

of dollars; and even worse, the overseas berets may actually be more expensive so U.S. taxpayers will get stuck with a bigger bill.

Mr. Speaker, I am circulating a letter to President Bush urging him to review this shortsighted decision. I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join with me.

DEBT REDUCTION

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, in order to be a leader, one has to have credibility. If you do not have a record of accomplishment on an issue, people simply will not listen.

It is worth pointing out that for almost four consecutive decades, Congress was run by our Democratic friends, and never, not once, did they ever balance the Federal budget. Never once did they pay back a dime on the public debt.

Mr. Speaker, I am not pointing this out to be partisan. I am pointing it out because now it is those same Democrats who are claiming President Bush's tax relief package will keep us from paying down the debt.

Look at the Republican record: Almost immediately after taking control of Congress, Republicans started balancing the budget, paying down our public debt. Four years in a row, we balanced the budget. Four years in a row, we paid down on the public debt.

We already paid near half a trillion dollars. We are paying down the public debt; and in 10 years, we will have paid off every dime available to be paid.

If we stick with the President's plan, there will be enough for tax relief, Social Security, education and paying off our public debt.

BERETS SHOULD ONLY BE MADE IN AMERICA AND WORN BY THE ELITE ARMY RANGER FORCE

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. First, the Air Force bought Chinese boots. Now, the Pentagon is buying berets made in China. The Pentagon said China is cheaper. Unbelievable. What is next? At 17 cents an hour, will the Pentagon hire Chinese soldiers?

Unbelievable. Think about it. The beret once signified our elite ranger force. Now it is about to become a product of communism.

Beam me up. What has happened to the common sense of America? I say it is time to tell the Pentagon we can hire generals and admirals a lot cheaper from China, too.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the fact that the berets should only be made in America and should only be worn by the elite Army ranger force.

BAD DECISION-MAKING REGARDING BLACK BERETS

(Mr. DUNCAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, the decision to give black berets to all Army troops rather than just to rangers who earned them was a bad decision.

Far worse was the decision to order these berets from a Chinese firm rather than an American firm which could have done them for far less costs.

This was apparently done so the berets could be delivered by the Army's birthday in June.

It would really have made no difference at all to have them given out on some later historic day and have saved millions for our taxpayers.

This decision shows once again that bureaucrats can rationalize and justify almost anything and will almost never admit a mistake.

Mr. Speaker, I say bureaucrat because, by this decision, General Shinseki has acted more like an arrogant bureaucrat than a soldier. Also, by giving this work to Chinese rather than American workers, especially in a slow economy and especially when Americans could have done it at millions less in cost, was both unwise and harmful to this Nation and its workers.

We seem at times, Mr. Speaker, to be giving our own country away.

PRESIDENT'S TAX CUT IS PARTISAN ISSUE

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, last week, the House voted for the President's signature proposal, a cut in income taxes heavily tilted towards millionaires and billionaires.

Republican National Committee Chairman Jim Gilmore highlighted my no vote as evidence, he says, that I do not want to see lower taxes for my constituents.

My district in Northeast Ohio is not heavily tilted towards the millionaires and billionaires whom President Bush and the Republican Party Chair Gilmore want to help. Most of the people I represent are middle-income people or lower-income working families working their way up.

The right kind of tax cut would mean something to them. Unfortunately, that is not what the President delivered.

Medicare means something to the people in my district. The President's plan uses an accounting trick to siphon funds for the Medicare trust fund. Medicare cannot afford that. The elderly people in my district cannot afford that.

Mr. Speaker, tax cuts are not a partisan issue, but this tax cut is. If the President would work with us on a tax cut that would benefit all Americans,

we could easily pass one in this body, but I could not support a bill which gives tax cuts to the wealthiest people, robs Medicare and fails to pay down the national debt.

SUNDRY MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Sundry messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

STABILIZATION AND PACIFICATION OF SOUTHERN SERBIA ACT

(Mr. BEREUTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member today is introducing legislation entitled the Stabilization and Pacification of Southern Serbia Act. This bill is a response to the ongoing violence in southern Serbia and in Macedonia that has been fomented by Albanian extremists seeking to create a greater Kosovo by annexing areas of Macedonia and southern Serbia that also contain large concentrations of Albanians.

