

a discriminatory practice known as "wear away." This practice prevents older and longer service workers from earning new benefits under the cash-balance plan until that benefit exceeds the original promised benefit. We must end the practice of wear away immediately.

Our amendment calls on Congress to enact legislation this year requiring, at a minimum, that employers provide workers with adequate notice of a change in their pension plan that reduces future benefits. It also prohibits the discriminatory practice of wear away. Our amendment makes clear that Congress will take whatever action is necessary to assure older workers that they will not be short-changed when it comes to their retirement security. It is long past time for Congress to act and protect our older and longer service workers. We value older workers in America—we don't "wear them away."

— GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I rise today in support of S. 2390 which Senator DEWINE introduced yesterday. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this legislation. I know that, unlike additional infringements on the constitutional rights of law-abiding Americans, this bill will effectively reduce gun violence and save lives.

Like many of my colleagues, I am extremely concerned about gun violence. In my home state of Arkansas, there are several cities which have long been plagued by extraordinarily high levels of violence and murder, largely fueled by illegal guns, gangs, and drug trafficking. According to the 1998 Uniform Crime Reports, Little Rock, with a population of 176,377, North Little Rock with a population of 60,619, and Pine Bluff, with a population of 54,062, had 25, 8, and 17 murders respectively. The rate of murder per 100,000 inhabitants in North Little Rock-Little Rock was 10.3 and it was 33.8 in Pine Bluff and significantly exceeded the national rate of 6.3 murders per 100,000 inhabitants. Nonetheless, I have received literally thousands of letters from Arkansas asking me not to support additional gun control measures, but rather to simply enforce the laws already in effect.

My constituents are right. We do not need more gun laws. We just need to enforce those already on the books. The facts show that the Clinton Administration has not done this; from 1992 to 1998 prosecutions of defendants who use a firearm in connection with a felony have decreased nearly 50 percent, from 7,045 to approximately 3,800. In addition, while more than 500,000 convicted felons and other prohibited purchasers have been prevented from purchasing firearms from federally licensed firearms dealers under the Brady Handgun Violence Prevent Act, only 200 of these persons have been referred to the United States Department

of Justice for prosecution. I have carefully studied the Project Exile program in Richmond, Virginia and am convinced that it saves lives. Before Project Exile was implemented, Richmond was one of the nation's murder capitals, and Project Exile resulted in a 40 percent reduction in the number of murders committed with firearms. That is why for the past several months, I have been working to implement Arkansas Exile. By supporting S. 2390, I hope to obtain the additional funding necessary to allow Arkansas and other states to implement a program proven to reduce gun violence.

Finally, I support S. 2390 because it is the right approach. The President and many of my Senate colleagues condemn firearms, which are inanimate objects, and the gun industry while ignoring and working to overturn the well-established legal principle and a third-party's criminal act is an unforeseeable event for which a merchant may not be held liable. I am saddened and alarmed that the President and cities throughout the nation are using the vast resources for their governments to force the gun industry to take responsibility for the acts of criminals, and I am determined to do all I can do that the criminals, not the gun industry and law-abiding Americans, are held responsible for gun violence.

— WRONGFUL IMPRISONMENT OF 13 IRANIAN JEWS

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on behalf of the thirteen Iranian Jews wrongfully imprisoned and facing trial in Iran. I join with concerned people of all faiths around the nation, and the world, in calling for the observation of fundamental human rights and the ultimate goal of freedom for these innocent people.

Iran has recently taken some positive steps away from political and religious repression toward the acceptance of freedom, justice, and democracy. Reforms, however, have been marred by a disheartening lack of concern for the human rights of religious minorities in Iran. Throughout my life, I have been committed to furthering fundamental human rights, especially religious freedom, for both Americans and people throughout the world. Therefore, I was deeply concerned by the February 1999 arrest of thirteen Iranian Jews informally accused of spying for Israel and the United States. Today, ten of the thirteen are still in jail awaiting trial, while the other three have been released on bail. This situation is especially troubling because these innocent community and religious leaders could face the death penalty if convicted.

