

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Exactly. As Ronald Reagan said, this is a great country filled with good people. There are so many good people, it makes you feel good to be in America. Especially senior citizens, they want to do what is right in this country. They recognize we have problems in this country. They are willing to make their contribution, but as the gentleman says, we have talked to veterans groups. It is not always me, me, me, and that is too bad that some organizations here advocate that.

We are moving in the right direction. The rudder is right, we are all talking about balance the budget, balancing the budget and getting fiscal responsibility back in Washington. Now is a chance, the best chance ever in our lifetimes, to really bring that fiscal sanity back here and get a balanced budget by the year 2002. I am more optimistic today, whether we deal with the administration or we just do it on our own.

Mr. KINGSTON. I am glad to hear that. I thank the gentleman for being with us tonight in this special order.

OUR RIGHT TO SAFETY AND FREEDOM FROM FEAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SUNUNU). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. HULSHOF] is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, once again the 32 newly-elected Republican Members of this body have sought a special order of this House to focus on issues that affect the lives of Americans all across this great land.

We have, as Members know, in the past explored positive solutions to problems that affect American communities. We have addressed the issues and concerns of working men and women as they struggle to juggle family commitments along with their careers. We have spoken, I think last week it was, about enacting real tax relief.

Mr. Speaker, tonight we want to train the spotlight of this House and focus on an issue of concern to every man and every woman and every child in this great land. What I am speaking about is the most basic civil right that each of us possesses: the right to be free from fear, the right to be able to drive to a convenience store in safety, the right to take a leisurely stroll through our neighborhoods, holding hands with our spouses, without concern; the right to let our kids play outside in the front yard without having to constantly keep watch over them.

Mr. Speaker, before joining this body after the November election, I worked for a little over 10 years as a criminal prosecutor in the State of Missouri. Along with many hardworking law enforcement officials from our great State, I had the opportunity to work on the front lines, dealing with crime and crime victims. I have cried with

family members as they have had to deal with the horrific tragedy visited upon them by some violent criminal. We have held hands as we have waited for the verdict of 12 impartial people.

I have relived with those victims of violent crime some pretty horrific tragedies, like the young father who was murdered in front of his two young children. In one of the most selfless acts that I can think of, he was begging not for his life, not for his own safety, but for the lives of his two kids. Yet his pleas fell on the deaf ears of the murderer, who was ultimately convicted.

Or there were the two juveniles who were on a crime spree, and chose to murder the two security guards that came down to investigate this routine theft. The stories and tragedies across this country are too many to mention. I do not need to mention, Mr. Speaker, how strongly I feel for the victims of violent crime.

Of course, last week we had the opportunity to visit back in our districts and promote National Victims' Rights Week. Fortunately, I think in the last Congress, in earlier Congresses, we have done some things to begin making some inroads, to make sure that victims are equal partners in the criminal justice system along with those who are accused of these heinous crimes.

For instance, in the last Congress, restitution for victims was required in Federal courts. In fact, earlier in this Congress we passed a law to help protect crime victims' rights to attend the trial of their assailants and to provide victim impact testimony, which passed this House by a large, overwhelming number. In fact, I am told that the President has signed that measure into law, and it is now the current law of this land.

We have much work to do, however. What we hope to do, Mr. Speaker, is focus a few minutes this evening on this issue. Particularly, I know that there are members of the Republican freshman class who have been champions in the area of victims' rights. I know there are others of us who wish to speak tonight about a specific problem dealing with drugs in our communities, as well as violent juvenile offenders.

In fact, I see that my friend, the gentleman from New Jersey, joins me here in the well of the House. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PAPPAS].

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and I want to thank him once again for organizing this special order that we are doing each week that we are in session, to highlight an area of public policy that is of concern to you and to many of us here, and to talk about some of the experiences that we have had in our own respective districts and States.

The debate here this evening, or the discussion here this evening, is really aimed at trying to create a better

America, and to help many families within our districts and certainly within our country. For many of us, it is obvious that if we do not pay some attention to this, the future for many people in our country is not going to be what it certainly should be. The young people of our Nation are the future. They are the future doctors, teachers, businessmen and businesswomen, and yes, even future Members of this Congress.