This legislation would terminate U.S. economic assistance for Kosovo on June 30, 2001, unless the President certifies that citizens or residents of Kosovo are no longer providing assistance to the extremists that are responsible for the worsening situation in both southern Serbia and Macedonia and that leaders of the three main ethnic Albanian political parties of Kosovo are taking positive measures to halt the ethnically motivated violence against non-Albanians residing in Kosovo.

It does contain a waiver for the President to continue U.S. assistance if he deems it in the national interests.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of the legislation.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Such record votes, if postponed, will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

CONDEMNING HEINOUS ATROCITIES THAT OCCURRED AT SANTANA HIGH SCHOOL, SANTEE, CALIFORNIA

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 57)

condemning the heinous atrocities that occurred on March 5, 2001, at Santana High School in Santee, California, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 57

Whereas on March 5, 2001, a gunman opened fire at Santana High School in Santee, California, killing 2 students and wounding 13 others: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the atrocities that occurred on March 5, 2001, at Santana High School in Santee, California;

(2) offers its deepest condolences to the families, friends, and loved ones of those killed in the shooting;

(3) expresses hope for the rapid and complete recovery of those wounded in the shooting;

(4) applauds the hard work and dedication exhibited by local and State law enforcement officials and by others who offered support and assistance;

(5) commends the rapid response by the faculty and staff of Santana High School in evacuating its students to safety in an efficient and effective manner;

(6) encourages communities to implement a wide range of violence prevention services for the Nation's youth; and

(7) encourages the people of the United States to engage in a national dialogue on preventing school violence.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) and the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 57, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Delaware?

There was no objection.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 57 offered by the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), to express my profound sorrow for the loss endured by the students, teachers and families of the southern California community of Santee.

Today, you are foremost in the thoughts and prayers of all Americans as you struggle to rebuild your community and the sense of safety and security that a school building is supposed to embody.

□ 1415

Mr. Speaker, I join this body in its continuing search for answers, but it was not so long ago that I stood in this place hoping and praying that April 1999 events at Columbine High School would not be repeated, and taking refuge in the facts offered by various agencies which claim that school-associated violent deaths were still rare.

While I do believe that schools are one of the safest places for our chil-

dren, it is equally clear that no school is immune from this type of tragedy. For this reason, it will take all of us working together to make our society safer and smarter and to prevent any further reoccurrences.

While we cannot reclaim the lives of those lost and we cannot make whole those who have suffered as a result of this latest school shooting, we can honor them by resisting the temptation to execute a quick fix, issue the press release, and absolve ourselves from further responsibility. We must accept the fact that we have a society-wide problem that will only be solved by a society-based solution, and it will take time.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Education Reform, I will work to ensure that no child, regardless of background or family income, will be forced to risk his or her life in order to learn. Often it is easy to forget, but we have a Federal program that is specifically designed to help stem the tide of school violence.

I hope to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make sure that this money is a sufficient amount to allow schools to implement the types of programming and take the types of measures that will really make a difference in the school environment. Then we will make information about the use of this money widely available to parents and the communities to assure them that we are spending Federal money to best ensure their children's safety.

Yet, violence is not a problem that we can expect our schools to solve alone. In the days that follow, I hope that every American remembers how they felt the day they learned of the shooting and said with a heavy heart "not again." We must rededicate ourselves. From friends and classmates who hear about bullying in the school yard to families who have difficulty communicating with each other, from businesses that market violence, to every level of government, we must do our part. By now we all know what that is, to be a friend, to be a parent, and to be responsible for those who have entrusted their most valuable possession, their child, to our care.

All that said, first things are first. I want to offer my heartfelt sympathy to the families and friends of the two students who were killed and the 13 who were injured. Today we are united by our sorrow. Tomorrow, I hope we still will be united, not by grief or fear, but by our collective resolve to prevent another tragedy from turning our schools into a place of violence, teaching our children a lesson that no one should ever have to learn.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We are here today to mourn a tragedy. In many ways, we mourn a double tragedy today at Santana High School

on March 5, 2001, because, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with my colleagues as we grieve the loss of two bright young students, Bryan Zuckor and Randy Gordon.

But we also are heartbroken that no one heard Charles Williams, "Andy's" cries for help and saddened that he did not find another way to express his anger and his pain.

We pray for the families of the injured students and the school staff. We also recognize that, when we are faced with such a high-profile tragedy, that we must also grieve for the thousands of children and their families that die every day because of violence and accidents in our community.

