ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 122, a bill to promote freedom, fairness, and economic opportunity by repealing the income tax and other taxes, abolishing the Internal Revenue Service, and enacting a national sales tax to be administered primarily by the States.

S. RES. 4

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 4, a resolution to limit certain uses of the filibuster in the Senate to improve the legislative process.

S. RES. 6

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 6, a resolution to modify extended debate in the Senate to improve the legislative process.

S. RES. 8

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 8, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that Congress holds the sole authority to borrow money on the credit of the United States and shall not cede this power to the President.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. BEGICH, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 131. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the reproductive assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs to severely wounded, ill, or injured veterans and their spouses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today I introduce the Women Veterans and Other Health Care Improvement Act of 2013. I am incredibly proud of the women and men who have served or are serving our Nation in uniform, and I am grateful for the sacrifices they make on our behalf. That is why we must do everything in our power to meet the needs of our veterans and servicemembers. As those needs change, we must ensure the care available keeps pace.

That is why I introduced legislation, which was signed into law as part of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010, which helped to transform the way that the Department of Veterans Affairs addresses the needs of women veterans. Among other things, that law required the VA to provide neonatal care, train mental health professionals to provide mental health services for sexual trauma, and develop a child care pilot program. VA has an obligation to provide veterans with quality care and it is our responsibility to make sure that VA does so. The legislation I am introducing today builds upon that effort to make additional improvements to VA's services for women veterans and veterans with families.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been characterized by increasing use of improvised explosive devices that leave servicemembers, both male and female, at increased risk for blast injuries including spinal cord injury and trauma to the reproductive and urinary systems. Defense Department data show that between 2003 and 2012 nearly 2,000 women and men suffered these types of injuries while serving in Iraq or Afghanistan.

These devastating and life-changing wounds can destroy the vision these men and women, and their spouses, had for the future. Having a family is one of the cornerstones of life that so many people look forward to and see as a fundamental part of their lives. To have dreams shattered because you were brave enough to put yourself in harm's way for your country is something we can never fully repay. But we must do everything we can.

As our warriors return from the battlefield, the VA system must be equipped to help injured veterans step back into their lives as parents, spouses, and citizens. These veterans have served honorably and have made the ultimate sacrifice for our great Nation. They deserve the opportunity to pursue their goals and dreams, whether that includes pursuing higher education, finding gainful employment, purchasing their first house, or starting their own family. VA has many programs that help veterans pursue the educational, career, or homeownership dreams and goals that they deferred in service to this country, but it falls short when it comes to helping severely wounded veterans who want to start a family. These veterans often need far more advanced services in order to conceive a child.

The Department of Defense and the Tricare program are already able to provide advanced fertility treatments, including assisted reproductive technology, to servicemembers with complex injuries. However, not all injured servicemembers are prepared to have a child at the time they are eligible for that coverage, and some are no longer eligible for Tricare by the time they are ready.

VA's fertility counseling and treatment options are limited and do not meet the complex needs of severely injured veterans. I have heard from seriously wounded veterans whose injuries have made it impossible for them to conceive children naturally. While the details of these stories vary, the common thread that runs through them all is that these veterans were unable to obtain the type of assistance they need. Some have spent tens of thousands of dollars on advanced reproductive treatments in the private sector to get what they need to start a family. Others have watched their marriage collapse because the stress of infertility, in combination with the stresses of readjusting to life after severe injury, drove their relationship to a breaking point. Any servicemember who sustains this type of serious injury deserves much better. It is our responsibility to give VA the tools it needs to serve them, and the Women Veterans and Other Health Care Improvement Act is a start at doing that.

This legislation also requires VA to build upon existing research framework to gain a better understanding of the long-term reproductive health care needs of veterans, from those who experience severe reproductive and urinary tract trauma to those who experience gender-specific infections in the battlefield. An Army task force charged with looking at the needs of female servicemembers reported that women in the battlefield experience higher rates of urinary tract infections and other women's health difficulties.

After a decade at war, many women servicemembers are still at increased risk for women's health problems due to deployment conditions and a lack of predeployment women's health information, compounded by privacy and safety concerns. Little is known about the impact that these issues and injuries have on the long-term health care needs of veterans. Additional research will provide critical information to help VA improve services for veterans.

Caring for children is another frequent problem veterans encounter when trying to get health care. To address this, my legislation provides permanent authority for VA to provide child care to veterans going to medical centers or Vet Centers for health care. A pilot program examining these services is nearing completion and the results have been overwhelmingly positive. Those pilots have been very popular with veterans and VA employees, and have been far less expensive than originally estimated.