Juvenile crime for many people is the result of substance abuse. In speaking to teachers, youth group leaders from various religious institutions throughout my State and district, that has been confirmed for me.

I recently saw a study that had gotten the opinion of police chiefs around the country, and they believed, or 31 percent of them believe, that reducing substance abuse, specifically narcotic abuse, would be a very positive step in reducing the crime rate. For many of these police chiefs, reducing drug abuse was three times as crucial as putting more police officers on the street. That that was certainly something that raised my eyebrows.

I know that many of our colleagues here probably saw an article in many of the newspapers, even here in Washington, DC, within the last couple of days, in which two teenagers from my State in Sussex County, the northern part of New Jersey, lured and then killed two pizza delivery people.

I just read an article today in one of our major newspapers in our State, in the Star Ledger, that both suspects in this slaying had a history of drug abuse, and perhaps this brutal crime could have been prevented if these two people had not begun using drugs.

I would like to quote from the Star Ledger article. One of the alleged perpetrators' grandmother was interviewed, and she said, and I will quote in part, "This young man was transformed in the past 2 months through drug use." This change was radical, and she was speaking of his demeanor, how it changed, and that he had, among other things, tremendous mood swings. Obviously she is very upset about not just what took place to these two young people who were killed, but also what drugs did in changing her grandson.

In New Jersey, though, for several years our Governor has established the Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, and we have really seen it make a difference. What it does is it establishes in each of our 21 counties in our State an alliance which is made up of people from county government, municipal government, people from the religious community, youth organizations, education, labor, business, many non-profit, volunteer organizations.

What they have done, which is somewhat unique even for New Jersey, is meet to determine what is their need in their respective community, and how can that need best be addressed. There is some government funding that

is provided, but there is also a requirement that there be some fund-raising at the local level to help pay for these, which in most instances are education and prevention programs.

Some of the programs that have been sponsored include drug-free graduation parties or proms, poster contests, in-school training sessions on the danger of drugs, and preventative programs for all age categories. I might say that some of the communities have even selected programs to target senior citizens, because in many people's view there are many senior citizens in our country that have substance abuse problems.

The focus of this particular program is in education and prevention, not so much on treatment, not that that is not an appropriate avenue for funding, but there are many detoxification services and halfway houses that are already in existence and are funded in many instances from other avenues.

Over the course of our Gov. Christy Whitman's first term in office, juvenile arrests in New Jersey have actually declined overall by 5 percent, and juvenile arrests for violent crimes have dropped by 7 percent. I believe that these community-based organizations that I have spoken about here are an important reason for this drop in crime.

Another exciting initiative that was very successful in my home county of Somerset in New Jersey was the formation of the Somerset County Youth Council, which, when I was on our county board, asked principals, high school principals, private, parochial, as well as public, to recommend young people to come together, to meet maybe 4 times a year, to advise the county government officials on programs they feel need to be addressed from the young people's perspective.

That strategy has been very enthusiastically responded to by both the educational community as well as the young people. They have become involved in a wide variety of efforts, undertaken projects, such as trying to raise the consciousness of their peers to not even start to smoke, let alone get involved in alcohol and narcotics, and it has really been something that has been very, very positive.

These young people have been asked to serve, and they have really stepped forward and run this program, which really is growing in its scope and in its breadth of involvement from people from all segments and all economic situations.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman mentioned these young groups, and I would ask the gentleman, what age groups is he talking about that the coalition is reaching out to?

Mr. PAPPAS. Junior high, middle schools, and up to high school.

Mr. HULSHOF. It seems that especially the earlier that the education process can begin, once that foundation begins, you can really begin to build that foundation.

I know recently just going back, I have had a chance to visit with the local elementary school in Missouri, the Luray Elementary School, very small, K through 8, with about 45 students, and yet they are very aware. In fact, when you walk into the school, the doorman there says "Don't do drugs."

□ 2130

This constant educational process that helps young people realize that with every choice there comes a responsibility, it sounds like this is also working in your home district.

Mr. PAPPAS. In conclusion, if the gentleman will continue to yield, I think what I spoke about, what we have done in New Jersey and what we did in my county, is to illustrate how one-size-fits-all approaches that too often Washington, DC, folks have felt is the way to go does not always work. It is not always the answer to all of the needs of the communities throughout our great country.

