to our military personnel and congratulate the Army Aviation Association of America on 50 years of service.