This legislation is also fully paid for. VA would be empowered to ask contractors and large corporations to pay a relatively small fee in order to provide the care needed by some of our most seriously wounded veterans. This would not hurt small businesses or veteran owned small businesses, because the Secretary would be given the authority to exempt those small businesses to ensure their ability to compete is not jeopardized.

Finally, I would point out that last Congress, in fact just a little more than a month ago, these provisions were unanimously approved by the Senate. I think the other Members of this body realized then that we must meet the changing needs of all our servicemembers and veterans, and that regardless of gender we must fulfill our obligation to do everything we can to make whole those who have been injured in service to this country.

I hope all of my colleagues will again support this legislation so we can provide care to meet these most serious needs.

By Mr. CARPER (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 132. A bill to provide for the admission of the State of New Columbia into the Union; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the New Columbia Admissions Act, a bill that seeks to end a longstanding injustice and give full voting representation to the residents of the District of Columbia. More than 600,000 Americans live in Washington, D.C. and bear all the responsibilities of citizenship, yet currently have no vote in either chamber of Congress. This legislation paves the way for the creation of a 51st state from the populated portions of Washington, D.C., giving the citizens who live here in our nation's capital the voice they deserve in our national government.

Washington is not just a collection of government offices, monuments and museums; it is home to more than half a million people who work, study, raise families, and start businesses. These citizens serve in the military and die for our country just like the residents of the 50 States. They pay Federal taxes just like other Americans in fact they pay more per capita than residents of most states. But when it comes to having a voice in our Congress, suddenly these citizens do not count.

We must ask ourselves how we would feel in their place; I think most of us would quickly decide that this is not how we would want to be treated. In fact, the United States is the only democracy in the world that treats the citizens of its capital city this way. We are the only democracy, it is sad to say, that denies voting representation to the people who live in its capital city.

People have been trying to fix this injustice for almost as long as it has existed. In 1801, just one year after residents of the new Federal capital city were denied the vote, a prominent city resident began arguing for a constitutional amendment to give voting rights to residents of the District. Two years later, a House member introduced a bill to ''retrocede,'' or give back to Maryland and Virginia, the land that was ceded to create the District. Support for the proposal was based in large part on the political injustice of denying representation to the residents of the capital city. Even some opponents reportedly argued that the District might be granted Congressional representation once its population became more substantial, a threshold that clearly seems to have been met by a city of more than half a million people, a number comparable to several states. In 1978, the House and Senate approved a constitutional amendment to give the District full voting representation in Congress that was ratified by 16 states, but the measure died when it failed to win support from the required ¾ of the States within 7 years. More recently, in 2009, the Senate approved a bill to give the District a voting representative in the House.

The bill I am introducing today creates a path for the District of Columbia to become the State of ''New Columbia'' with full voting rights in Congress. Under this bill, a federal district called Washington, D.C. would still remain under the control of Congress, as the Constitution mandates. But it would be a smaller area encompassing the White House, the Capitol, the Supreme Court and the National Mall, an area where few people actually live. The rest of the current District of Columbia, diverse neighborhoods that are home to more than half a million U.S. citizens no different from the ones you and I and our colleagues come here to represent would become a new State provided that its residents vote to set that in motion.

The bill is similar to proposals offered by Senator Edward Kennedy in the early 1990s, and by my former colleague Senator Joseph Lieberman in December 2012. Delegate ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, the District's sole, non-voting representative in the House who has worked tirelessly for voting rights for the residents of the city, has introduced a companion House bill.

I believe we keep proposing and debating different solutions to the injustice imposed on District residents because we know in our hearts that the situation we have now and have tolerated for so long is not right. It is familiar, but it is not fair and not consistent with the values we all share as Americans. It is incumbent upon those of us who enjoy the right and the privilege of full voting rights to take up the cause of our fellow citizens here in the District of Columbia and find a solution.

Earlier this week, we celebrated the birth of Martin Luther King, Jr. and his legacy of working to bring equality and justice to all Americans. It is in that spirit that I introduce this bill, with my colleagues Senators BARBARA BOXER, RICHARD DURBIN and PATTY MURRAY. I hope we can work together to find a way to bring the same rights to the residents of the District of Columbia that all of us living in the 50 states cherish so much.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COBURN, Mr. JOHANNS, and Mr. HELLER):

S. 134. A bill to arrange for the National Academy of Sciences to study the impact of violent video games and violent video programming on children; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I still well up with deep emotion when I see Newtown parents remembering their lost children, recalling what they wore to school that day or their last sweet words before boarding the school bus. The memory of that horrifying day, and of those children and their teachers, has not waned, nor should it ever. It should be an enduring call to action to do everything we can to save innocent lives.

