

who commit suicide. They are kids who are gang bangers shooting up innocent people. They are kids who are playing with their playmates.

The gun tragedy continues in America, and this Congress refuses to do anything. Many of us come to the floor of the Senate on a regular basis as a reminder to our colleagues in Congress that this issue will not go away because gun violence is not going away, and we need to do something to make America safer.

Since Columbine, thousands of Americans have been killed by gunfire. Until we act, the Democratic leadership in the Senate who supports this gun safety legislation will read some names into the RECORD of those who lost their lives to gun violence in the past year and will continue to do so every day the Senate is in session. In the name of those who have died and their families, we will continue this fight.

The following are the names of just some of the people killed by gunfire 1 year ago on the dates that I mention. On June 19, 1999, these were the gun victims in just some of the States and some of the cities across America:

Milton Coleman, 58, Gary, IN; Darnell Green, 28, Gary, IN; Ronald Hari, 25, Chicago, IL; David Jackson, 23, St. Louis, MO; Andre Johnson, 24, Detroit, MI; Eien Johnson, 19, Detroit, MI; Nakia Johnson, 22, Philadelphia, PA; Lewis Lackey, 47, Baltimore, MD; Malcolm Mitchell, Gary, IN; Mann Murphy, 76, Detroit, MI; Robert Rodriguez, 31, Houston TX; Donnell Roland, 20, Kansas City, MO; Denise Wojciechowski, 33, Chicago, IL; an unidentified male, 36, Long Beach, CA; another unidentified male, 53, Nashville, TN; another unidentified male, 19, Newark, NJ.

In addition, since the Senate was not in session on June 17 or June 18, I ask unanimous consent that the names of those who were killed by gunfire last year on June 17 and June 18 be printed in the RECORD.

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

JUNE 17

Donald R. Gauldin, Pine Bluff, AR; Phillip Martello, 18, New Orleans, LA; Lee Martindale, 14, St. Louis, MO; Marcus D. Miller, 18, Chicago, IL; Larry Mitchell, 19, Dallas, TX; Raymond Reed, 71, Charleston, SC; Molly Roberts, 15, Houston, TX; Norberto Rodriguez, 26, San Antonio, TX; Philip M. Spears, 51, Houston, TX; and Tony Williams, 19, Chicago, IL.

JUNE 18

Warren Cunningham, 33, Charlotte, NC; Barron Howe, 31, Washington, DC; Daniel Metcalf, 31, Washington, DC; Tony Muse, Detroit, MI; Adam W. Newton, 36, Oklahoma City, OK; Nysia Reese, 15, Philadelphia, PA; Jeffrey Rhoads, 37, York, PA; Coartney Robinson, 20, Dallas, TX; Debra Rogers, 45, Dallas, TX; and Damian Santos, 20, Bridgeport, CT.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the reason these names are being read is to share with my colleagues in the Senate the fact that this is not just another

issue. The issue of gun safety and gun violence in America is an ongoing tragedy, a tragedy which we will read about in tomorrow morning's paper and the next morning's paper and every day thereafter until we in this country come forward with a sensible gun safety policy to keep guns out of the hands of those who misuse them.

I have seen the National Rifle Association, Mr. Heston, and all of his claims about second amendment rights to the ownership of guns. I believe people have a right to own guns, so long as they do so safely and legally, but I do not believe there is a single right under our Constitution—not one—that does not carry with it a responsibility.

There is a responsibility on the part of gun owners across America to buy their guns in a way that will keep guns out of the hands of those who would misuse them and to store their guns in a way so they are safely away from children who would use guns and hurt themselves and others, and not to demand guns in America that have no legitimate sport, hunting, or self-defense purpose.

Most Americans agree with what I have just said. I think it is a majority opinion in this country. It is clearly not the feeling of the Republican leadership in the Senate and the House of Representatives. They have continued to bottle up this legislation which would move us closer to the day when we have a safer society and when families and communities across America can breathe a sigh of relief that the crime statistics and gun statistics about which we read are continuing to go down and not up.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the last item I want to address today is relative to a suggestion by the Vice President of the United States to create what is known as a Medicare lockbox. There have been many suggestions made during the course of this Presidential campaign about Social Security and Medicare. It is no surprise. There are hardly any programs in Washington, DC, that affect so many people and affect the quality of life of so many families across America. I am proud to be a member of the Democratic Party which, under Franklin Roosevelt, created Social Security.

