

laws. The fourth title of the bill authorizes the study of biological and environmental factors that are responsible for an increase in deaths in the eastern gray whale population. Two hundred ninety thousand dollars is authorized for fiscal year 2001, and \$500,000 is authorized for each of fiscal years 2002 through 2004.

Title V of the bill makes a technical correction to the American Fisheries Act (AFA) with regard to two fishing vessels, the *Providian* (United States Official Number 1062183) and the *Hazel Lorraine* (United States Official Number 592211). The 1998 AFA authorized the participation of certain US-owned fishing vessels in the Bering Sea pollock fishery. The AFA was designed to work in conjunction with the license limitation provisions of the fishery management plan developed by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. Certain "qualifying years" were established in order to determine which vessels had earned a "fishing history" to allow them future access to pollock-fishing quotas. During the consideration of the AFA, the special circumstances of many vessels were taken into account. At that time, the fishing vessel *Providian* was being built in a U.S. shipyard as a replacement vessel for the pollock-fishing vessel *Ocean Spray*.

In 1994, the *Ocean Spray* was lost at sea—fortunately without the loss of a single life. Had the *Ocean Spray* not been lost, the vessel would have continued to fish for Bering Sea pollock during the years leading up to the development of the AFA. After the loss of the *Ocean Spray*, the owner-operator followed the replacement guidelines in order to secure his federal fishing permits and endorsement for his new vessel, the *Providian*. According to landing records, it appears that the average pollock harvest of the *Ocean Spray* during the years 1992 through 1994, exceeded 2000 metric tons.

Since the construction on the *Providian* was completed, the owner decided to bring his vessel to Bath, Maine to work in the Maine herring fishery. The current location of this vessel does not eliminate the need to establish fairness and restore the vessel owner's pollock-fishing rights earned with the *Ocean Spray* during 1992–1994. This amendment to the AFA is intended to provide the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service with the authority to qualify the *Providian* under the AFA with directed onshore pollock-fishing rights equivalent to those earned by the *Ocean Spray* during the years 1992–1994.

Mr. President, the authors of the AFA certainly took into account the particular circumstances of other vessel owners and companies. This technical amendment simply qualifies two vessels, the *Providian* and the *Hazel Lorraine* under the AFA for fishing rights that they otherwise should have received allow for the participation of

two additional catcher vessels in the Alaskan pollock fishery. These vessels were able to demonstrate that they should have been included in the Act when it passed in 1998.

I would like to thank Senator KERRY, the ranking member of the Oceans and Fisheries Subcommittee for his hard work and support of this bill. I would also like to thank Senator INOUE for his support, particularly for his contributions to the coral reef conservation section of the bill. In addition, I would like to thank Senator MCCAIN, the chairman of the Commerce Committee, and Senator HOLLINGS, the ranking member of the Committee, for their bipartisan support of this measure. We have before us an opportunity to significantly improve our nation's ability to conserve and manage our marine resources and I urge the Senate to pass H.R. 1653, as amended.

RECOGNITION OF CONGRESSMAN NEIL STAEBLER

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I rise today to acknowledge the life and accomplishments of a distinguished and principled public servant who served as a Member of Congress from my home state of Michigan, Neil Staebler. For nearly six decades, Neil embodied the very ideals on which this nation was founded. Born in 1905, Neil Staebler is widely credited as a founder of the modern Michigan Democratic Party. However, Neil's greatest desire was to make our government work for all its citizens.

Throughout his life, Neil dedicated himself to serving the United States of America. At the age of thirty-seven, he joined the World War II effort by enlisting in the United States Navy, where he served as a lieutenant.

After the conclusion of the war, Neil and a group of other distinguished citizens from Michigan, including former Governor G. Mennen Williams, former Congresswoman and Lieutenant Governor Martha Griffiths, and Martha's husband Hicks, helped to re-shape the Michigan Democratic Party and alter the landscape of Michigan politics. They sought to reinvigorate the Democratic Party and make it more responsive to the will and the needs of Michigan's citizens. Their efforts led to a renewed vibrancy within the Michigan Democratic Party, and propelled Neil to the chairmanship of the Party.

Neil served as state chairman for over a decade, and was able to use his position to encourage active political participation by all people. In addition to serving as state chairman and winning a seat to Congress in 1962, he ran an unsuccessful but hard fought challenge of Governor George Romney in 1964.

While he was a loyal member of the Democratic Party, Neil Staebler was first and foremost committed to our nation's institutions and the need for all citizens to participate in the democratic process. President Gerald Ford

recognized Neil's commitment to civic participation when he appointed him to serve on the first Federal Elections Commission.