That is why I have championed a comprehensive approach to combating gun violence, and support the President's plan to protect the Nation's citizens. West Virginians have a proud tradition of hunting and understand the importance of the Second Amendment. I know we can protect those traditions and rights as we look at ways to prevent senseless acts of violence.

One piece of this comprehensive examination concerns violent content, including video games and video programming. I have long had concerns about how the violent content that kids see and interact with every day affects their wellbeing. This is a very important issue, and one that deserves further research, as even the President recognized. That is why, as Chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, I am introducing today the Violent Content Research Act of 2013. Under this legislation, the National Academy of Sciences would conduct a comprehensive study on the connection between exposure to violent video games and video programming and harmful effects on children.

Recent court decisions demonstrate that some people still do not get it. They believe that violent video games are no more dangerous to young minds than classic literature or Saturday morning cartoons. Parents, pediatricians, and psychologists know better.

These court decisions show we need to conduct additional groundwork on this issue. This report would be a critical resource in this process. It could inform research by other organizations, including the Centers for Disease Control, and provide guidance to lawmakers. I call on my colleagues to join me in passing this important legislation quickly.

Separately, I will be calling on the Federal Trade Commission and the Federal Communications Commission to expand their work in this area. The FTC has reviewed the effectiveness of the video game ratings system. The FCC has looked at the impact of violent programming on children. Changes in technology now allow kids to access violent content on-line and increasingly from mobile platforms with less parental involvement. It is time for these two agencies to take a fresh look at these issues.

Major corporations, including the video game industry, make billions on marketing and selling violent content to children. They have a responsibility to protect our children. If they do not, you can count on the Congress to take a more aggressive role.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 134

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Violent Content Research Act of 2013''.

SEC. 2. STUDY; NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Trade Commission, the Federal Communications Commission, and the Department of Health and Human Services, jointly, shall undertake to enter into appropriate arrangements with the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a comprehensive study and investigation of—

(1) whether there is a connection between exposure to violent video games and harmful effects on children; and

(2) whether there is a connection between exposure to violent video programming and harmful effects on children.

(b) CONTENTS OF STUDY AND INVESTIGATION.—

(1) VIOLENT VIDEO GAMES.—The study and investigation under subsection (a) shall include—

(A) whether the exposure listed under subsection (a)(1)—

(i) causes children to act aggressively or causes other measurable harm to children;

(ii) has a disproportionately harmful effect on children already prone to aggressive behavior or on other identifiable groups of children; and

(iii) has a harmful effect that is distinguishable from any negative effects produced by other types of media;

(B) whether any harm identified under subparagraph (A)(i) has a direct and long-lasting impact on a child's well-being; and

(C) whether current or emerging characteristics of video games have a unique impact on children, considering in particular video games' interactive nature and the extraordinarily personal and vivid way violence might be portrayed in such video games.

(2) VIOLENT VIDEO PROGRAMMING.—The study and investigation under subsection (a) shall include—

(A) whether the exposure listed under subsection (a)(2)—

(i) causes children to act aggressively or causes other measurable harm to children;

(ii) has a disproportionately harmful effect on children already prone to aggressive behavior or on other identifiable groups of children; and

(iii) has a harmful effect that is distinguishable from any negative effects produced by other types of media; and

(B) whether any harm identified under subparagraph (A)(i) has a direct and long-lasting impact on a child's well-being.

(3) FUTURE RESEARCH.—The study and investigation under subsection (a) shall identify gaps in the current state of research which, if closed, could provide additional information regarding any causal connection—

(A) between exposure to violent video games and behavior; and

(B) between exposure to violent video programming and behavior.

(c) REPORT.—In entering into any arrangements with the National Academy of Sciences for conducting the study and investigation under this section, the Federal Trade Commission, the Federal Communications Commission, and the Department of Health and Human Services shall request the National Academy of Sciences to submit, not later than 15 months after the date on which such arrangements are completed, a report on the results of the study and investigation to—

(1) Congress;

(2) the Federal Trade Commission;

(3) the Federal Communications Commission; and

(4) the Department of Health and Human Services.

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 141. A bill to make supplemental agricultural disaster assistance available for fiscal years 2012 and 2013, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, last year the U.S. experienced the most severe and extensive drought in at least 25 years.

While the impacts of the drought affected both crop and livestock sectors, our commodity farmers have had some protection under crop insurance. With the House not passing a 5 year reauthorization of the Farm Bill last year, we have left one sector of agriculture to fend for themselves.