I want to commend law enforcement, the school staff, and students at Santana High School, and say how grateful I am and I know how grateful my colleagues and those in our community are with the San Diego Sheriff's Department, and particularly the officers Ali Perez and Jack Smith. We also want to recognize off-duty San Diego police officer Robert Clark. These three men responded with precision, with valor, and courage, and in doing so saved the lives of countless others.

Our deepest gratitude also extends to the Santana High School personnel, particularly Principal Karen Degischer and all the teachers, the counselors, the school security, and their support staff, for their professionalism, for their courage.

We know that they had previously practiced drills and procedures for such emergencies, and they did well during this horrible crisis.

We must also commend the student body of Santana High School for their resilience, their solidarity, and courage and their decision now to move on.

When anything like this happens, we all look for reasons. It has been stated too many guns and not enough adults. There is an allegation: not enough real listening going on in our community.

We know as well that the teenage years are just some of the most difficult years in a person's life. Young people's bodies are changing, the social dynamics of school are difficult for all kids and the insecurities abound.

Too many kids may maintain a cover of anonymity in a school; and unfortunately, we know that there are lots of ways that they can do that quite easily in a large high school. So now we are looking for answers. It is not the time to blame, but rather the time to fight, to fight for our kids.

So we think about going back to the basics and back to the golden rule. But if we talk about teaching our kids the golden rule, we have got to understand and recognize that adults are not always modeling the golden rule. I think that we do not have enough exposure to positive parenting in our community.

Sheriff Bill Colander, who used to head up the youth agency in our State, reminds us that, when they began to teach kids about parenting in the security situation that they had, they recognized that, in fact, that was not the

parenting that they had experienced; and in fact, in many cases, that is often true.

We need to encourage mentoring. Kids need to have mentors, and kids need to be mentors. We might think, whether Andy had been tapped to help out a young person in his school, to work with a second grader on reading, whatever it may be, that tapped and valued the person that he was, and perhaps that might make a difference. We have good models in our schools of kids who are mentors.

Teachers as well need more time and resources to spend with their students. We know that our classes are too big, and that is another reason why kids can live in anonymity in our school. Large classes and large schools do not create an atmosphere conducive to getting to know kids as much as we should. We need to create an atmosphere at school so kids feel both physically and mentally safe; that they can talk about their prejudices, their feelings, and their opinions. Everyone has had adverse experiences, and so everyone needs to feel supported and listened to, valued in who they are and what they have to contribute.

As legislators and community leaders, we need to be researching the best practices in other communities and disseminate this information in neighborhoods.

Ironically, Santana had programs. They had taken some good first steps, not final solutions. They had developed peace programs. They had participated in minitowns, a very popular and well-thought-out program in our community.

But all programs need to be backed up with an evaluation. What works? What does not? Why? We need to look at that information. We need to solicit those opinions from young people.

In the State Assembly, I created the Adolescent Task Force; and in that, we brought young people to the table. We enlisted their ideas. We broadened the circle so kids who often felt that they were not included perhaps in associated student body or other clubs would be included in that forum. Really listening as opposed to telling them what they need is important for all of us.

We have a challenge for change. One thing that we know is many of our young people, in fact most of our young people, are very resilient. Let us learn from them. How can they teach us about that resiliency? Our challenge is to support them.

It has been said that we in America are pretty good at grieving, and yet we wait for a crisis to change. We have to ask, Why are there not more programs to teach kids inclusion? Why are there not more public service announcements on the impacts of bullying developed by students around issues of guns of getting together and finding ways of solving their problems?

We need to enlist the media in that, but we need to allow young people to have the input to create these mes-

sages because they really know what it is that people and young people will relate to; that through listening, through mentoring, and modeling, kind, caring behavior, we can stop some of these devastating tragedies.

I hope that my colleagues will join me in our deepest condolences to the families and friends of Bryan Zuckor and Randy Gordon. Let us bring students to the center of our discussions and work together to ensure that these tragedies do not continue to be repeated in any community.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), the distinguished sponsor of the concurrent resolution.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I salute and thank my colleague for putting this resolution together and allowing us to be here today.

Mr. Speaker, all of San Diego, California, all of San Diego County California, all of California, all of America was impacted on March 5 when a senseless shooting at Santana High School took the lives of Bryan Zuckor and Randy Gordon and wounded 13 others.