I hope that initiatives that we have had, not just in New Jersey but really in many of our districts that are represented here tonight, will be reflected upon. I talk about some of the success stories that we have been involved with in central New Jersey, with the hope of encouraging other people to not necessarily feel they have to reinvent the wheel.

I certainly look forward to learning of what positive things may have taken place in your district and in others and certainly take those ideas back home.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the gentleman for his efforts. Hopefully his constituents know how hard he is working up here and that he is providing some great examples and success stories in central New Jersey.

I see the gentleman from Colorado has joined us in the Chamber, and I yield to the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. BOB SCHAFFER].

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

I wanted to talk about a couple things that I think raise this issue and tell us why it is important this week and why we ought to focus on juvenile crime and the importance of this topic.

There was a subcommittee hearing that just took place this last week, and some of the stories that that subcommittee had heard are some sobering facts. I want to go through a couple of those. There were a number of personal stories, just tragic, similar to the one that you mentioned just a few moments ago, but also just some numbers that I think really put this into perspective.

First of all, when you realize that with the experts are telling us right now about the effect of what they call the echo boomers, the children of baby boomers that will be leaving their diapers behind and becoming teenagers

very shortly, the experts tell us that nationwide we are likely to experience a 31 percent increase in juvenile crime by the year 2010. In that climate, the FBI predicts and has told us that juvenile arrests for murder will increase 145 percent over the 1992 level, juvenile arrests for forcible rape by 66 percent, and juvenile arrests for aggravated assaulted by 129 percent.

Those are estimates based on today's trends, but I know like you and the rest of the Members of this freshman class who are dedicated to changing those numbers and using the power of these podiums and our offices to try to give a new direction to these numbers and offer a brighter picture.

Let me tell you about some of the problems that we face in America right now, why juvenile crime is something that is on increase. I would submit that it has an awful lot to do with the callous disregard for the issue that we see people in government and people in this Congress, I hate to admit, take toward juvenile crime and hopefully we can change that.

The question is, what happens to juveniles once they are caught? What does the Government do at the State and local and Federal level as well to remedy the situation? Juvenile courts have seen their case load of violent juvenile offenders increase 98 percent between 1985 and 1994. The number of juvenile murders has actually tripled during that same time period. Juveniles 15 years and younger were responsible for 64 percent of the violent offenses handled by juvenile courts in 1994. Almost half of all juveniles arrested for violent offenses received either probation or fine, restitution or community service. And nearly 40 percent of those offenders who come in contact with the court system have their cases dismissed.

These young children are not stupid. They may be foolish with respect to the crimes that they commit. I do not want to deny that. But when it comes to the odds of getting caught and getting prosecuted and strenuously so in this court system, these young children have figured out that the odds are in fact on their side and that we as Americans have tolerated far too much in the way of unruly behavior and discipline problems throughout the country and so on.

Let me tell you a couple more disturbing statistics. The average length of institutionalization for a juvenile who has committed a violent crime is only 353 days. In other words, a juvenile who commits cold-blooded murder can be back on the streets in less than 1 year in many cases.

According to the Justice Department, of those juveniles who actually make it to a State institution, 43 percent have had more than 5 prior arrests and 20 percent have been arrested more than 10 times. Approximately four-fifths of those offenders have previously been on probation and three-

fifths have been committed to a correctional facility at least once in the past.

The next question obviously is, what can we do? What can we do to turn these terrifying numbers around? That is the job that is in front of us. That is something that I believe if we have the tenacity that brought us all here to Washington we can turn those numbers around.

I would suggest that in many respects what we ought to do is not look to more and more government programs as the answer to preventing juvenile crime. Sometimes that is effective. But as the research begins to pile up and mount, it confronts us with the undeniable truth that spending millions and millions more of Federal and State and local funds on various youth related programs has not managed to turn these statistics around, not at all.

I would suggest that just as the previous gentleman had mentioned that in some ways we need to look back to the future, programs that have worked well. It was Alexis de Tocqueville, the great observer of American democracy back in the earliest days, who observed that in America it was the private associations, the private institutions, the private charities and religious organizations that in fact had more to do with America's greatness than anything that the government was able to put together.