Our ranchers across the country and in my home State of Montana have experienced the most extensive drought since the 1950. About 80 percent of agricultural land experienced drought in 2012.

As last year came and went, a drought stretched across the United States.

Wheat and corn fields dried up. Without enough forage, ranchers faced the decision to either to sell their herds or purchase extra feed, cutting into their thin margins.

As of this week, over 2,000 counties have been designated as drought disaster areas by the USDA.

In my state of Montana, 36 counties, or well over half of our State, are in disaster. Compound that with one of the worst droughts in recent history and our cattle and sheep producers are hanging on by a thread.

Where our corn, wheat, and soybean farmers have crop insurance as a backstop, we have left our ranchers without any assistance.

Pastureland last year was scarce and the cost of feed, when it was even available, was often unaffordable. Many ranchers are responding by culling their herds.

That is why I have introduced the supplemental agricultural disaster assistance. This bill takes the three livestock disaster program I created in the 2008 Farm Bill and extends them for 2012 and 2013 losses.

Covering losses from 2012 and 2013 will give our livestock producers some assistance through one of the worst droughts anyone in this chamber can remember. It will also cover our ranchers until the House and Senate can complete the 2013 Farm Bill.

These livestock disaster programs expired in September 2011, leaving our livestock producers with no safety net. For over a year and a half, through one of the worst droughts in recent memory, our producers have been left to fend for themselves.

Congress must make the responsible decision and pass this standalone bill I introduce today with Senator DEBBIE STABENOW, Chairwomen of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and Senator ROY BLUNT.

We must do our jobs and pass this basic safety net for ranchers.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. REED, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. CARPER):

S. 150. A bill to regulate assault weapons, to ensure that the right to keep and bear arms is not unlimited, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Assault Weapons Ban of 2013. This legislation is urgently needed to help end the mass shootings that have devastated countless families and that lead too many Americans to live their lives in fear.

Imagine that you receive a call from your child's school that there has been a shooting. How would you feel? Panicked? Terror-stricken? Helpless? Those were the feelings experienced by hundreds of parents whose children attend Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT.

Now imagine that, after rushing to the school, you receive the terrible news that your child is not coming back. On December 14, 20 sets of parents heard those devastating words. Their lives will never be the same.

I remain horrified by the mass murders that were committed that day in Newtown. But I am even more incensed that our weak gun laws allow mass killings to be carried out again and again in our country. Since 1982, there have been at least 62 mass shootings across the United States. Even worse, the rate of these shootings has been accelerating: Twenty-five of these shootings have occurred since 2006, and 7 took place in 2012.

These massacres don't stop—they just continue on and on. They have become tragically common in our society.

For each shooting that occurs, there are parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters, and aunts and uncles who have forever lost someone special in their lives: In Newtown, 26 families will never hear the laughter of their son or daughter again. In Aurora, Colorado, 12 people who attended a movie on a July night will never be able to enjoy another night out. At Virginia Tech, 32 families will never see their son or daughter again. In Tucson, AZ, 6 people

never returned home from meeting their Congresswoman one Saturday morning 2 years ago. My friend, Gabby Giffords, will never be the same.

The one common thread running through all of these shootings is that the gunman used a semiautomatic assault weapon or large capacity ammunition magazine or drum.

These military-style weapons have but one purpose: to kill as many people as possible as quickly as possible. Since the last assault weapons ban expired in 2004, over 350 people have been killed with assault weapons. Over 450 have been injured.

I do not intend to sit by while these killings continue. That is why today I am joining with my colleagues Senators SCHUMER, DURBIN, WHITEHOUSE, BLUMENTHAL, LEVIN, ROCKEFELLER, MIKULSKI, BOXER, REED, LAUTENBERG, MENENDEZ, CARDIN, GILLIBRAND, SCHATZ, MURPHY, and WARREN to introduce legislation to prohibit the sale, transfer, manufacture, and importation of assault weapons and large capacity ammunition feeding devices that can accept more than 10 rounds.

As the members of this body know, we had an assault weapons ban in place from 1994–2004. I was the author of that ban in the Senate, and Senator SCHUMER carried that ban as the then-Chairman of the House Crime Subcommittee.

The 1994 law was not perfect, but it was working when it expired in 2004. The supply of assault weapons was drying up, and crime committed with those weapons was decreasing. Don't take my word for it; scientific studies bear this about.

The 1994 law required the Justice Department to study and report on its effectiveness. That study, completed in 1997, found that the ban was responsible for a 6.7 percent decrease in total gun murders, holding all other factors equal.