Do my colleagues know what? This time the feeling in this capital, when an event like this occurs is usually one of helplessness, because there is no legislation, there is no resolution, there is no law that can reverse what happened.

But in San Diego, California, I want to let my colleagues know hope is reviving, with students and parents and teachers coming together to rebuild this community.

There is one small thing that we can do here, and that is that we can condemn in the strongest possible terms the atrocities that occurred on March 5, 2001, in Santana High School.

We can offer from this House our deepest condolences to the families, to the friends, and to the loved ones of those who were killed and wounded in this shooting. We can express hope for the rapid and complete recovery of those wounded in the shooting.

And we can, Mr. Speaker, very importantly applaud the hard work and dedication exhibited by our local and State law enforcement officials and by all the others who offered support and assistance. They numbered, Mr. Speaker, in the thousands in this community.

We can commend the rapid response by the faculty and staff of Santana High School in evacuating its students to safety and efficient and effective manner. And we can encourage communities to implement a wide range of violence-prevention services for the Nation's youth. Mr. Speaker, we can encourage the people of the United States to engage in a national dialogue on preventing school violence such as this.

Mr. Speaker, God bless our community, God bless the students at Santana High School; and I look forward to working with all of my colleagues and all of our citizens to see to it that events like this never occur again.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON).

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding the time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution to condemn the shooting at the high school in San Diego, California, last week that added to the long list of tragedies at our Nation's schools. This measure also extends condolence appropriately to the families of the victims, applauds the State and local law enforcement officials, commends the staff and faculty of Santana High School for their rapid response to the shooting, and encourage the American people to engage in a national dialogue on this issue of school violence.

I am concerned also with the young man who performed this dangerous and fatal act of violence. We have a problem, Mr. Speaker. Our concerns are young people are killing each other; and we parents, school officials, State legislators, Members of Congress have been stuck in partisan political posturing and fail to take the decisive action that may stop the violence. We must act now, before more children are killed.

□ 1430

Our children are the leaders of the future. They are our most cherished natural resource. They look to us for guidance, for leadership, and for protection; and for too long we have let them down by our failure to act. We must restore, perhaps in ourselves and most certainly in our youth, respect for life. We also must offer our children more mental health counseling and other services, structured adult-supervised after-school programs, and we must pass reasonable gun-safety measures.

How many more lives must be lost, Mr. Speaker, before we elevate the sanctity of life above the political pressure of a gun lobby? How many more families and communities must be devastated by the senseless tragic loss of life of some of our young people in a school yard, some in homes and on the streets, before this Congress will say enough already? Who will be next, Mr. Speaker? Must we wait before acting until the child of a Member of Congress is shot and killed? I hope not. I pray not.

Now is the time for us, Republicans and Democrats, to act. We must affirm the sanctity of life, offer more mental health services and after-school programs, and pass reasonable gun safety measures. Our children are counting on us and deserve that.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the distinguished majority whip.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Delaware for yielding me this time. Mr. Speaker, it has come to this again; another school tragedy. In another American town, several

families now mourn a lost child. Other families are faced with the certain knowledge that one of their children will never be the same after surviving a tragic attack.

The town of Santee, California, is left to heal after an awful incident that made no sense at all and shattered hundreds of young lives. That is the reality, and we cannot shrink from it. We send them our prayers and our sincere hope that no city or town will again suffer the senseless trauma and tragedy inflicted upon Santana High School.

That is our hope, but it would be the height of folly to suggest that we will prevent similar tragedies by simply erecting even more barriers to behavior and imposing ever more restrictions on our constitutional freedoms. This line of thought is flawed for both practical and abstract reasons. Fixating upon the blunt instruments of crime places the symptom before the cause.

America confronts horrible tragedies, like the awful 8 minutes at Santana High School, not because the capacity to harm others exists within a free society. Rather, we face these demons because of our human condition. Human beings must inevitably struggle to triumph over evil. And make no mistake about it, this latest attack was certainly evil.

We do not like to admit that evil still exists, but as the unmistakable lesson of the 20th century instructs us, we cannot remake human nature. Indeed, attempts to do so, like the policies perpetrated on its people by the Soviet Union have been themselves responsible for immense suffering.

