

nounced that the Senate agrees to the report of the Committee of Conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1906) "An Act making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes."

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COOKSEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. METCALF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. METCALF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1082, the Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

In August, the House Committee on the Judiciary, on which I sit, held a hearing on hate crimes. We heard testimony from Carole Carrington. I am sure my colleagues are familiar with her story.

Her daughter, granddaughter, and a dear family friend were murdered in Yosemite National Park last February. The murderer was finally captured a few months later after brutally murdering another woman near Yosemite.

Why did this man kill these four women? Because they were women. He claims to have fantasized about killing women for the last 30 years. He did not know any of his victims. He targeted them simply because they were women.

Mr. Speaker, this great Nation was founded on the desire for freedom, freedom from oppression, freedom from religious persecution, freedom to participate as full citizens.

Our Nation's founding principles revolve around the concept of individual liberties and the freedom to live our lives in a free and open society. We have long recognized that personal safety and security are essential for a person to exercise the rights and obligations of citizenship.

Governments are created by men and women in part to protect and defend citizens from violence to ensure that they are able to exercise their personal liberties.

Hate crimes are intended to intimidate the victim and to limit those freedoms. Hate crimes are designed by the perpetrators to create fear in the victim. The woman who was attacked on a dark street lives in fear of another attack. The African-American family that has a cross burned on their lawn remembers that threat far after the scorch marks on the grass have been washed away. The gay teenager who is beaten by classmates may never feel safe in school again.

Hate crimes are meant to instill fear. And the fear that hate crimes instill is not simply targeted at the immediate victim. The fear is aimed at members of the group. Hate crimes are different than any other violent crime because they seek to terrorize an entire community, be it burning a cross in someone's yard, the burning of a synagogue, or a rash of gay bashings.

This sort of domestic terrorism demands a strong Federal response because this country was founded on the premise that a person should be free to be who they are without fear of violence.

A member of the other body, the Republican chairman of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, said, "A crime committed not just to harm an individual but out of a motive of sending a message of hatred to an entire community is appropriately punished more harshly, or in a different manner, than other crimes."

I do not know for sure what causes hate. I am sure the expert have some ideas. But fear of the unknown combined with stereotyping of groups that reinforces that fear probably has something to do with it.

I know that hate crime legislation cannot cure the hate that still resides among some in our country, but this legislation can provide more protections for groups who are targeted and send an important message that Congress believes that hate crimes against any group are a serious national problem that deserves to be addressed.

One year ago, a young University of Wyoming student, Matthew Shepard, was brutally murdered because he was gay. We all know the story. But Matthew's murder had a profound personal impact on me. It reminded me that I could be targeted simply because of who I am.

It was at the height of my campaign when they found Matthew's body. The word spread quickly among my many university student volunteers, and I could see the hurt and fear in their eyes as they talked about what happened to this young university student, a person their age.

A number of my volunteers were gay or lesbian and they were in shock. It affected so many of us profoundly and personally.

Hate crimes are an attack on society, an attack on tolerance, an attack on freedom. This Congress ought to act swiftly to pass the Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY).

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. I would like to associate myself with the words of the gentlewoman from Wisconsin for her leadership on this issue.

Let me say directly to the American public, this is desperately needed legislation. We have in our climate today too much anti-Semitism, too much racial hatred, too much homophobia, and people who are singled out based on

those parameters are targeted by those that hate others because of who they are, because of their gender or orientation or color of skin.

This should not be permissive in this society of ours as we enter the 21st century, and we have to deal with this and we have to confront it and we have to educate our children because these crimes are devastating.

We had a boy killed in our community recently in West Palm for the same motivation, because he was gay. We have heard crime after crime similar to these Matthew Shepard cases that are wrenching the heart and soul out of our country.

So I applaud the gentlewoman for her leadership. I join my colleague in urging the Congress to adopt hate crime legislation to federalize these crimes. Because, again, these are not singular acts. These are acts by despicable people who seek out people based on race, gender, sexual orientation. They are mean-spirited and they must be dealt with with the full effect of the law so, hopefully, we can turn the tide on these crimes and get people to recognize that the punishment will be severe, it will be swift, and maybe they will think twice before they inflict their hatred on others.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HATE CRIMES—OTHER NOT-SO-WELL-KNOWN CASES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I do not know where Sylacauga, Alabama, is. But in February of 1999, Billy Jack Gaither, a gay man, was abducted and beaten to death with an ax handle and set afire among burning tires in a remote area.

And frankly, Mr. Speaker, I do not know where Texas City, Texas, is either. But that is a place where two black gay men, Laaron Morris and Kevin Tryals, were shot to death and one of the men was left inside a burning car.

And very frankly, Mr. Speaker, I do not know where Kenosha, Wisconsin, is, although I have heard of it. But that is a place where, in May of 1999, a 27-year-old man intentionally swerved his car onto a sidewalk to run over two African-American teens. After hitting the two cyclists, he left the scene and kept driving until stopped by police. Eight years earlier, the same man ran his car twice into a stopped van carrying five African-American men and drove away.

I do not know where those places are. But very frankly, Mr. Speaker, I think

many Americans do not know where Laramie, Wyoming, was until about a year ago Matthew Shepard, an openly gay 21-year-old university student, was savagely beaten, burned, tied to a wooden fence in a remote area, and left to die in subfreezing temperatures.

There is nothing about these cases that reflects poorly on those individual towns across America. In fact, hate crimes like these, unfortunately, are happening in towns big and small, major metropolises, small neighborhoods all across this country.