The Justice Department sponsored a subsequent follow-on study in 2004, as the law was getting ready to expire. That study, carried out by the University of Pennsylvania, found that by about 9 years after the law took effect, the use of assault weapons in crime had declined by more than 2/3—70 percent.

The Washington Post found that the percentage of firearms seized by police in Virginia that had high-capacity magazines dropped significantly during the ban. That figure has doubled since the ban expired.

The Police Executive Research Forum found that 37 percent of police departments reported seeing a noticeable increase in criminals' use of assault weapons since the ban expired.

Studies of state-level assault weapons bans also show that these bans DO work. A study of Maryland's State ban on assault pistols found that in the first six months after the ban was enacted, ''the Baltimore City Police Department recovered 55 percent fewer assault pistols than would have been expected had there been no ban.''

Let me just address for a moment the arguments of some of the opponent of this legislation. They point to overall crime rates, and say the 1994 ban did not affect them. But that overstates the purpose of the ban. It was never intended to reduce all crime. It was intended to reduce gun murders, and specifically mass shootings. And the research found that it did just that.

A 6.7 percent decrease is not a complete solution. But if one of the lives saved was your child, your husband, your sister, your parent, it makes all the difference in the world. As President Obama has said, if we can save even one life, then we must try. And a 6.7 percent decrease in total gun murders—that is a lot more than one life.

Our police officers, the men and women who pledge their lives to protect us, are particularly at risk from assault weapons. A study by the Violence Policy Center found that, between 1998 and 2001, one in five law enforcement officers slain in the line of duty was killed with an assault weapon.

Recognizing this, I am proud to have the support of the Major Cities Chiefs of Police Association and several other organizations representing law enforcement. Every day, they must stare down ever-more-powerful military-style assault weapons.

The legislation we are introducing today will strengthen the 1994 law, allowing it to be even more effective:

The 1994 law prohibited semiautomatic weapons that could accept a detachable magazine, and had at least two military characteristics. The bill we are introducing today tightens this test to prohibit semiautomatic rifles, handguns, and shotguns that can accept a detachable magazine and have one military characteristic. One criticism of the 1994 law was that its ''two-characteristic'' test was too easy to ''work around'': a manufacture could simply remove one of the characteristics, and the firearm was legal. The bill we are introducing today will be much more difficult to work around.

The bill also accounts for specific ''work-arounds'' that the gun industry developed to avoid the 1994 law and similar State bans.

The bill prohibits ''thumbhole stocks'', which manufacturers developed to allow a stock to function like a pistol grip, which is a standard military feature in State bans and the expired Federal ban.

It also prohibits ''bullet buttons'', a feature that certain manufacturers developed to evade state restrictions on detachable ammunition magazines. Some state laws describe a ''detachable magazine'' as one that can be removed without the use of a tool. So these gun manufacturers developed so-called ''bullet buttons'' that allow magazines to be removed with the use of the simplest of tools, such as a key, another bullet, or even a magnet. With these ''bullet buttons'', what is supposed to be a fixed magazine becomes in practical application a detachable magazine. Our bill contains tight language to close this loophole.

Other changes to the bill include updating the list of specifically-named military-style firearms that are prohibited, to account for new models that have been developed since 1994. We now prohibit 158 weapons by name.

The bill prohibits semiautomatic rifles and handguns with a fixed magazine that can accept more than 10 rounds.

The bill adds a ban on the importation of assault weapons and large-capacity magazines; and eliminates the 10-year sunset that allowed the original law to expire.

Like the 1994 law, our legislation will prohibit large-capacity ammunition feeding devices capable of accepting more than 10 rounds. These large magazines and drums are so dangerous because they allow a shooter to fire 15, 30, even 100 rounds without having to reload.

Now, let me tell you what the bill will not do.

It will not affect hunting or sporting firearms. Instead, the bill protects legitimate hunters by protecting 2,258 specifically-named firearms used for hunting or sporting purposes, and exempting antique, manually-operated, and permanently disabled weapons.

Let me be clear: the bill will not take away weapons you currently own. Anybody who says otherwise is simply trying to deceive you. Instead, the bill protects the rights of existing gun owners by grandfathering weapons legally possessed on the date of enactment.

An important change from the 1994 law is that we address the millions of assault weapons that currently exist. While, as in 1994, they would remain legal after our bill takes effect, any future sale or transfer of such a weapon would require a background check to be conducted of the purchaser or recipient. We do have an exception for intra-family transfers. Keeping these powerful weapons out of the hands of known criminals and people with adjudicated mental problems is a no-brainer.

The bill also imposes a safe storage requirement for grandfathered firearms to ensure they don't get into the hands of people who would be prohibited from possessing them.