No, we cannot remake man, but we can, through negligence and indifference, tolerate a climate that is a more fertile breeding ground for senseless violence. I believe that our tolerance for a culture of death only serves to exacerbate those strains of evil present within persons who are predisposed to consider violent acts a viable statement.

Because once we begin differentiating between shades of life, we truly open a Pandora's box in which some lives will be callously discounted and dispensed with. We need to treat all life as a sacred gift from our creator, not a sliding scale that society grades by its utility.

I believe that we will only find a lasting solution by rediscovering our core and founding principles. I believe this rediscovery will demand that we boldly move to rebuild the three key elements of our Nation's success: The strength of the American family, the moral authority of American government, and the fundamental virtue of American culture.

All of these things flow from a common philosophy, a coherent world view. It is a philosophy built on values that are moral, universal and, yes, I believe, the source of America's greatness. Faith in God, the sanctity of human life, the existence of right and wrong,

and the certain knowledge that we are all ultimately accountable for our actions.

This is not the world view that predominates our culture today, and until it does we will confront more awful acts of violence.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. McCARTHY).

Mrs. McCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, but I have to say I would certainly prefer to be standing here debating on what we can do to save these young children.

For close to 4½ years I have stood here. I do not know how many times, saying I am sorry to the families. For 4½ years, I have had to meet with some of these parents that have lost their children. How many times does this have to happen before this Congress will start to realize this is not going to go away?

We cannot stop ignoring this issue. While America's teachers and students search for solutions to the violence that threatens our school, Congress has failed to enact even modest proposals to reduce our children's access to firearms. I know that it is a very complex issue, and we should be all working together on every single issue to make sure that our children are safe.

I spent yesterday morning in one of my local schools, as I tend to do on every single Monday. The kids were 1 through 6, and every single question they asked me was, is somebody going to shoot me. Now, we know the majority of our schools are safe, but there is fear in the schools today. We must recognize the fear our children, our teachers, and our parents are facing. The American people are looking to us to come up with answers. We cannot have all the answers, but we certainly can do a better job than what we are doing right now.

It is time to stop the rhetoric of this talk. It is time to stop going around in circles. It is time that this Congress started working to do something to protect our children and our families, and I ask the American people to work with us.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA).

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution, and while many will speak of the importance of remembering this tragic episode and many will speak of solutions to be found in this body, I do not rise for that purpose. I believe that the solution to this problem is not found in this body and will not be.

Much like President Lincoln, more than 6 scores ago, when he came to Gettysburg and people expected him to talk only of the burial ground and the loss of life, I would hope that we would all commit ourselves here today and throughout the United States to use this resolution as a moment to think

and reflect on those ways in which all Americans could in fact, prevent this in the future, not by adding to the 1200 laws already on the books in California but on personal responsibility.

It is my fervent belief that if each of us evaluates how we could eliminate violence in our own home, the access of guns, of knives, and of anything else that is pervasive in our homes that could cause harm if poorly used, take responsibility for locking them up, and personally educate our children, then we could personally address the issues of hate, anger and the other menaces that have led to these types of disasters in the past, and most certainly, if not dealt with, will lead to them in the future.

It is the loss of life of the past and loss of life here today that all Americans should focus on and take internally the obligation to see that these lives, this tragic loss of life will not have occurred in vain.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER).

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time, and I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) for bringing us this resolution.

The gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and all of us from San Diego County are here jointly to express the deep sorrow that has fallen upon our entire county and our entire country. And by condemning this act of violence, Congress is expressing the collective sorrow felt around the Nation not only for the victims but for another lost teen who chose to express his frustration with a gun. We especially pray for the families and the whole school family of the slain students, Randy Gordon and Brian Zuckor; and we hope that their lives can be put together again.

Since the tragedy at Columbine High School, and up through this tragedy in Santana High School, much has been written about the prevalence of guns in our community and violence in our media. But it seems to me from all these examples that we have had, one thing is clear, not just those who excel, not just those who are popular, not just those who have special needs as defined by law, have got to get our attention. Every child, all kids, we need to get each and every one of them involved in activities, in learning, in fun, especially the ones who sit quietly, who may not demand attention, who may not excel, who may not be popular, who may not be involved.

I guess I have to say to our distinguished majority whip, we are not talking about putting restrictions on people's behavior, we are talking about, as the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) said, our positive responsibility as human beings.