Just a few examples, and I want to finish with just a brief comment about what is happening here in the District of Columbia.

Look at these examples and I think it is our challenge to try to see what has worked and try to duplicate these examples.

The Young Men's Christian Association, the YMCA, was established to combat urban crime. Seeing its mission as molding the moral character of the young, the YMCA successfully undertook a struggle to win the hearts and minds of inner city youth, leading to a major drop in juvenile crime.

In founding Georgetown University in 1792, Bishop John Carroll argued for the necessity of, "a pious and Catholic education for the young." Carroll hoped that Georgetown's graduates would supply a pool of teachers for the Catholic schools of local parishes. Today those schools provide superior education, not only to the children of Catholic faith but to all faiths, and it has had just a tremendously important role to play in poor inner city parents seeking an alternative to public education.

The Young Women's Christian Association gave a chaperoned place to live to young women migrating to the cities from rural areas. That stability immediately became available to those young women, permitting them to gradually find the community life in which they felt comfortable and safe fellowship after leaving their families and original communities.

The Red Cross is another good example, a massive private sector organiza-

tion which runs the world's largest blood collection and distribution systems as just one of its projects. The temperance movement in the mid-1800's, a response to the growing alcohol addiction of the time, resulted in massive reductions in alcohol consumption and a change of attitudes about alcohol abuse.

I mention some of those examples because these were not inspired by government. They were inspired by private citizens, private associations who realize that the answer to crime and to just sad economic conditions for many millions of our youth at that point in time was not found in the halls of government but it was found in the halls of churches and schools and charitable organizations.

I want to finish with one more sad story unfortunately. It is an event that took place right here in Washington, DC last week, and I mention this today because it does relate to this issue of juvenile crime and it is a topic that I hope to speak to in more detail next week.

That is an event that took place a little over a week ago here in the District schools. In a fourth grade classroom here in Washington, an elementary school, nine fourth graders were allowed to be unobserved or unattended by their teacher in a holding room off to the side of the school room. These children engaged in some kind of sex game known as freaky Friday, as the Washington Post described the event, eventually were disrobed and engaged in sexual activity in a school building, a classroom in the District of Columbia. This is an important item to note for us here because the Constitution puts this Congress in charge of the District of Columbia.

But at a time when we are wondering and in disbelief in many cases as to how young children in America can behave in many cases the way they do, we need to look no further than the examples that occur right here in Washington, DC, a good place to start, I would suggest, and as I mentioned, I hope to have a chance to discuss this a little more next week because we certainly have to focus on improving the quality of our public education system if we ever hope to get at a point where we really are challenging these young children, giving them real hope and opportunity.

Let me finish just by saying this. By far the greater example is found within the many children and young people we have seen throughout the country who are achieving noble things, who are working hard, earning good grades, finding ways to be young entrepreneurs and being successful in their home towns.

We see these examples all the time. They really do need to be celebrated. They need to be a component part to any solution that we try to craft here in Washington or policy direction that we pursue, and it is really those young children, who are on their ways to be-

coming worthwhile productive leaders and citizens in our country, that we need to embrace and that we need to celebrate and really look to them. I think they really are going to be the answer to the solutions that we are hunting for in reducing juvenile violence.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I always appreciate the gentleman from Colorado gracing us with his presence. I did not see any photographs tonight. I was waiting for the family portraits.

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, no juvenile offenders at home.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman mentioned a good point. He started talking about statistics and what unfortunately we had to look forward to.

In fact, I know that some who say that crime is not that much of a problem and that the statistics say that violent crime is going down, and they talk about government programs having worked, and yet why is it that none of us at least who work in this city, why do we not feel safe when we walk down the street?

You mentioned another good point about the violent nature of the offenses being committed by younger and younger offenders. I have had a chance, again in my career as a prosecutor, I have had occasion in the last couple of years to visit with some of the older criminals in the prisons who are actually serving substantial sentences and visiting with them about why they are there and trying to find some solutions.

One of the things that rang out was that these men and some women with extensive criminal resumes were most fearful of the youthful offenders who were just now being sentenced that they were having to be incarcerated with, that these were the ones that had a callous disregard for the difference between right and wrong.

It was just extraordinary to hear these very grizzled criminals that expressed some concern and fear about the youthful offenders that they were having to share cells with.