While the bill permits the continued possession of high-capacity ammunition magazines that are legally possessed on the date of enactment, it would ban the future transfer of these magazines.

Finally, the bill allows local jurisdictions to use existing Federal Byrne JAG grant money to support voluntary buy-back programs for grandfathered assault weapons and large-capacity ammunition feeding devices.

Opponents charge that this legislation impinges upon rights protected by the Second Amendment. I recognize that the Supreme Court has clearly held that there is an individual right to possess firearms that is protected by

the Second Amendment to the Constitution, and I respect that right.

However, the Supreme Court was also very clear that, like other rights protected by other amendments in the Bill of Rights, this is not an unlimited right. For instance, the First Amendment's protection of free speech does not allow someone to falsely yell ''Fire!'' in a crowded theater. Justice Scalia, the author of the majority opinion in the seminal case of District of Columbia v. Heller, said this plainly: ''Like most rights, the right secured by the Second Amendment is not unlimited.''

Justice Scalia, no flaming liberal he, went on to say: ''We also recognize another important limitation on the right to keep and carry arms. [United States v.] Miller said, as we have explained, that the sorts of weapons protected were those 'in common use at the time.' We think that limitation is fairly supported by the historical tradition of prohibiting the carrying of 'dangerous and unusual weapons.' ''

The muskets of the 18th Century bear little resemblance to the rapid-fire military-style assault weapons today, and their single-shot weapons are a far cry from the 100-round ammunition drum that was used to inflict such carnage at a movie theater in Aurora, CO. These are particularly dangerous weapons, which the Government is well within its rights to regulate under the Second Amendment and the Heller decision. The Second Amendment protects an individual's ability to own a weapon; it does not protect their ability to own any weapon. Any reasonable person would recognize limitations on this right: an individual should not own a nuclear weapon, they should not own a rocket launcher, and they should not own a military-style assault weapon.

Let me conclude with these thoughts:

The most important duty that government has to its citizens is to provide for their safety.

When 20 kindergarteners are slaughtered by an assault weapon, our government has failed to provide for their safety.

When 12 people are gunned down in a movie theater by an assault weapon, our government has failed to provide for their safety.

The firearms used in these massacres are weapons of war. They are weapons designed to kill the maximum number of people in the shortest period of time. We should be outraged by how easy it is for the perpetrators of these horrific crimes to purchase powerful weapons.

Let me say it as plainly as I can: weapons of war do not belong on our streets, in our schools, in our malls, in our theaters, or in our workplaces.

We know the common denominator in these deadly massacres and these daily shootings: easy access to killing machines designed for the battlefield. The circumstances may differ, but the one constant is always the guns.

These weapons not only take away the lives of our loved ones. They also take away our freedom—our freedom to live without fear.

When a child is fearful of walking down the street outside his home, he has lost his freedom.

When Americans wonder whether the next massacre with an assault weapon will take place in their town, they have lost their freedom.

I ask all of my colleagues to join me in this fight.

Join with our chiefs of police who say ''no'' to assault weapons.

Join with teachers from across our nation who say ''no'' to assault weapons.

Join with the emergency room doctors and medical professionals from every corner of our country who say ''no'' to assault weapons.

Join with clergy from all denominations who say ''no'' to assault weapons.

Join with the 58 percent of Americans who support an Assault Weapons Ban.

I am proud that the bill we are introducing has been endorsed by so many organizations and public officials:

Law Enforcement: International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators; International Association of Chiefs of Police; Major Cities Chiefs Association; National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence; Police Foundation; Women in Federal Law Enforcement; Charlie Beck, Chief, Los Angeles Police Department; Lee Baca, Sheriff, Los Angeles County; Scott Knight, Chief of Police, Chaska Police Department (MN), and former chair, Firearms Committee, International Association of Chiefs of Police; and Bill Lansdowne, Police Chief, San Diego;

Localities: U.S. Conference of Mayors; Boston City Council; City of Stockton (CA); County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors; Ventura County Board of Supervisors (CA); Mayor David Glass, Petaluma, CA; Mayor Emmett O'Donnell, Tiburon, CA; Mayor Jill Hunter, Saratoga, CA; Mayor Hilary Bryant, Santa Cruz, CA; Mayor Bob Filner, San Diego, CA; Mayor Bob Foster, Long Beach, CA; Mayor Michael Harris, Pleasant Hill, CA; Mayor Kevin Johnson, Sacramento, CA; Mayor Edwin M. Lee, San Francisco, CA; Mayor Jean Quan, Oakland, CA; Mayor Chuck Reed, San Jose, CA; Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa, Los Angeles, CA; Superintendent Anthony Smith, Oakland Unified School District; Mayor Miguel Pulido, Santa Ana, CA; City of Lemon Grove; Mayor Cheryl Cox, Chula Vista, CA; San Diego Unified School District; City of Calabasas; City of Ventura; City of Los Angeles; City of West Hollywood; Mayor Rob Schroder, Martinez, CA; and Mayor Amanda Gilmore, Alameda, CA;