Throughout this year's election, people of differing political allegiances have remarked on the stable and resilient nature of our nation's institutions. Our health as a democracy is due, in a large part, to the dedication and efforts of individuals like Neil Staebler. Neil Staebler was one of the true lions of Michigan and American politics. I am sure that my Senate colleagues will join me in honoring the memory of Neil Staebler, and in wishing his wife Burnette and their family well in the years ahead.

THE MILLENNIUM HOLIDAY TREE

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, the wonderful tree currently gracing the West lawn of this Capitol is from Colorado. I have had the pleasure of working towards getting this tree to DC for 2½ years, and I wanted to share with my colleagues a little about my home state's gift to the nation.

The Millennium Holiday Tree is a gift from the entire state of Colorado to our nation. It is a celebration of all that is Colorado: natural beauty, many cultures, cities and rural communities, and our rich history. The Colorado tree will be shining through early January 2001. The Millennium Holiday Tree is a native Colorado Blue Spruce which stands 65' tall and was projected to be 77 years old at the time of cutting. It was grown on the Pike National Forest near the community of Woodland Park. The tree was selected from this area because it is in the shadow of Pikes Peak, often referred to as "America's Mountain".

The Colorado State Forest Service is growing seedlings from the "grandma" tree. Seedlings from the Millennium Holiday Tree will be replanted at the cutting site. The Governor and Francis Owens were among the first to receive a Holiday Tree seedling for their support of this project. Hundreds of seedlings will also be planted in memorial forests around the state as part of Holiday Tree celebrations.

Colorado school children made over 4,000 ornaments for the tree. They each depict the theme: "Valuing the Past—Looking to the Future". Each county had the opportunity to supply 100 ornaments for the Millennium Holiday Tree and the companion trees.

Through the many community events, we celebrated the richness of Colorado. Each reflected the wide range of cultural and historical influences present in our communities—Native American, Hispanics, pioneers, and others. Local celebrations were encouraged in each of Colorado's 64 counties and at each of the 10 stops along the Tree route. Santa Fe Trail communities in Kansas and Missouri joined the celebrations too, including one in St. Louis at a National Park Service historic site. After the cutting ceremony on November 20th, the tree was

moved indoors where the limbs were drawn up and secured for the long journey. A 65-foot trailer, designed to look like a historic Conestoga pioneer wagon, hauled the tree. Organizers used an experimental shrink wrap method to keep the tree fresh and secure from weather damage. The tree traveled caravan-style here to our nation's Capitol following the Santa Fe Trail, a historic trade route through Colorado, Kansas and Missouri. My friend and our colleague from Colorado, Senator BEN NIGHTHORSE CAMPBELL, actually drove the tree carrying truck all the way out here. He told me he had a great time, and I believe him.

Sixty four smaller companion trees, one from each county, traveled with the Millennium Holiday Tree and were placed in various government offices throughout DC.

This entire project was made possible through generous financial and in-kind support from the many sponsors. Volunteers, donations, and sponsorships made it all possible. Unused surpluses from this project will be set aside for a rural endowment fund. The year 2000 will be the 31st year a tree has been provided by the U.S. Forest Service and its partners. And I want to especially thank Dr. Raitano and Bill Nelson for their incredible work on this. They "parented" the project for years and it is due to their efforts it all turned out so well.

"SHALL ISSUE" LEGISLATION IN MICHIGAN

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, late Wednesday night, the Michigan Legislature passed a bill that, if signed, will have a negative impact on public safety in my home state. The legislature passed the "shall issue" bill which would require that local licensing authorities "shall" or must issue a concealed handgun license to a person who passes a background check and a safety course. Notably, the legislature waited until after the election to pass the legislation.

The current law in our state now gives local gun boards discretion to issue concealed gun licenses where a need is shown. Current law allows local gun boards—each made up of a local sheriff, a county prosecutor and a designee of the State police—to determine who should be allowed to carry a concealed handgun. The legislation before the state legislature would take discretion away from local law enforcement and allow virtually any applicant to carry a concealed handgun.

In May of 1999, when the State Legislature last took up this bill, a coalition of law enforcement groups led the fight against it. Law enforcement soundly rejects the proliferation of concealed weapons in our communities and have warned that this legislation will move Michigan in a dangerous direction.

The Michigan Law Enforcement Coalition issued the following statement about the bill:

Current law authorizes a local gun board made up of local law enforcement officials to issue CCW [Carry Concealed Weapons] licenses to those citizens who show a demonstrated need to carry a concealed weapon. Legislation that would shift the burden of proof, requiring the board to issue a permit unless it can state a reason, is a state-mandated "shall issue" bill and eliminates local control.