Mr. President, this entire legal ordeal has been filled with Iranian Constitutional violations and shrouded in secrecy. For instance, the thirteen have never been formally charged or indicted. This should be the first step

in any legal proceeding, but it now appears almost certain the defendants will not know the charges they face until the trial begins. As a former Attorney General of Missouri, I fully appreciate what a daunting, if not impossible, task it would be to build a credible defense without knowing the charges.

Additionally, although it appears the Iranian government might have recently reversed its previous position and agreed to allow the thirteen to choose their own legal counsel, the judge in the case has refused access to the defendants by their chosen attorneys. Beyond the seriously limiting results of this decision, the chosen attorneys cannot officially become the defendant's counsel until the necessary legal documents are signed, which will not occur until the attorneys and defendants meet. The courts have created one of the worst "Catch-22s" I have seen.

It also troubles me that the trial will be conducted in secrecy. After repeated requests by international observers and the press, the decision to keep the trial secret has been affirmed by the courts. For these obvious reasons, I believe it likely that the thirteen will not receive a fair and impartial trial.

The members of the Jewish Iranian community, who out of respect and fear of the Islamic majority rarely speak out in public, have even made an uncharacteristic plea to the Iranian government. I join with this community in asking for all defendants in Iran, regardless of religion or standing, to have access to legal counsel of their own choosing, and to be afforded the requirements of Iranian law for fair and open trials. In addition, I urge the Iranian government to grant permission for the ten jailed Iranian Jewish defendants to go home on furlough for Passover, which begins on the evening of April 19th, if the proceedings have not yet been completed.

Mr. President, I rise today in support of the basic principles of human rights and religious freedom. The Iranian government must do the right thing and provide these defendants their fundamental rights, and the International Community must use all available pressure and diplomatic avenues to influence them to do so. And the United States Government should demonstrate real leadership by diligently working to see the ultimate release of these thirteen Jewish Iranian defendants.

— THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, April 11, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,763,650,722,859.87 (Five trillion, seven hundred sixty-three billion, six hundred fifty million, seven hundred twenty-two thousand, eight hundred fifty-nine dollars and eighty-seven cents).

Five years ago, April 11, 1995, the Federal debt stood at \$4,871,386,000,000

(Four trillion, eight hundred seventy-one billion, three hundred eighty-six million).

Ten years ago, April 11, 1990, the Federal debt stood at \$3,084,969,000,000 (Three trillion, eighty-four billion, nine hundred sixty-nine million).

Fifteen years ago, April 11, 1985, the Federal debt stood at \$1,730,073,000,000 (One trillion, seven hundred thirty billion, seventy-three million).

Twenty-five years ago, April 11, 1975, the Federal debt stood at \$511,156,000,000 (Five hundred eleven billion, one hundred fifty-six million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,252,494,722,859.87 (Five trillion, two hundred fifty-two billion, four hundred ninety-four million, seven hundred twenty-two thousand, eight hundred fifty-nine dollars and eighty-seven cents) during the past 25 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

COMMEMORATION OF 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COUNSELING CENTER OF MILWAUKEE, INC.

• Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today to commend an organization that has provided high quality mental health, residential, case management, prevention, treatment and outreach services to adults, youth and families in the Greater Milwaukee area for thirty years. This organization is the Counseling Center of Milwaukee, Inc.

The Counseling Center of Milwaukee came from humble beginnings. Established in 1970 in the basement of Milwaukee's St. Mary's Hospital, it merged with the organization Pathfinders for Runaways in 1971. The Center has since grown into a \$2.3 million agency with 100 paid and volunteer staff.

In working to fulfill its vision statement of putting more people in charge of their lives, connecting to others and contributing to their communities, the Counseling Center of Milwaukee provides both individual and family services including education, counseling, providing emergency shelter and mentoring.

The Counseling Center serves a variety of clients, most of whom are low income and most from the city of Milwaukee. The Counseling Center has always been a place where clients could turn when they had nowhere else to go. Through public and private funding, the Counseling Center provides service to anyone in need, regardless of their ability to pay. This includes more than 7,000 citizens in the Greater Milwaukee area served in 1999.

I am proud to join in celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Counseling Center of Milwaukee. I thank the dedicated employees and volunteers of the Center for their significant contributions to the mental health of the citizens of my state, and wish them a prosperous future.●

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

• Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize National Library Week and pay tribute to those dedicated individuals who, through their passion for books and learning, make our libraries places of great discovery.