In a column that was written after Columbine, the noted journalist William Raspberry wrote,

The sad fact is that there are people who, for too many of us and often for themselves,

do not matter. There are people in our schools, in our offices, on our streets who know they don't matter to the rest of us, who exist, if at all, as objects of ridicule and derision: As nerds, as nobodies, as fatties, shorties, as crips, as dummies, as losers. Probably all of us spend some portion of our lives not mattering, though most of us have refuge in places like home, the workplace, church, or a social group where we do matter a great deal.

But some of us have no such refuge, apart from our fellow nonmatterers. And of that sad group, some will make sure they matter in the time-tested way of mattering: Through violence. The tendency is for the rest of us to respond to the violence and think we have dealt with the problem. We institute new rules or new dress codes. We remind ourselves of the signs to be watched for and forget that there are still people who do not matter.

The hardest point to absorb, says Mr. Raspberry, is the need to start paying attention to those who see themselves as outcasts, not just because it may prevent violence but because there simply should not be human beings who do not matter.

□ 1445

At Santana high school, at Columbine, in every community, it is our responsibility to let every child know that they do matter. In a society where kids are often latchkey kids, where kids and parents often watch different TVs even when they are in the same house, when we come and go in our neighborhoods without speaking, we have to find better ways to let people know that they do matter. Our hearts go out to all the Santana High School family as they put their community back together.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), the sponsor of the resolution.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, my many thanks to my friend from Delaware, I thank him so much for putting this resolution on this morning. To my San Diego colleagues, I thank them for coming together with all of us and giving some real value to this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I thought I would mention those students and others at Santee High who were in fact wounded. Barry Gibson, Heather Cruz, Scott Marshall, Travis Tate-Gallegos, Melissa McNulty, Trevor Edwards, Raymond Serrato, James Jackson, Trison Salladay, Matthew Heier, Karla Leyva, and campus supervisor Peter Ruiz and student teacher Timothy Estes have been in the thoughts and prayers of, of course, all of the Santee residents and all Americans who have heard about this tragedy. They will continue to be in our thoughts and prayers.

Mr. Speaker, there will be political discussions that arise out of this tragedy. That is going to happen. We are a political body. We respond to occurrences like this.

I would just ask all my colleagues over the next 3 or 4 weeks to observe a standard, maybe an arbitrary standard that I have set for myself, but I would hope we would all observe it and, that

is, this is a tragedy, this is a time for grieving, a time for mourning, a time for healing in Santee, California; and I would ask everyone to not attach a political agenda to this occurrence until a month has gone by. Maybe that is an arbitrary time, but I think that that respects the families and the students in Santee, California.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I would hope if people who watch this resolution, that fathers and mothers and grandparents and uncles and aunts, as a result of watching us and contemplating these events, would resolve to spend a little more time this week, this month, this year, maybe starting today, with their children, then this resolution will have had value.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ).

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with sadness to speak on the gentleman's resolution of which I am a cosponsor. I commend the sponsor of this legislation, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Research and Development of the Committee on Armed Services.

This tragedy was a horrible, horrible crime. We mourn with the families who lost children, and our thoughts are with the families of the injured students and staff.

But our duty goes beyond that. Our schools need to be safe places in order for learning to successfully take place.

I am a cosponsor of the Excellence in Education Act, a proposal for reauthorization of our Federal elementary and secondary education programs. Included in all of that would be a Safe and Drug Free Schools program based on proven results, alternative education programs that remove violent children from our classrooms, to help to streamline and make smaller schools so that teachers, principals and administrators can get to know the children and can monitor their emotional state, and also funds for school counselors and mental health professionals to spot the students who need help from us before they turn violent.

I join my colleagues in expressing our grief and sorrow, and I look forward to working with all the Members in this House to end school violence.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to join my colleagues and thank them for bringing this resolution forward. I want to send my condolences once again to the families of the slain students. We mourn their loss of life. But we also mourn a loss of innocence, a loss of innocence for a community but also for all the young people throughout our communities who yearn to grow up safe and they yearn to grow up loved.

It has been said that most of the communities that we live in would be in denial around an incident like this and say that it just can't happen here.

Well, it can happen, it does happen, it happens far too frequently. Where are the answers? The answers are most likely right in our backyards. I ask all of us here today and in our communities to value our kids, to talk to our kids, and to enlist their support as we work to create better communities.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I have listened attentively to the debate here today. As everybody has indicated, I, too, would like to repeat my condolences to the families, friends, schoolmates, everybody associated with these young people at Santee. This is a very difficult matter for them. No matter how we phrase it, it is always going to be a difficult matter for them, for those who were fortunate enough to live, for their lifetimes and for all of us something we will all remember our lifetimes.

