

initiative on the State ballot to close the gun show loophole. Colorado voters can now do what Congress has failed to do: close a deadly loophole that allows criminals, juveniles, and other restricted persons to buy guns at gun shows with no questions asked.

With our Nation losing 10 children to gun-fire every day, Congress should heed the voices of millions of Americans concerned about gun violence—not those of the gun lobby—and follow the lead of States like Colorado. While Colorado's progress is encouraging, we should not have to rely on a patchwork of State laws when it comes to protecting our children's safety. Only Congress can pass legislation that protects children all across America. National legislation to close the gun show loophole and keep guns out of the wrong hands should be passed without further delay.

Statement on Signing the Cross-Border Cooperation and Environmental Safety in Northern Europe Act of 2000

August 3, 2000

Yesterday, I signed H.R. 4249, the "Cross-Border Cooperation and Environmental Safety in Northern Europe Act of 2000." This law endorses the administration's Northern Europe Initiative (NEI) and highlights the need for continued international efforts to address the environmental dangers posed by nuclear waste in northwest Russia. I want to express my appreciation to Representative Sam Gejdenson for introducing and ensuring the passage of this important legislation.

We launched the Northern Europe Initiative because we recognized, as the Congress does in this law, the importance of strengthening regional cooperation among the Baltic States, Russia, and all countries bordering the Baltic Sea. Only in this way can we create the stability and prosperity that will lead to full integration of northern Europe, including northwest Russia, into the broader European and transatlantic mainstream. Our European friends, especially the Nordic countries and the European Union, are full partners in this effort.

The law also highlights the environmental dangers posed by military nuclear waste in northwest Russia. These dangers have been brought to light by the work of courageous independent environmentalists and non-governmental organizations in Russia and elsewhere. Aleksandr Nikitin, a retired Russian Navy colonel, has made important contributions to the international understanding and study of environmental problems in this region. Both environmentalists and non-government organizations face increased challenges today.

We have been deeply involved in helping Russia and its neighbors confront the serious environmental risks that face the Barents Sea, the Baltic Sea, and the people who live around them. We look forward to increased cooperation from Russia as we create a legal framework for our common efforts.

NOTE: H.R. 4249, approved August 2, was assigned Public Law No. 106-255.

Statement on the Death of Sister M. Isolina Ferre

August 3, 2000

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of Sister Isolina Ferre. Her passionate fight, for more than 60 years, against poverty, violence, and despair earned her many awards and countless tributes from all around the world. Armed only with her faith, she taught gangs in New York City to solve their differences without violence. In Puerto Rico, her community service centers, the Centros Isolina Ferre, transformed ravaged neighborhoods by operating clinics and helping residents to empower themselves.

Almost a year ago today, I was honored to welcome Sister Isolina to the White House and present her with the Medal of Freedom. At that ceremony, I said, "Sister Isolina taught people to see the best in themselves and in their communities and made sure they had the tools to make the most of the gifts God has given them."

Her lifetime of selfless commitment to others will remain her greatest legacy. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and many friends.

**Statement on Federal Action on
Potential Electricity Shortages in
California**

August 3, 2000

Today I am directing all Federal agencies to take steps to reduce consumption of electricity in California to the maximum extent possible. As one of the largest power consumers in California, it is critical that the Federal Government take every possible step to reduce non-essential power consumption at Federal facilities in the State.

During power shortage emergencies, it also is important that we increase our generation of power in the West, much of which is supplied to California customers. Therefore, I also am directing that Federal agencies that generate power, and the Federal Power Marketing Administrations, take all possible steps to maximize the amount of electricity that can be delivered to California.

These short-term measures will assist California utilities and consumers in meeting electricity needs during this critical period.

**Memorandum on Potential
Electricity Shortages in California**

August 3, 2000

*Memorandum for the Heads of Executive
Departments and Agencies*

*Subject: Potential Electricity Shortages in
California*

The increased demand for electricity during summer heat waves can make it a challenge for electric utilities to meet the demands of their customers. Currently, the supply of electric power is tight in California due to record demand for electricity. The State faces the possibility of rolling blackouts in some areas. These conditions put both consumers and businesses at risk.

The Federal Government is among the largest consumers of electricity in California. It is important that we lead by example in taking energy-conserving steps to reduce the

risk and severity of power outages. Therefore, I direct that:

- Managers of Federal buildings in California take steps to reduce consumption of power to the maximum extent practicable consistent with the health and welfare of employees; and,
- Federal agencies coordinate with other State and local government agencies to minimize the use of electricity in all government buildings in California.

Further, although most of the electricity in the Western United States is generated and marketed by privately and publicly owned utilities, the Federal Government also generates and markets electricity in the region. For the duration of the current power shortage emergency, I direct that:

- Federal agencies that generate electricity take all possible measures, consistent with existing laws and regulations, to maximize the amount of electricity that can be delivered to California; and,
- Federal Power Marketing Administrations take all steps necessary to maximize the availability of electricity in California.

I also direct Federal agencies to work with the State of California to develop procedures governing the use of backup power generation in power shortage emergencies.

Although these are important steps that can help reduce the risk of power shortages in the short term, we need a more comprehensive approach for the long term. I therefore further direct each of you to continue working towards the goals of Executive Order 13123, Greening the Government Through Efficient Energy Management, and to continue working with the Congress on comprehensive electricity restructuring legislation, which can promote greater investment in generation and transmission facilities, enhance the efficiency of the interstate transmission grid, and promote energy efficiency programs.

William J. Clinton