

## THE MATTHEW SHEPARD ACT

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would strengthen and add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

In the early morning hours of February 15, 2008, a young man and his friend were passing through Temple University's campus in Philadelphia, PA, when they found themselves in a physical fight with four Temple students. According to reports, the two non-Temple students were standing in front of a traditionally Jewish fraternity house when they were accosted by the four attackers. One of the four allegedly asked the two visitors if they were Jewish. When they replied that they were not, one of the Temple students evidently began to yell, "We hate Jews! We hate Jews!" According to police, one of the two victims was seriously injured and suffered a broken nose and fractured right eye socket. Temple released a letter characterizing the incident as a hate crime. The attackers have been suspended pending a University Disciplinary Committee hearing, while Philadelphia police are pursuing criminal charges and have issued warrants for the suspects' arrest.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. Federal laws intended to protect individuals from heinous and violent crimes motivated by hate are woefully inadequate. This legislation would better equip the Government to fulfill its most important obligation by protecting new groups of people as well as better protecting citizens already covered under deficient laws. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

INDIAN HEALTH CARE  
IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I regret having missed the final vote for the Indian Health Care Improvement Act of 2007. I support the passage of this bill and would have voted in the affirmative.

It has been over 15 years since the Indian Health Care Improvement Act has been reauthorized. It is critical to strengthen the provision of care, through the Indian Health Service, IHS, to American Indian and Alaska Native populations, who suffer from significant health disparities compared to the general U.S. population, including a life expectancy that is 2.4 years lower, and significantly higher death rates from tuberculosis, alcoholism, diabetes, suicide, and infant mortality.

The Indian Health Service derives its authorities from the Indian Health Care Improvement Act and its mission is to improve the health status of American Indians and Alaskan Natives by constructing, maintaining, and managing health care delivery and sanitation systems through a network of 49 hospitals, 6,500 IHS, tribal, and private contract facilities. The IHS provides ambulatory, emergency, dental, and preventative health services to 58 percent of the 3.3 million American Indians and Alaska Natives; however, it is confronting these challenges with significant health care workforce shortages. Anywhere from 12 to 32 percent of positions for dentists, nurses, optometrists, physicians, and pharmacists, among other health professionals, are currently vacant. Thus, the passage of this legislation is critical to strengthening the IHS and providing critical services to American Indians and Alaskan Natives.

Specifically, the reauthorization will improve the recruitment and retention of health providers in the IHS, provide support for American Indians and Alaska Natives to enter the health professions, provide funds for the construction of health and sanitation facilities, expand Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP reimbursement and enrollment to all American Indians and Native Alaskans health programs, eliminate Medicare and CHIP cost-sharing and premiums for American Indians and Native Alaskans served by tribal health programs, improve IHS information systems, billing, and patient care and training, mandate that the Departments of the Interior and Health and Human Services design a comprehensive approach to behavioral health assessment, treatment, and prevention services, establish a National Bi-Partisan Commission on Indian Health Care to study the delivery of services to American Indians and Native Alaskans, require an annual report to Congress on the enrollment and health status of American Indians and Native Alaskans served by Federal health programs, reauthorize the Indian Health Care Improvement Fund to support health promotion and disease prevention programs, cancer screenings, epidemiological and health services research, and catastrophic healthcare, and modernize health care delivery for American Indian and Native Alaskan seniors requiring long-term care, hospice, home/community-based care, and assisted living.

I commend the work of both the Senate Indian Affairs and Finance Committees and, most importantly, Senators DORGAN and MURKOWSKI for their leadership and commitment to this bill.

## HONORING THE 4TH BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM, 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the outstanding

service of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, as they complete their service in Iraq and return to their loving families.

I am so proud of the brave servicemembers of the 4-1 Cavalry who have sacrificed so much to keep our Nation safe. I also appreciate the commitment of their family members, who have borne a heavy burden to advance the cause of liberty. All of them deserve our sincere appreciation and gratitude.

Since September 11, 2001, our Nation has been at war with terrorists who are determined to kill innocent Americans and destroy freedom around the world. We cannot let that happen. Our country has the greatest capacity and will to fight for freedom. If freedom dies in America, it will die throughout the world. I have no doubt we will win this war because our Nation is blessed to have heroes like the courageous men and women of the 4-1 Cavalry.

The 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division command team, consists of COL Stephen Twitty and CSM Stephan Frennier. The brigade combat team is a relatively new unit that activated on October 18, 2005, at Fort Bliss, TX. The subordinate units consist of the 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 5th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, and the 27 Brigade Support Battalion.

The 4th Brigade Combat Team received orders to deploy to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in July of 2006. Upon completion of mission readiness exercises and a rotation at the national training center, the 4-1 Cavalry began to deploy in September of 2006.

By their first anniversary, the 4-1 Cavalry arrived in Ninewa Province, the second largest province in Iraq. The 2-12 Cavalry deployed to Baghdad to augment the 1st Infantry Division.

The brigade headquarters was based in Mosul, Ninewa's provincial capital, which is the site of the biblical city of Ninewa. The province, slightly larger than the State of Maryland, is in the extreme northern part of Iraq. It borders Syria to the west and is comprised of Sunni Arabs, Shia Arabs, Turkmen, and Christians. The mission of the 4-1 Cavalry was to build capable Iraqi security forces, to conduct counterinsurgency operations in order to neutralize anti-Iraqi forces and to transition responsibility for defeating the insurgency to the Iraqi security forces, and the provincial government. They performed that mission superbly.

Despite being subjected to IEDs, VBIEDs, and small arms fire, the members of the 4-1 Cavalry did an outstanding job protecting the people of Ninewa Province. Due to their professionalism and courage, attacks in the province went from 15 to 18 per day in December of 2006 to 7 to 9 attacks per day by September of 2007. In conjunction with their Iraqi counterparts, they