For our friends here in the Congress who are from San Diego County, you, too, have endured a great deal of hardship as a result of this; and we understand that. We offer you our sympathy as well.

For all of us here in Congress, and I agree with the sponsor of the resolution, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), we do not want to react instantaneously to this, but I would also hope that in this country that we would take a holistic approach to what we are doing with respect to violence in our society, that we in Congress will look at whatever laws that we can pass that we can agree upon; and I hope we would make the effort to reach that agreement, to make sure that we have the best laws possible to control the use of weapons of violence.

We hope our State and local governments would do the same. We hope that our culture would do the same, that which we see in movies and television, read in books, see on the Internet, whatever it may be, would understand that what they write about or what they put into visual arts is something which indeed can affect the lives of young people out there.

Obviously, it has been stated so articulately by so many Members here today, the bottom line of looking after our young people, in families, in school, in every way we possibly can is something that we have to do. We need to stop this bloodshed as best we possibly can. We all have to do it together. We cannot blame and fault each other. We have to reach out and try to help each other. For that reason I am pleased to be able to encourage everyone to support this resolution.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today sadly to support this legislation, which offers our condolences to the families and friends of those involved in the shooting last week at Santana High School in my home state of California. I want to personally express my deepest sympathies to the families of all the victims at Santee High School.

Regrettably, another incident of school violence has left one of our communities grieving

and looking for a way to prevent another terrible tragedy like the one that occurred in Santee.

The bill before us today encourages communities to implement a wide variety of violence prevention services for our Nation's youth. I feel that one of the best violence prevention services is ensuring that we have adequate counselors available in our schools for troubled youth.

While we may never know what causes some children to feel that violence is their only option to solve their problems, I believe that having a strong support system in place will show students that they have a safe place to go to when they are troubled. School counselors, psychologists, and social workers play a vital role in counseling students. As important as these counselors are, there are far too few of them in our schools.

In some States, the ratio of students to counselors is over 1100 to 1, although the National Academy of Sciences recommends that ratio to be no higher than 250 to 1.

In order to correct this situation, I will soon reintroduce my legislation to establish a grant program to allow states to hire additional school-based mental health and student service personnel—counselors, psychologists, and social workers. My bill will authorize \$100 million over five years for this purpose.

We must have these counselors in our schools so that students can turn to them at times of crisis in their lives. Counselors do make a difference, and hopefully if they are available to more students, we can try to prevent terrible tragedies such as that at Santee High.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the H. Con. Res. 57, a resolution condemning the Heinous atrocities that occurred on March 5, 2001, at Santana High School in Santee, California.

The shooting occurred early morning 9:45 a.m., Monday March 8, on the campus of Santana High School, in Santee, CA, where a 15-year old suspect, Charles Andrew "Andy" Williams, fired 30 gunshots in the school killing two people and injuring thirteen people including two adult supervisors. In the aftermath, 14-year-old Brian Zuckor died at the school. One of the wounded students, 17-year-old Randy Gordon, died later of his injuries at Grossmont Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, as founder and co-chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus and member of the Judiciary Committee and the Subcommittee on Crime I find myself again taking to the House floor to reiterate the need for serious and effective legislation regarding gun safety and our children as well as effective children's mental health initiative on the local, state and national level.

I have continued my work into the 107th Congress on behalf of Child safety with the introduction of the "Child Gun Safety and Gun Access Prevention Act of 2001" (HR-70), and the "Give a Kid a Chance Omnibus Mental Health Services Act of 2001" (HR-75).

HR-70 would increase youth gun safety by raising the age of handgun eligibility and prohibiting youth from possessing semiautomatic assault weapons. The measure also purposes an enhanced penalty for youth possession of handguns and semiautomatic assault weapons, as well as the transfer of such weapons to youth.

HR-75 would amend the Public Health Service Act to direct the Secretary of Health

and Human Services to support programs to promote mental health among all children and their families and to provide early intervention services to ameliorate identified mental health problems in children and adolescents.