We took a group of Americans—our parents and grandparents, the seniors in America, who were literally one of the most impoverished classes in our society—and said: With Social Security, we will create for you a safety net. With this safety net, when you go into retirement in your senior years, you are going to have some peace of mind that you will not be destitute and poor and have to depend on your children for your livelihood.

Social Security has worked. It has now become a very bipartisan program—and it should. Democrats, Republicans, and Independents alike un-

derstand that this safety net for seniors and for disabled people in our country really makes America a better place.

In the 1960s, President Lyndon Johnson—another Democrat—came up with the idea of Medicare. It was not a new one. President Truman had proposed some version of it earlier, and others had talked about it. President Johnson, with his legislative skill, was able to pass Medicare.

In Medicare, we said we would create for America a health insurance program for the elderly. This again was considered socialistic, radical, by its critics. They said America does not need this, that everything will be just fine.

Yet we see what has happened since we introduced and passed the Medicare program. Seniors are living longer. They are more independent. They are healthier. They are active. They are leading great lives because of the combination of Social Security and Medicare.

Many of us want to take care that in the midst of any Presidential debate about these two programs, we do not go on any risky escapade that could endanger the life of these programs. There are too many people who depend on them; and not just the seniors, but their children who expect Social Security and Medicare to be there.

George W. Bush, the Governor of Texas, and soon to be the Republican nominee for President, has proposed changing the Social Security system so that there could be a private investment factor so that individuals could direct the investment of some of their Social Security funds into private investments.

On its face, a lot of people who own stocks and mutual funds across America would say: Goodness, that gives me a chance to increase the amount of money I can put into these types of investments. Perhaps if the stock market continues to do well, I will profit from it. It is a surface reaction you might expect that is positive among some American families. But the real issue is, how would we come up with the same level of protection in Social Security if we started taking money out and letting people direct it as they care to in their own private investments?

The basic benefits on which many elderly depend for almost all of their retirement income could be cut by as much as 40 percent. How can that be, if George Bush is only talking about a few percentage points of investment?

Social Security is a pay-as-you-go program. The amount of money we collect in the payroll taxes goes out to pay today's seniors. When I become a senior citizen, eligible for Social Security—if I live that long—I will be paid by the current wage earners in the payroll tax that is collected from them.

It is a pay-as-you-go system. If at any point in time you want to remove some 2 percent, or whatever the number might be, of the money that workers are paying into Social Security, it

has a direct impact on today's seniors because they do not have the pool of money coming in to sustain today's Social Security needs.

So when there is a proposal made to cut back the amount of contribution by individuals to give them 2 percent of whatever it might be for their own self-directed investment, the obvious question is, Who will pay it? Who will pick up the difference?

The basic Social Security benefit is pretty modest across America, but it is important. For workers with a history of average earnings who retired in 1999 at age 62—most people retire before they reach the age of 62, incidentally—their monthly benefit is \$825. For the lower earner, the benefit is \$501 a month. Despite these modest amounts, Social Security is the major source of retirement income—50 percent or more—for 63 percent of the older population.

The whole point of having Social Security is to provide workers with a predictable retirement benefit.

Mr. Bush's plan affects these basic retirement benefits in two ways.

First, the program has a long-term deficit of about 2 percent of payroll. The deficit isn't Governor Bush's creation, by any means. It confronts anybody attempting to reform the system. But Governor Bush's proposal makes the problem worse by pledging not to add any new money to the Social Security system.

Vice President GORE has said, let's take the surplus and pay down the national debt by paying off the internal debt of Social Security and Medicare. We collect \$1 billion in taxes a day from businesses, families, and individuals to pay interest on our national debt.

I think the most responsible thing we can do, in a time of surplus, is to take the extra dollars and reduce that debt and reduce the interest we pay and our children will pay for things we did many years ago. I know that is conservative. It isn't as flashy as proposing tax cuts. But I think it is sound. We do not know if these surpluses will be there forever, but as long as they are here, let us pay down the debt of this country. That is the position of President Clinton, Vice President GORE, and the Democratic side of the aisle.

On the other side, from Republican Governor Bush, and many Republican leaders, we are told, no, no, no, take this surplus, as it exists, give tax cuts to certain people, and change the Social Security system, and do not address the fundamental concern about this \$6 trillion national debt we continue to finance on a daily basis to the tune of \$1 billion a day in Federal tax collections.