I know, as the gentleman has worked on the subcommittee, in the old days in, 1950's and 1960's, when our juvenile laws were first crafted and created across the country, a truancy was the most violent or aberrant behavior that we had to deal with. Now rape and murders and assaults and all other types of violent offenses.

I know in the State of Missouri we have been very proactive, that we have held accountable those youthful offenders that commit adult crimes and holding them accountable as adults, while at the same time, as I hear folks argue on the other side of it, we are not throwing away the key on youthful offenders, but there are ways to reach out to those that have not had discipline in their lives, like boot camps or institutional type settings that provide them training and skills that they have not had.

You mentioned some of these volunteer organizations. I think the list goes on and on, things like even scouting, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts or 4-H, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, which provide adult mentors for adolescents.

I think this is a problem that really hopefully the American people realize is not a governmental problem with governmental solutions but really does require all of us to take a little bit of a load and some of the responsibility. I thank the gentleman.

I see my good friend from Kansas, my neighboring State, is also now in the well. I yield to the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. SNOWBARGER].

Mr. SNOWBARGER. Mr. Speaker, if I could, I would like to kind of broaden the discussion a little bit tonight. We have talked a lot about juvenile crime. That is an important part of the discussion of crime altogether. But I think it may have escaped our attention. Last week was victims rights week.

□ 2145

Last week was Victims' Rights Week, but our memories of the victims of crime should not be restricted to a single week of the year, nor should our determination to deal appropriately with violent criminals be limited to lofty speeches and tough resolutions.

The American people know, and they make it clear in survey after survey, that violent crime is a national crisis. And at a time in history when the world was never safer for a democracy, the streets of our country have become even more dangerous. We have largely won what President Kennedy called the long twilight struggle against Communist totalitarianism, but the war against crime goes on in our cities. It is a war we must fight with the same resolve, determination, patience and vigor with which we waged the cold war of the last past half century.

I feel we should take the same approach to crime, particularly juvenile crime, that we have taken to welfare. Congress should permit the States to experiment with different methods for controlling crime rather than impose a one size fits all solution from Washington. It would be foolish to believe that Congress knows better how to fight crime in Kansas City, Kansas than the city council or the Kansas legislature does. It would be equally foolish to suggest that the same crime fighting strategies are equally effective in Los Angeles, California, and Lawrence, Kansas.

However, there are some things that can and should be done by Washington to assist the States in fighting crime. For example, the Clinton administration should be moving more swiftly to create a computerized instant check system to prevent criminals are from purchasing guns. The White House promised that such a system would be in place long ago, and it is time they turned their overheated election year rhetoric on this issue into concrete results.

The administration likes to cite statistics showing that the rate of violent crime is falling, but these figures fail to convey the increasing sense of the coarsening of our culture in which once unspeakable crimes lead the news on a nightly basis. Nor do they convey the preciousness of a loved one so senselessly taken away and the rage that come from the knowledge that it was preventable.

Many Members of this body have, over the last several years, become familiar with the name Stephanie Schmidt. Her parents, Gene and Peggy, are constituents of mine and have lobbied tirelessly for tougher sentences for sex offenders.

Unfortunately, none of us in this body will ever have the pleasure of knowing Stephanie. Three and a half years ago a convicted rapist, who had just served half his sentence before being paroled, kidnapped, raped and murdered the 20 year old college student.

Gene and Peggy, two exceptionally courageous people, turned their grief into action by asking all of us to speak out for Stephanie, as my lapel pin indicates. Along with the parents of other murdered children, they have asked us to look more realistically at the problem of repeat offenders.

The Schmidts have proposed a series of measures that I fully endorse and will be working to enact into law. They are designed to extend reach of what has become known as "Megan's Law". These proposals, which could appropriately be called "Stephanie's Law", are as follows:

First, we should expand the current law requiring all convicted sex offenders to register in the state in which they resides to apply to all violent felony offenders.

Second, the FBI in conjunction with the Justice Department and the Attorney General's office should complete a registry of violent felony offenders from all 50 States. Under current law the FBI is exploring establishing such a list. Congress should require it. We should examine the feasibility of disseminating information in a central registry through avenues such as public libraries or perhaps a 900 phone number, the proceeds from which could finance the registry.

