

is a major threat, especially to power companies.

In a recent study, the Department of Energy found that the total value of damages to industries affected by theft of copper wire alone is approximately \$1 billion every single year. I have visited small electric companies in the rural areas that have been stolen from—not once, not twice, but three times. I have visited companies that have had their trucks stolen and then the thieves go out in the trucks and steal wire because people let them in because they have the electric company's truck. They have targeted construction sites, power and phone lines, retail stores, and vacant houses. They have caused explosions in vacant buildings by stealing metal from gas lines, and they have caused blackouts by stealing copper wiring from street lights and electrical substations. Last October four people were injured in an explosion at a University of California Berkeley electrical station. Officials blamed it on copper theft that occurred 2 hours before the explosion. As the electrical workers tried to fix it, the explosion occurred. As I mentioned, they are taking brass stars from our veterans' graves. This happened on Memorial Day of 2012. In another case that shows just how dangerous metal theft can be, Georgia Power was having a huge problem with thieves targeting a substation that feeds the entire Atlanta Hartsfield International Airport, one of the busiest airports in the world. The airport was getting hit two to three times a week and surveillance didn't lead to any arrests.

This rise in incidents of metal theft across the country, the growing cost to businesses, and the danger it poses underscores the critical need for Federal action. What does our bill do? It helps combat this by requiring modest recordkeeping by recyclers of scrap metal, just keeping track of who is selling the metal. It requires limiting the value of cash transactions. This simply means they can take it in for \$100 bucks, but after that they have to require a check. We have many States that are doing this but not enough. So what we are finding is people are stealing metals in Minnesota where we have a \$100 cash requirement and then they are selling it in another State so they cannot be tracked.

The amendment also makes it a Federal crime to steal metal from critical infrastructure and directs the U.S. Sentencing Commission to review relevant penalties. The Metal Theft Prevention Act has been endorsed by the National Rural Electric Cooperative, the American Public Power Association, American Supply, Edison Electric Institute, National Electrical Contractors Association, National Association of Home Builders, National Retail Federation, U.S. Telecom Association, and about a dozen other businesses and organizations. It has the support of the Major Cities Chiefs of Police Association, the Major County Sheriffs' Association,

the National Sheriffs' Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, and the National Association of Police Organizations.

I ask my friends who represent the scrap metal dealers to look at this coalition and to ask yourself: Is this worth it, over a \$100 requirement for writing a check? Is it worth it to oppose this when buildings are blowing up and critical infrastructure is being broken into and one of the busiest airports in the country is having problems? Is it worth it to oppose a bill that has strong bipartisan support? I don't think it is. I think the interests of the consumers of this country, the interests of businesses in this country, and the interests of law enforcement should trump, and that is what should matter in this Chamber. So I hope my colleagues will look at this again and look at the bare minimum this legislation sets. It does not create that much of a burden, when all these companies that buy this scrap metal, much of which is stolen—a number of these things are stolen. A lot of these people are good. They know it doesn't matter. They are doing it in some of the States. All they are doing is keeping records and requiring a check when it is over \$100. That is all we are talking about.

If we balance \$1 billion in theft a year against a simple requirement of recordkeeping, I think it is pretty clear. I hope my colleagues will look at it this way, and I know their chiefs and sheriffs will tell them this must be a priority. We need to do everything we can to protect our critical industry infrastructure from unscrupulous metal thieves. I hope my colleagues support this bill when it comes up for a vote.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. President.

I hope the Presiding Officer had a great Mother's Day. I hope Senator KLOBUCHAR had a great Mother's Day and got a phone call from her daughter in Connecticut.

I am here to tell the story of three pretty heroic mothers who are representative of far too many with similar stories across the country. I wish to tell you very quickly this afternoon about Gwen Cox Salley, Lori Gellatly, and Marianne O'Shields. All three of them are no longer with us. They are amongst the 31,672 victims of gun violence every year, 2,639 deaths a month, and 86 people a day who are killed by guns all across this country. I wish to try to lend a voice to a few of these victims tonight, mothers who were killed by their intimate partners, by their spouses, in an act of domestic violence that frankly could have been prevented if not for the law of this land.