If a child wants to know everything there is to know about space, you could send them up there in a rocket ship. If they're interested in tornadoes, you could send them out after one with a crew of storm chasers. If they'd like to meet George Washington, you could even send them back in time. You could—if you just knew how.

Or, you could send them to the library instead.

National Library Week is April 9–15, and there's no better place than our libraries for bringing the world and the events that shape it—past and present—to life. Fortunately, a child doesn't need any special gadgets to experience all the library has to offer; they just need a library card.

As Congress debates important issues like the federal budget and how to save Social Security, the library is also an excellent place for young people to learn more about government and what's happening in Washington. And of course, the librarians are always there to help.

On the occasion of National Library Week, I urge all Americans to check out a book—and "check out" all the riches their local library has to offer.●

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

• Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, boxer Muhammad Ali once said, "Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth." Minnesota's volunteers exemplify that philosophy, and during National Volunteer Week, April 9–15, we celebrate their passion for their communities.

National Volunteer Week offers an opportunity to salute the millions of dedicated men, women, and young people for their efforts and their commitment to serve. Volunteers are one of this nation's most valuable resources, making this year's Volunteer Week theme—"Celebrate Volunteers!"—very appropriate.

Minnesotans can be proud that our state has one of the highest rates of volunteerism in the nation. While 56 percent of Americans volunteer nationally, two-thirds of all Minnesotans give back to their communities through volunteering. According to state officials, this show of strength returns \$6.5 billion a year in donated hours to Minnesota communities.

Thanks to the many Minnesota volunteers who help make our communities better, more compassionate places to live. For those who have yet to discover the joy that comes from serving others, I invite them to get involved—and remember the words of Henry David Thoreau: "One is not born into the world to do everything but to

do something." Volunteering is truly your opportunity to do something.●

IN MEMORY OF LEE PETTY

• Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I rise today to remember auto racing's Lee Petty, who died last week at the age of 86. A pioneer of the sport, he claimed 55 titles, including the inaugural Daytona 500 in 1959, before a 1961 collision ended his competitive career. His son Richard carried the torch with style, collecting seven Winston Cup trophies and establishing a fan base Lee Petty could have only dreamed of back in the late 1940s when he was scorching North Carolina dirt tracks. But it doesn't end there. Lee's grandson, Kyle, a good friend of mine, continues to find success on the NASCAR circuit and Lee's 17-year-old great-grandson, Adam, recently made his NASCAR debut.

The name Petty has become synonymous with racing, and for good reason. Lee Petty had the foresight to invest in a sport with little pedigree but a heaping portion of American guts and glory. He understood that a driver's personality was often as powerful as the car he drove, and spectators would pay good money to go along for the ride. His empire, Petty Enterprises, bears witness to the clarity of that vision, having produced 271 race winners and 10 NASCAR champions.

Despite great success, Lee Petty never acted like a superstar. He lived with his wife, Elizabeth, in the same modest house where they had raised their children. Perhaps humbleness, and a willingness to brave the hot sun for hours to sign autographs, will prove to be Lee Petty's greatest contribution to American sports. An editorial in Charleston, SC's daily newspaper, the Post and Courier, concludes: "In a day where money seems to be the overriding concern of so many athletes, Lee Petty was a reminder of what is important in the sporting world—and why folks gravitate toward the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing. Lee Petty's grown-up NASCAR has never forgotten that a professional sport should be family- and fan-oriented." The patriarch of one of professional sports' most celebrated families, Lee Petty has left a legacy that will linger over American racetracks for generations to come.●

COMMENTS ON VIETNAM

• Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, we have all read a lot on Vietnam, but nothing more thoughtful than the brief comments by Charleston, S.C.'s Charles T. "Bud" Ferillo, Jr. in the College of Charleston magazine, "The Cistern." Mr. Ferillo, a 1972 graduate of the college, served in Vietnam. I ask that his comments be printed in the RECORD.

The comments follow:

PERSPECTIVES

(By Charles T. (Bud) Ferillo, Jr.)

Well before I was drafted, I viewed America's involvement in Vietnam a political