Third, any Federal legislative changes should include a public policy statements urging States to reform their laws dealing with licensing boards and agencies. State boards and agencies should not feel compelled to license or certify any violent felon who is on post release supervision.

Laws by themselves cannot prevent crimes nor can anyone law protect all people from the particular crime it addresses, but that is no excuse for failing to enact the law when its need is so clear.

I will be asking this Congress to speak out for Stephanie, for other victims of violent crime, and for the millions of Americans who live daily in

terror of what awaits them outside their front door.

I appreciate the gentleman's yielding the time.

Mr. HULSHOF. I appreciate that. I notice the gentleman is wearing a particular pin on his lapel. Would he mind sharing with us what that signifies?

Mr. SNOWBARGER. Again this was a pin distributed back in my district by the "Speak Out For Stephanie Foundation" in honor of Crime Victims' Week last week, again we were so focused on taxes that last week, I am not sure if there is any connection here between being victims of crime and talking about taxes, but in any event, we did not give it the attention we needed to last week, and I felt compelled tonight to raise the issue of the victims of violent crime and indicate that Congress does have a role to play in that.

Other areas of criminal law, I prefer to leave to the States.

Mr. HULSHOF. If I could prevail upon the gentleman a little further, I appreciate his comments, and I know before joining this body that he was a leader in the Kansas legislature for a number of years.

What did the State of Kansas do either on crime victim legislation or perhaps dealing with juvenile offenders.

Mr. SNOWBARGER. I will talk specifically about juvenile offenders, because it is amazing to me that Washington is just now catching on to get tough on juvenile crime laws. We did that in Kansas last year.

We often think Washington has the answers to all these questions. They do not. A lot of States out there were before Kansas in submitting and passing legislation that would again treat juvenile offenders as adults when they commit adult crimes, extending the sentences for juveniles, again treating them as adults if they choose to commit crimes like adults would commit.

In the area of victims rights, we passed a constitutional amendment to the State constitution that guaranteed certain rights to victims. I know one of our colleagues from Texas is going to be talking about that same kind of proposal for the U.S. Constitution.

Again, States are already acting on those things, and sometimes I think if we do not understand that States can act more quickly and sometimes in a much more responsive fashion, then we are going to fall into the same trap I think our colleagues in the past have, thinking Washington is the repository of all wisdom.

Mr. HULSHOF. I appreciate the gentleman, especially for his very eloquent voice, and he is right, last week we were focused on our pocketbooks, unfortunately. And National Victims' Rights Week, while it was something we celebrated and recognized back in my home district in Missouri, in fact, while we were in session last week I was told that Fred Goldman, who of course has become a very vocal advocate for the rights of victims actually came to Missouri to champion and to

remind us that the system, the criminal justice system, while it is not perfect, is the best system known in modern civilization.

At the same time that we focus on the rights of the accused, certainly we do not want that system to victimize family a second time after having experienced a very tragic type of crime.

So I appreciate the gentleman joining us tonight. He mentioned the State of Texas, and I see my friend from Texas has joined us, and I would be happy to yield to him, Mr. BRADY.

Mr. BRADY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Missouri for yielding to me.

I want to follow on the comments of our colleague from Kansas about the week that we just passed and some of the issues that were raised.

During National Crime Victims' Rights Week, House Joint Resolution 71 was introduced. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this proposed constitutional amendment which would provide rights for victims of crime, victims of juvenile crime, of State and of Federal crimes.

House Joint Resolution 71 is important to me because, as my friends know, my father was murdered when I was young, when I was 12 years old, leaving my mom to raise five of us by herself. Our family has been through the trial, through a conviction, through sentencing, and even though dad's killer received life in prison without parole, like a lot of families we found ourselves before the parole board fighting to keep him in prison. Unlike a lot of families, we succeeded, but only because this killer happened to be a little built elderly at the time he committed the crime.

House Joint Resolution 71 is important to America because we are a country with two classes of citizens, of those who have been touched by violent crime and those who someday will be. In this House Joint Resolution, in this constitutional amendment, we seek to provide some basic rights that, with the exception of a few enlightened States, are not available today.