I hope during the course of this debate on reforming Social Security, whether the proposal is from the Democrats or the Republicans, that families across America will look long and hard at whether these proposals

are in fact honest, whether they use real numbers, whether they really affect the future of America in a positive way and can continue this economic growth we have seen, and whether they are in fact the kinds of things which reflect the values of this country.

When we take a look at some of the proposals coming from the candidates in the Presidential race, particularly on Governor Bush's part, I do not think they meet that test.

I am going to close now because I see my colleague from Arkansas has come to the floor.

Mr. President, I yield the floor to Senator LINCOLN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KYL). The Senator from Arkansas.

THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT AND THE SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I rise to call attention to the needs of our Nation's seniors. Although Social Security, Medicare reform and prescription drugs make daily headlines in newspapers across the country and are the topic of Congressional and Presidential debates, there are two other important programs for seniors which do not receive the media attention they deserve. These two programs are the Older Americans Act and the Social Services Block Grant.

As a member of the Senate Special Committee on Aging and a Senator representing the State with the highest poverty rate among seniors, I want to reinforce to my colleagues in the Senate the importance of these two programs, which are lifelines to low-income, homebound and frail seniors.

First, we need to reauthorize the Older Americans Act. It is our country's main vehicle for providing a wide range of social services and nutrition programs to older men and women. Unfortunately, the Older Americans Act has not been reauthorized since 1995—absolutely inexcusable—making this the sixth year without a reauthorization of such a vital program for our Nation's senior. Because this year marks the 35th anniversary of the Older Americans Act, Congress has a unique and timely opportunity to improve the Older Americans Act.

If we don't act, we will be sending the wrong message to our Nation's seniors. We would be telling them that they are not a priority in this Nation. This is absolutely the wrong message to be sending to those who helped create this incredible prosperity in our Nation. I say to my colleagues, we can do better. We must do better.

The South not only has some of the highest poverty rates among seniors, but the South is the home of the majority of seniors in the country. Here are some statistics that might surprise you: Florida, West Virginia and Arkansas rank among the top five States nationally with the highest percentage of seniors over the age of 55; through 2020,

the South will see an 81 percent increase in its population of persons age 65 to 84 years of age; and for people age 85 and over, that increase in the South will be 134 percent—phenomenal in terms of what we will see in the South with elderly individuals dependent on programs that the Older Americans Act provides—and over half of all elderly African Americans live in the South.

Based on these compelling statistics and the pending "age wave" that is coming to the South, the time to act is now. We must update the formula used to calculate Older Americans Act funds so Southern states receive their fair share of the funds. Currently, 85 percent of Older Americans Act funds are distributed to States based on 1985 numbers. This is neither fair to southern States nor is it good public policy to be using such outdated information. Without a formula update, States like Arkansas, and other southern States, with greater numbers of seniors will continue to be expected to do too much with absolutely too little.

Each year Title III funding provides seniors around the country with hot, nutritious meals in senior centers and other congregate settings. In addition, millions of meals are delivered each year to homebound men and women who rely on this program not only for nutrition, but for companionship and human contact which volunteers provide when they visit the person each day. I have made those rounds with constituents, delivering meals on wheels to our seniors in rural areas. It means so much to have someone bring a nutritious meal and to visit.

For many seniors, the only human contact they have each day is with the person who delivers their meals. During extreme weather conditions, home-delivered meal volunteers are able to check on seniors and make sure they are not ill or suffering from extreme heat or cold.

In Arkansas, we deliver 2 million home meals a year to the elderly and provide another 2 million congregate meals. However, many seniors are still unable to receive meals. About 1,300 frail, homebound elderly men and women are on waiting lists for home-delivered meals. This number only represents a fraction of low-income seniors who need meals but can't get them, because those living in rural areas that are not served by programs like Meals on Wheels are not counted for waiting lists.

Here is a story which was sent to me by an Area Agency on Aging caseworker from Fulton County, AR. She writes about a couple by the name of John and Reba.

John and Reba live in a mobile home near Salem, Arkansas. They started receiving home delivered meals in October 1999. Both of them are physically handicapped and are barely able to get around. John is on oxygen and has severe heart problems. Reba has heart problems and arthritis.

At the time they began receiving meals they were physically and financially burdened and didn't know how they would buy