Gun Safety: Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence; Coalition to Stop Gun Violence; Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence; Mayors Against Illegal Guns; Violence Policy Center; and Washington CeaseFire;

Education/Child Welfare: American Academy of Pediatrics; American Federation of Teachers; Boys & Girls Clubs of America; Child Welfare League of America; Children's Defense Fund; Every Child Matters; Moms Rising; National Association of Social Workers; National PTA; National Education Association; and 20 Children;

Religious Community: African Methodist Episcopal Church; Alliance of Baptists; American Baptist Churches of the South; American Baptist Home Mission Societies; American Friends Service Committee; Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America; Camp Brotherhood; Catholic Charities USA; Catholic Health Association; Catholic Health Initiatives; Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good; Catholics United; Church of the Brethren; Church Women United, Inc.; Conference of Major Superiors of Men; Disciples Home Missions, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Dominican Sisters of Peace; FaithsAgainstGunViolence.org; Franciscan Action Network; Friends Committee on National Legislation; Health Ministries Association; Heeding God's Call; Hindu American Foundation; Interfaith Alliance of Idaho; Islamic Society of North America; Jewish Council for Public Affairs; Jewish Reconstructionist Movement; Leadership Conference of Women Religious; Mennonite Central Committee, Washington Office; National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd; National Council of Churches; National Episcopal Health Ministries; NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby; Pax Christi USA; PICO Network Lifelines to Healing; Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Office of Public Witness; Progressive National Baptist Convention; Rabbinical Assembly; Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism; San Francisco Interfaith Council; Sikh Council on Religion and Education, USA; Sisters of Mercy of the Americas; Sojourners; Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations; United Church of Christ; United Methodist Church; United Methodist Women; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development; United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism; Washington National Cathedral; and Women of Reform Judaism;

Medical Community: American Academy of Pediatrics; American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; American College of Surgeons; American Public Health Association; Doctors for America; and National Association of School Nurses;

Other Organizations: Alliance for Business Leadership; American Bar Association; Black American Political Association of California; Grandmothers for Peace International; National Parks Conservation Association; Sierra Club; TASH; Viet Nam Veterans in the Media; VoteVets.org; and Washington Office on Latin America.

But we should have no illusions. This will be a big fight.

It will be an uphill battle—all the way. I know this.

But we need to ask ourselves:

Do we let the gun industry take over and dictate policy to this country? Do we let those who profit from increasing sales of these military style-weapons prevent us from taking commonsense steps to stop the carnage?

Or should we empower our elected representatives to vote their conscience based on their experience, based on their sense of right and wrong and based on their need to protect their schools, their malls, their workplaces and their businesses?

This legislation is my life's goal. As long as I am a member of the Senate, I will work night and day to pass this bill into law. No matter how long it takes, I will fight until assault weapons are taken off our streets.

Put simply, we cannot allow the rights of a few to override the safety of all. That is not the America that our founding fathers envisioned. And that is not the America I want my children and grandchildren to live in.

So I ask everyone watching at home: please get involved and stay involved.

The success or failure of this bill depends not on me, but on you. If the American people rise up and demand action from their elected officials, we will be victorious. If the American people say ''no'' to military-style assault weapons, we will rid our Nation of this scourge.

Please, talk to your senator and your member of Congress.

By Mr. BEGICH (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BENNET, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. REED, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. COONS):

S. 153. A bill to amend section 520J of the Public Health Service Act to authorize grants for mental health first aid training programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

MR. BEGICH. Mr. President, today I rise to introduce a very important piece of legislation—the Mental Health First Aid Act of 2013. The bill authorizes grants for mental health first aid, similar to the first aid training offered by Red Cross chapters across the United States.

I introduced this bill last Congress and focused on higher education because many common mental illnesses happen at late adolescence or young adulthood. However, as the recent tragedy in Newtown reminded us in horrific detail, violence is not limited to college campuses.

My colleague on the House side, Rep. RON BARBER of Arizona, has already introduced a companion bill in the House of Representatives. As you know, he was critically wounded in a tragic shooting 2 years ago with then Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords.