We are seeking the right to be included in public proceedings; for victims to know in advance the court proceedings that affect their case; to have the simple right to sit in the courtroom to lend their family support to the victim and, in some cases, to the prosecution, which is the same right that we accord the family of the accused.

The O.J. Simpson trial, which caught much of the world's attention, featured the families of the victims in the courtroom. That is the exception rather than the rule. Today, in most States, clever defense lawyers routinely list and identify the family of victims as potential witnesses only to ensure that they are kept out of the courtroom as a means to isolate the victim's family.

It is a cruel courtroom tactic that features, for the jury's sake, the family

of the accused while isolating the family of the victim. The tactic is routine, it is wrong, and it is a tactic that ought not be tolerated any longer in this country.

As important as presence in these proceedings are, House Joint Resolution 71 guarantees that victims are heard in these public proceedings. It gives us the opportunity to tell the prosecution, the judge, the jury, the parole board members how our family feels about having a criminal released from custody, often only hours after they have committed the crime; how appropriate is a plea bargain; how just is a sentence; and how safe our families will feel when the killer of a child or the rapist of one's wife walks free again in their neighborhood as a result of some parole board's action.

We all agree, clearly, that justice must be sure and must be swift. Unfortunately, our criminal justice system is rarely either. This measure, House Joint Resolution 71, allows victims of crime to seek relief from unreasonable delays in criminal proceedings, which is a key advantage and benefit to those who are in a situation that they never thought imaginable, and hoping that the system will work on their behalf and often finds themselves years and years beyond the offense before any measure of justice is ever served.

We are also seeking the right for victims to seek restitution for crime victims. It permits these families to seek some financial help, to help replace the financial support that literally was stolen from them. For many families these dollars, if they are ever paid, go for basic needs, like health care for their children, clothing, the cost of higher education.

We are providing in House Joint Resolution 71 the right to know when the person who took a child's life or a family member's life, when they escape from prison, the right to know when they are proposed for release from prison. This is such a commonsense basic right to have our safety considered when determining a release for the criminal.

Finally, in House Joint Resolution 71, we want to make sure that victims are made aware of these rights early in the process so that they can take full advantage of these basic, basic rights.

In closing, we pursue the rights in House Joint Resolution 71, the Crime Victims Constitutional Amendment, so that someday in the future, somewhere in America, when a family finds themselves in a situation they never thought could happen to them, that we are able to give them the one thing they most desperately need, which is justice.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's joining us and especially for his eloquence in speaking on behalf of crime victims. I know certainly he raises a number of good points, particularly about parole.

I know that this body has, on occasion, encouraged States to enact

tougher sentencing laws, truth in sentencing, so that when that collective voice of a jury pronounces a sentence on one they have found guilty, that that sentence, a large percentage of that sentence, will actually be served.

I learned this week, in fact, that a man that I helped convict of a crime of murder in Missouri 4 short years ago was up for his first parole hearing this week. I wish that this was an exception to the rule, but, unfortunately, this is all too common.

What has been the gentleman's experience in Texas?

Mr. BRADY. As a prosecutor, the gentleman knows firsthand how frustrating it is to have that revolving door. And even though the States have put tremendous resources into prosecution and law enforcement into their prison systems, expensive prison systems, that is still unfortunately a common occurrence today.

It is devastating to the family, to the victims of these crimes, to have this criminal walk free on the streets after such a short time, in some cases where the trial, in the time it took to receive a sentence, is longer than the sentence that they actually serve.

□ 2200

It is indefensible within our system. The good news is I think Congress has absolutely the will to make these changes and I think we have the ability to do so. I appreciate the gentleman's leadership as President of the Republican freshman class in guiding us, in focusing us on issues of quality of life, not just through the economy and through our society but making sure we have a criminal justice system that from your experience works as well for the victims as it does for the accused.

Mr. HULSHOF. I thank the gentleman for his words. He is exactly right. There is no easy solution to this very difficult problem. But I think we can make some strides and provide some meaningful changes. We have begun that, even in the last Congress, giving credit to the 104th Congress that did provide that victims receive some restitution from those that took something from them, whether it was monetarily or in other ways that sometimes money could not replace but at least providing that right of restitution. But building on that, even as we did earlier in this Congress with providing the right of allocation of victims to attend these hearings, these parole hearings and sentencing hearings and the right to be heard at trial, but there is much more to be done.