First, the story of Gwen Cox Salley. Gwen was killed 2 days after she finally took out a restraining order against

her husband. She had a long history of abuse with her husband Michael Scott Salley. Most recently he had come to her house the day before she took out this restraining order and threatened to kill her and their 7-year-old daughter. He tried to get access to his gun that was on the property, but she was able to hide it and then very quietly texted a couple of her friends that she was in trouble. The police came, and before violence erupted they were able to arrest him. She took out a restraining order, but the next day he came back with a gun, went to the local daycare parking lot where Gwen was picking up her 7-year-old daughter, took control of the car, sped off to apparently kill them both, but luckily Gwen was able to push her 7-year-old daughter out of the car so her daughter could be rescued and taken in by the daycare center's employees, but an hour or so later Gwen Salley was dead.

She did everything she was supposed to do. She finally left this man who had been so abusive over the years. After he threatened to kill them both, the cops were called and she took out a restraining order, but because the law of Louisiana at the time didn't allow for police to come and take his gun—in fact, the law allowed him, as the Federal law allows now, to go out and even purchase a gun during that time, and 1 day later Gwen Cox Salley was dead.

The gun industry wants to make us believe that our greatest fear comes from gun-wielding strangers who are going to break into our house at night and murder us, but the fact is women across this country are three times more likely to be killed by a gun by their husbands or their intimate partner than they are to be killed by anybody else with any other kind of weapon. That is the reality. For women who live in homes with a firearm, they are 500 percent more likely to be the victim of homicide through domestic violence than in houses without firearms. The statistics don't look good for women across this country and in part because our laws are so weak, even in a State such as Connecticut.

This is the story of Lori Gellatly, who was killed just a few days ago in Oxford, CT. She had taken out a restraining order against her husband Scott. They had twins, but things had gone wrong. She wrote in the application about one incident that "Scott had yelled in my face . . . and got very angry. I felt threatened. He then told me I wasn't going anywhere and grabbed my right thumb and twisted my wrist . . ." while the two children were in her arms. "He acts out very violently and I am afraid for my kids and myself."

She took out that restraining order and again, almost within moments, he was at the house. She called 911, but when police got there they found Lori Gellatly and her mother Merry Jackson with gunshot wounds. Lori was pronounced dead at Waterbury Hospital. Again, a restraining order taken out

but with no ability to take the guns away from her husband or to stop him from buying a gun, she was found dead.

The reality is we can do something about it. In fact, some of these States I am talking about are doing something about it themselves. Louisiana, which has a reputation as a State with a pretty strong history of gun ownership, has done something about it. The State legislature has passed a law allowing for a process that someone convicted of a domestic violence crime can have their guns taken away. Wisconsin has done the same, a State with a similar, pretty robust history of gun ownership.

It just makes sense that if someone has been convicted of a domestic violence crime, if they have a restraining order taken out against them because they got violent with their spouse, that is the exact time at which society needs to step in, law enforcement needs to step in and separate those guns from that individual. The statistics back that up. In States, for instance, that have just basic background check protections, women are 38 percent less likely to be killed by guns. These laws matter when it comes to keeping women alive at the hands of abusive spouses.

Mariann O'Shields died just a couple weeks ago in Spartanburg, SC. Not only had she taken out a restraining order against her husband Robert O'Shields, but she had gone the extra step to bring her and her kids—her daughter to a domestic violence shelter. She was staying in a shelter, but her husband tracked her down at the shelter, and just after she had dropped off her child at a bus stop she was killed. The staff at the safe home, if you can imagine, were paralyzed by this crime. The director said:

My staff and I are totally devastated. It is your worst nightmare when you work with a shelter. I don't think that there is anything we could have done to protect her.

That is right. There wasn't anything more that domestic violence shelter could have done to protect Mariann O'Shields, but there is something we can do. We have all sorts of disagreements about the future of gun laws in this country, and I understand in the foreseeable future we are not likely going to get a bill that expands the sales that are subject to background checks, even though 80 percent of the American public thinks we should require people to show they are not a criminal before they can buy a gun.