Since 1991, when the Department of Justice started keeping hate crime statistics, they found after surveying hundreds of police department law enforcement agencies around this country that about 4,600 hate crimes had been committed. When they did a similar survey in 1997, they found that that number had nearly doubled to over 8,000.

This is an epidemic, Mr. Speaker. Matthew Shepard made us all gasp in horror. But now we in Congress have an opportunity to act.

Not so long ago, in 1990 and 1994, this House did act in passing the Hate Crime Statistics Act and Hate Crimes Sentencing Enhancement Act. But we have seen again and again that that law needs to be strengthened. We learned frankly from cases all across this country that there are problems with the current law that we are obligated to fix.

The Federal prosecution of hate crimes can only happen if the crime is motivated by race, religion, national origin, color, and the assailant intended to prevent the victim from exercising a very narrowly defined protected right, like voting or attending school.

The law is so narrowly written that we are seeing problems with prosecutions all around this country. In 1994, a Federal jury in Fort Worth, Texas, acquitted three white supremacists of Federal civil rights charges arising from unprovoked assaults on African-Americans, including one incident where the defendant knocked the man unconscious as he stood near a bus stop.

□ 1815

Some of the jurors revealed after the acquittal that although they were absolutely convinced that the crime was racially motivated, they could not find that it fit into one of these narrow racially protected activities. The same happened in 1992 when two white men chased a man of Asian descent from a nightclub in Detroit and beat him to death. The Department of Justice, with a great deal of help from the State and locality, tried to prosecute it using the current hate crimes law and failed because the law was too narrowly crafted.

We have an opportunity with the bill that is currently before the House Committee on the Judiciary to deal with this problem, to broaden the

crimes which the Federal Government, with the help of the States and localities, can prosecute. We have seen over and over again that if the Federal Government brings its forces to bear, that we can make a difference.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes this House is criticized for acting only in the face of abject crisis. I believe that that crisis has been shown to us by the horror of Matthew Shepard. Now is the opportunity for us to act in this time of crisis, to pass the Hate Crimes Enhancement Act, to finally begin to do something to stop that increasing trend of hate crimes. I cannot promise anyone in this Chamber that if we were to pass this act, there will not be people with hate in their hearts, there will not be people who do horrific things in small towns and big cities all across this country. But I do know we have an obligation to act, because what happened to Matthew Shepard was not just a blow to that small town, it was not just a blow to gay rights, it was not just a blow to that person's family, it was a blow to our national family. It was a horror that all of us must address.

IN SUPPORT OF THE HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COOKSEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, we are faced with an historic opportunity once again this year to pass legislation to combat violent hate crimes that continue to plague our country.

Last year, despite the brutal killing of Matthew Shepard simply because he was gay, we failed to incorporate the Hate Crimes Prevention Act into a bill to fund the Justice Department. We must not make the same mistake again this year.

In the year that followed Matthew Shepard's death, thousands of hate crimes were committed and Congress failed to protect gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender individuals and others from these heinous crimes.

Tragically, we are all far too familiar with the violent acts of terrorism that are sweeping our country. The August 10 shooting of a Filipino-American letter carrier, shooting to death, three young children who were shot and two adults at the Los Angeles Jewish community center is one of a series of brutal hate crimes that continue to plague victims, families, communities and the Nation. These violent acts come on the heels of the July 4 shooting spree in Illinois and Indiana, and the burning of three synagogues in northern California.

Congress has been far too slow in responding to the hate crimes that continue to threaten our communities all across America. Week after week we hear horror stories of murderers attacking innocent people because they

are, or are perceived, to be members of a certain community, because they are of a particular ethnic group, or thought to be of a particular ethnic group, or race or color or creed or sexual orientation. These hate crimes devastate families and local communities and they also send a chill down the backs of everyone else that belongs to the same group.

Remember, hate crimes are especially odious because they victimize more than just the individual victim, they also are acts of terrorism directed against an entire class of citizens. When a hate crime is committed, it sends a message to every member of the targeted group that they risk their lives simply by being a member of a targeted group. No American should have to be afraid to live in any community because they are threatened with violence because of who they are.

We should instruct the conferees to accede to one version of the Senate language, to agree to add gender and disability and sexual orientation to the Federal hate crimes law. There is a necessity to do this in order so that we can give help to States that have their own hate crimes laws but need Federal assistance in investigating crimes.

The Senate has already passed the Hate Crimes Prevention Act as an amendment to the Commerce, Justice, State and Judiciary appropriations bill which is now in the conference committee. Over the summer, I organized a group of 62 other Members of the House, both Republicans and Democrats, to join together and urge the conferees to include the Hate Crimes Prevention Act in the final appropriations bill. I hope we are successful and that we can pass meaningful reform this fall. It is certainly within our grasp, but we need all the help we can get to urge other Members of the House and of the Senate to include this vital legislation, the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, in the final version of the appropriations bill.

We must all redouble our efforts to pass sensible hate crimes prevention legislation this year. We must continue our fight to protect American families from violent bigotry and from vicious acts of hatred. Our constituents and the citizens of this great country expect no less of us.

IN SUPPORT OF HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today and speak in favor of the Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1999 which is cosponsored by myself and 184 of my colleagues in this House.

Just a few weeks ago, our country was shocked when a gunman entered a Jewish community center in Los Angeles, shooting at innocent children. His intent, and I quote, "sending a message