I know as the gentleman mentioned, House Joint Resolution 71 that we will be debating in the weeks and months ahead, that we need to continue to focus on the rights of the innocent. We continue to focus, Mr. Speaker, all too often, and rightly so in some instances, the right of those that are accused and certainly those due process rights are there and they should be there but at the same time we believe and I think

we have heard tonight very forcefully spoken by other Republican freshmen Members that the rights of the victims should also be heard as well in courtrooms across this land.

Mr. Speaker, I see that our time is drawing to a close. As a simple comment to sort of bring closure to this discussion, the Founding Fathers recognized that each of us has been given a God-given right, the right to life and to liberty and to the pursuit of happiness. Violent acts that are committed by unrepentant criminals directly violate these God-given inalienable rights. I think it is good of us to take a moment as we did in this last week to focus on the innocent victims of crime and I think we need to continue to speak out not just tonight in a special order but we need to speak out all across this country and not just those of us in this body or not just those back in State legislatures or State senate chambers, or not only in the Governor's mansions around this country but I think it is incumbent on each of us to do our part, whether it is part of a neighborhood watch program or whether it is marching for the victims of crime, for their rights, or in any of these volunteer organizations that we talked about tonight, whatever we can do to help promote and restore the fabric of our society and our community. It is a problem that there is no easy answer to but one that I think we need to continually focus on.

Again I thank the Speaker for allowing us, the 32 Members on the GOP side of this body, to bring to light this problem and some solutions that have worked.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today, on account of family illness.

Mr. DEUTSCH (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today, on account of personal business.

Mr. YATES (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today, on account of back pain.

Mr. RUSH (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today, on account of personal business.

Ms. KILPATRICK (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today, on account of official business.

Mr. SCHIFF (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today and the balance of the week, on account of medical reasons.

Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today, on account of weather-related transportation problems.

Mr. HOEKSTRA (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today, on account of illness in the family.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. SUNUNU) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. GOSS, for 5 minutes, on April 24.

Mrs. KELLY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. METCALF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. JONES, for 5 minutes, on April 24.

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. POMEROY, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. HUNTER, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas) and to include extraneous matter:)

Mr. WEYGAND.

Mr. MANTON.

Mr. MOAKLEY.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.

Mr. HAMILTON.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

Mr. KUCINICH.

Mr. KLECZKA.

Ms. FURSE.

Mr. ACKERMAN.

Mr. STARK.

Ms. LOFGREN.

Mr. FOGLIETTA.

Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut.

Ms. SANCHEZ.

Mr. LANTOS.

Mrs. MEEK of Florida.

Mr. DICKS.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. SUNUNU) and to include extraneous matter:)

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

Mr. SOLOMON.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

Mr. FORBES.

Mr. HAMILTON.

Mr. ROGAN.

Mr. BEREUTER.

Mr. MCINTOSH.

Mr. HYDE.

Mr. DUNCAN.

Mr. GILMAN, in two instances.

Mr. HORN.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. HULSHOF) and to include extraneous matter:)

Mr. FLAKE.

Mr. UPTON.

Mrs. EMERSON.

Mr. PACKARD.

Ms. SANCHEZ.

Mr. DREIER.

Mr. CASTLE.

Mr. SHERMAN.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Oversight, reported that that committee did on the following date present to the President, for his approval, a bill of the House of the following title:

On April 18, 1997:

H.R. 1003. An act to clarify Federal law with respect to restricting the use of Federal funds in support of assisted suicide.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, April 24, 1997, at 10 a.m.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized by various committees, House of Representatives, during the 1st quarter of 1997, a consolidated report of foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Speaker authorized trips during the 4th quarter of 1996 and 1st quarter of 1997, pursuant to Public Law 95-384, as well as reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized by various miscellaneous groups in connection with official foreign travel during the calendar year 1996 and the 1st quarter of 1997, are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JAN. 1 AND MAR. 31, 1997

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. F. James Sensenbrenner	2/16	2/24	Germany		496.00		4,508.05		1,078.17		6,082.22
			Russia		690.00						690.00
			France		648.00						648.00