I wish we could get the assault weapons off the street that did the kind of damage we saw in Newtown, CT, but in the absence of getting an agreement on commonsense alternatives to current law such as bans on assault weapons and a greater scope of background checks, at least maybe we can take this specific issue, which is spouses, in particular, women who have taken out restraining orders against their husbands or spouses or boyfriends, maybe we can limit the change we can agree on to at least those situations in which women are most vulnerable, after an

episode of violence, after a threat, when they have taken out a court-ordered restraining order, maybe at that moment their spouse shouldn't be able to possess a gun. Maybe at least during those few moments the spouse shouldn't be able to go out and buy a gun. Maybe the week after Mother's Day, in the face of the heroism that women such as Gwen and Lori and Mariann showed in removing their families and themselves from violent situations, maybe we can at least listen to the voices of these handful of victims of domestic violence crimes and do something in a targeted, limited way that could in the end prevent hundreds of unnecessary deaths across this country. I have to believe that in a body of good will we can at least agree on that.

That is the reason virtually every week I try to come down to the floor and share with my colleagues some of the voices of the victims, these 31,000 a year, 2,600 a month, 86 a day who are lost to gun violence all across this country. We can do better.

I yield the floor.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I, along with most Americans, celebrated Mother's Day yesterday with my wife, my daughter, and my grandchildren, to express our appreciation for what mothers all over the world have done in order to help our communities. In America, we have taken action to help women in this country. I am referring to the passage of the Affordable Care Act, which has helped childbearing women and child rearing throughout the child's life, as well as the mother and the family.

Let me give some examples because I think it is good to point out where we have made progress and to celebrate what we have done to help women in America. We have taken on the arbitrary practices of private insurance companies that discriminated against women, against pregnant women, and against mothers. A woman can now choose her own OB/GYN doctor as her primary care doctor, no longer having to wait for authorization or to get a referral in order to have OB/GYN care. Women now have the absolute right to choose their own primary care doctor, including an OB/GYN.

Under the Affordable Care Act, every woman in America is guaranteed an annual well-woman visit to be able to assess their health, including mammography screening, pap smears, diabetes screening, and other preventive screenings services at no cost. That is all provided in the Affordable Care Act, so a woman can take care of her own health care needs and, in many cases,

avoiding much more costly and debilitating care. Again, this is at no cost. So there is no reason why a woman cannot take advantage of these services. HPV DNA testing is now available every 3 years under the Affordable Care Act to deal with the sexual health of women. STI counseling and HIV screening for sexually active women are now available under the Affordable Care Act. This is now guaranteed. Women don't have to go look at the fine print of an insurance policy to see whether they have coverage. Before, in most cases, they didn't have coverage. Women don't have to wait for authorization, having to show a need. These are given rights that are now available to every woman under the Affordable Care Act.

No longer can pregnancy be considered a preexisting condition. Before the passage of the Affordable Care Act, if a woman wanted to get an insurance policy, insurers excluded childbirth during the first perhaps 9 months or later. It was considered a preexisting condition. Now we have a seamless system, so women can get the type of care they need.

Why does that become so important? So they can get the necessary prenatal care in order to keep their baby healthy, to get the type of tests that are necessary.

Pregnant women can now get a gestational diabetes screening to see whether they are at high risk and, if so, they can get the type of treatment they need in order to make sure their baby is born as healthy as possible.

Prenatal care is available and it is covered, and we now have, through the Affordable Care Act, a provision we added that provides support for qualified health centers. I have visited qualified health centers in Maryland that are now providing prenatal care that wasn't there before. It is not only that we are providing coverage; we are providing access to care, so we can reduce low birth weight babies in our community. Look at the numbers of infant survival. Look at the numbers of low birth weight babies. We are improving those numbers daily because of the Affordable Care Act. To be able to prevent and discover complications during pregnancy, including preterm outcomes—all of that is now available.

Women now have access to folic acid to make sure a woman has a healthier fetus and birth. All of that is now available under the Affordable Care Act.

We help newborns and their mothers. Breast feeding has been proven to be a very strong part of a healthy infancy and for a baby. There are certain needs a mother has, including having the time to breast feed, and the cost of breast feeding, including breast pumps. That is now covered under the Affordable Care Act.

We understand the need to keep people healthier, and that is why we call it