The Michigan Law Enforcement Coalition opposes any legislation which strips local gun boards of their discretion and shifts the burden of proof from the applicant to the gun board.

The Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police issued this statement:

This bill not only puts citizens at risk but will also effect law enforcement officers trying to do a difficult and dangerous job. Officers, already concerned due to the proliferation of handguns, would have even more apprehension knowing that the odds of confronting a concealed weapon have been multiplied. The presence of a gun can make any situation more dangerous. A gun can turn routine arguments into episodes of serious injury or death. During stressful times reasonable people do unreasonable things. The shouting match over a parking space or the fist fight at a sporting event can escalate into a shoot-out when guns are more accessible. Already nearly one-third of all murders committed are the result of an argument according to the FBI's Uniform Crime Report.

The Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police urges the Michigan Legislature to refrain from allowing the proliferation of concealed weapons without adequate safeguards by county licensing authorities. An armed society is a frightened and dangerous society.

Law enforcement groups were joined in their opposition to this bill by religious leaders, child advocates, and community leaders. Groups such as the Michigan Catholic Conference, Michigan PTA, Michigan Municipal League, Michigan's Children, Michigan Library Association, Michigan Association of Elementary and Middle School Principals, Michigan Association of Non-public Schools-Parent Network, Michigan Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence, Michigan Association of Theatre Owners, and National Conference for Community and Justice are unified against the "shall issue" standard.

Mr. President, I am disappointed that the Michigan Legislature passed this bill. I believe "shall issue" is wrong for Michigan and I have urged the Governor to veto the bill. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter I sent to the Governor.

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

DECEMBER 13, 2000.

Hon. JOHN ENGLER,
Governor of the State of Michigan,
Lansing, MI.

DEAR GOVERNOR ENGLER: I am writing to urge you to veto the "shall issue" legislation which recently passed the Michigan Legislature.

The "shall issue" legislation would make us less safe according to those best in a position to know. That's why it is opposed by a broad coalition of law enforcement groups such as the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police and the Michigan Police Legislative

Coalition (which includes the Michigan State Police Troopers Association, the Michigan State Police Command Officers Association, the Michigan Association of Police, the Police Officers Labor Council, Detroit Police Lieutenants and Sergeants Association, Detroit Police Officers Association, Warren Police Officers Association, and Flint Police Officers Association).

Law enforcement officers, who undergo an initial 72 hours of firearms training as well as annual re-training, have warned that allowing thousands more private citizens to carry concealed handguns would pose significant threats to public safety. It is unrealistic to expect citizens with a fraction of the training to demonstrate the same precautions and the same judgment as police officers. There is no justification for making the already difficult and dangerous job of an officer even more difficult and dangerous by increasing the number of concealed handguns on the streets.

I am also concerned that an increase in concealed weapons licenses will effectively expand an exception in the Brady background check system. The "Brady Law" provides that licensed gun dealers are not required to initiate criminal background checks if the purchaser presents a state-issued license to carry a firearm which was issued within five years. This would mean that people who have committed crimes after they have received concealed carry licenses would be able to purchase additional guns with no background checks unless and until their licenses are revoked.

Although the "shall issue" legislation allows the State to suspend or revoke a license if the license holder has committed a potentially disqualifying crime, the experiences of other states with such laws show that revocation doesn't happen instantly or always successfully. Some states with "shall issue" laws have acknowledged mistakenly issuing hundreds of licenses to applicants with prior convictions. Once those persons manage to slip through the screening process for concealed gun licenses that one time, they are then able to buy guns without further background checks for five years.

Earlier this year, all eyes turned to Michigan after the tragic shooting death of Kayla Rolland. Now, nearly ten months later, the people of Michigan want all of us to work toward decreasing the amount of gun violence in their schools and community places, not increasing the proliferation of guns in our neighborhoods and on our streets. The people of Michigan reject the notion that they will be unsafe in public places if not armed. I urge you to do the same and to veto the "shall issue" legislation, leaving local gun boards in charge of these often life and death decisions.

Sincerely,

CARL LEVIN.

RECOMMENDATION OF GLENN A. FINE

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I want to voice my support today for Glenn Fine, who would truly be an outstanding Inspector General at the Department of Justice. As you know, the Inspector General is charged with investigating waste, fraud, abuse and corruption. As such, it is a position of critical importance that we should have filled before adjourning for the year to ensure accountable and effective oversight of the DOJ.

Mr. Fine has been dealing with corruption ever since the Harvard-Boston