Mental health first aid teaches the warning signs and risk factors for schizophrenia, major clinical depression, panic attacks, anxiety disorders, trauma, and other common mental disorders, crisis de-escalation techniques and equips college and university staff with a five-step action plan to help individuals in psychiatric crisis connect to professional mental health care.

One in four adults and 10 percent of children in the United States will suffer from a mental illness this year. We know what to do if someone has a heart attack, but how do we react to someone having a panic disorder? Why do we wait for a tragic event to take notice and then bring out emergency measures?

When I was Mayor of Anchorage, we worked with local mental health organizations to train our police in Crisis Intervention Teams, a great improvement for police officers responding to a crisis. But now we need to go further.

You have heard me say this before, and it is not something to be proud of: In Alaska we have one of the highest suicide prevalence rates in the country. Further, we are a very rural State, where access to mental health care and medical services is often very difficult.

Even today, it is not widely known that fully ⅔ of Alaska can only be accessed by airplane. By educating the general public about the warning signs of common mental disorders, we can intervene early, facilitate access to care, improve clinical outcomes, reduce costs, and maybe save lives.

Mental disorders are more common than heart disease and cancer combined and a recent Governing magazine article reports that many States and localities are moving ahead—teaching their employees how to recognize the signs of mental health problems and how to help. Wouldn't you run to perform the Heimlich maneuver if a person was choking in a restaurant? Of course. We should all learn how to intervene with someone who is having a mental health crisis.

In the Alaska tradition, I seek to work across the aisle and believe this legislation merits bipartisan support. I am honored to be joined by my cosponsors on this bill, Senators BLUMENTHAL, BENNETT, AYOTTE, RUBIO, SHAHEEN, BLUNT, STABENOW and JACK REED. I invite you and all of our colleagues to join me in supporting this vital program. My great hope is it will avert suffering, prevent violence and ultimately save lives.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 12—RECOGNIZING THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRAGIC EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI ON JANUARY 12, 2010, HONORING THOSE WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN THAT EARTHQUAKE, AND EXPRESSING CONTINUED SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF HAITI

Mr. NELSON (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. WARREN, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. HARKIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 12

Whereas, on January 12, 2010, an earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale struck the country of Haiti, followed by 59 aftershocks measuring 4.5 or greater;

Whereas more than 220,000 people died as a result of the earthquake, more than 300,000 people were injured, and more than 3,000,000 people were directly affected by the disaster;

Whereas the total cost in terms of human lives, infrastructure damage, and economic losses makes the earthquake one of the worst urban disasters in modern history;

Whereas President Barack Obama vowed the ''unwavering support'' of the United States Government and pledged a ''swift, coordinated, and aggressive effort to save lives and support the recovery in Haiti'';

Whereas the initial emergency response of the men and women of the United States Government, led by the United States Agency for International Development and United States Southern Command, was swift and resolute;

Whereas the Haitian diaspora, other individuals, businesses, and philanthropic organizations throughout the United States and the international community overwhelmingly responded to the crisis by sending emergency relief supplies and significant financial contributions;

Whereas the Senate passed 3 successive resolutions expressing its profound sympathy and unwavering support for the people of Haiti and urging all nations to assist the people of Haiti with their long-term needs;

Whereas, 3 years later, significant challenges still remain in Haiti as it works to recover and rebuild;

Whereas, according to the International Organization for Migration, approximately 360,000 people remain in spontaneous and organized camps in Haiti and hundreds of thousands of poor people in Haiti continue to live in non-permanent housing, conditions that make them vulnerable to future natural disasters;

Whereas, according to an independent panel investigation by the United Nations, on October 19, 2010, an imported strain of cholera was detected in the Lower Artibonite region of Haiti;

Whereas, according to the Haitian Ministry of Public Health and Population, as of December 31, 2012, more than 7,900 people in Haiti have died from cholera and more than 635,000 have been infected with the disease since the earthquake on January 12, 2010;

Whereas the United Nations Secretary-General announced a plan to eliminate cholera from the island of Hispaniola through enhanced treatment and prevention efforts and through the development of clean water and sanitation infrastructure that is accessible to all people in Haiti;

Whereas gender-based violence against women and girls in Haiti continues to be a chronic problem, and judicial barriers that have prevented victims from finding redress remain a significant issue of concern;

Whereas, in 2012 alone, Haiti faced a long drought period and 2 major tropical storms that destroyed 70 percent of agricultural crops in Haiti, impacting the lives of millions of people in Haiti facing food insecurity and further crippling the economy of Haiti;

Whereas the sustained assistance to Haiti from the United States and the international community bolsters the efforts of the Government of Haiti to confront these challenges; and