Mr. Speaker, parents and supervising adults must be held responsible for their children when their household contains dangerous firearms." My bill would hold adults responsible for the death and injury caused by a child's access to firearms. These Acts, if passed, would help prevent tragedies like the one that occurred Monday morning in Santee, CA, by encouraging schools to provide or participate in a firearms safety program for students in kindergarten through Grade 12. Prevention is key.

In the 106th Congress I was an advocate for stronger and more enhanced gun laws and even introduced a motion in the U.S. House of Representatives that directed the members of the Juvenile Justice Conference Report to meet to discuss the current Juvenile Justice Bill. This motion also directed the committee report to include:

Measures that aid in the effective enforcement of gun safety laws within the scope of the conference; and

Common-sense gun safety measures that prevent felons, fugitives and stalkers from obtaining firearms and children from getting access to guns within the scope of conference.

Mr. Speaker, here we are again, coming to the House floor to mourn the deaths of more of our Nation's young. Here we come again, to the House floor to express the need for adequate and enhanced gun legislation.

According to Handgun Control, Inc. and the Texas Department of Public Health 5,285 children were killed by firearms in the United States; 260 in Texas; and 37 in Harris County, Texas. For every child killed with a gun, 4 are wounded. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the rate of firearm death of children 0-14 years old is nearly 12 times higher in the U.S. than in 25 other industrialized nations combined.

Mr. Speaker, many people say that guns do not kill people, people kill people. However, I believe that guns do kill people, especially when wielded by children. More than 800 Americans, young and old, die each year from guns shot by children under the age of 19.

The firearm injury epidemic, due largely to handgun injuries, is 10 times larger than the polio epidemic of the first half of this century.

More than 1300 children aged 10-19 committed suicide with firearms. Unlike suicide attempts using other methods, suicide attempts with guns are nearly always fatal, meaning a temporarily depressed teenager will never get a second chance at life. We must end this continual suffering that our nation is experiencing. People are tired of having to suffer through daily breaking news that another child was killed as a result of gun violence. I am concerned about children and their access to guns. I am concerned that guns are not regulated in the same way that toys are regulated.

I am concerned that we do not have safety standards for locking devices on guns. I am concerned that we do not prohibit children from attending gun shows unsupervised. I am concerned that we have not focused on the statistics on children and guns.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) strongly stresses that the most effective measure to prevent firearm-related injuries to chil-

dren and adolescent is to remove guns from homes and communities. According to the AAP statement:

The United States has the highest rates of firearm-related deaths among industrialized countries.

The overall rate of firearm-related deaths for children younger than 15 years of age is nearly 12 times greater than that found for 25 other industrialized nations.

The Academy even predicts that by the year 2003, firearm-related deaths may become the leading cause of injury-related death.

Already, among black males 10 through 34 years of age, injuries from firearms are the leading cause of deaths.

Even more tragic is the fact that most firearm-related deaths of children occur before their arrival at the hospital.

Thus, most of our children that injured by firearms do not even have a chance. This is the reality in our country that must not be denied.

Another important fact pointed out by the American Academy of Pediatrics is that: In 1994, the mean medical cost per gunshot injury was approximately \$17,000 producing 2.3 billion in lifetime medical costs, 1.1 billion of that was paid by US taxpayers.

Thus, it not only makes common sense, but economic sense to pass legislation that includes child safety measures so that we can prevent tragedies like the school shootings in Santana High School in Santee, California, Columbine and Littleton, Colorado from occurring again.

Mr. Speaker, we must remember the sad fact that 13 children die everyday from firearms. It would seem that in almost the year since the Littleton shootings, virtually nothing has been done to address these serious problems. That is why I introduced my own bill, the "Children Gun Safety and Adult Supervision Act in Congress this year," which would increase youth gun safety by raising the age of handgun eligibility and prohibiting youth from possessing semiautomatic assault weapons, but by enhancing the penalties for those adults who recklessly disregard the risk that a child is capable of gaining access to a firearm.

Child Safety legislation is not a novel concept. There are numerous laws on the books that create guidelines in order to protect the most impressionable people in our society—our children. Children under the age of 17 must be accompanied into an R rated movie at the theatres, yet that same child can walk into a gun show where he/she is surrounded by assault weapons.

A child, and I stress the word child, under the age of 18 cannot walk into a store and purchase cigarettes, yet that same child can walk into a gun show where he/she is surrounded by assault weapons.

There is Dram Shop law that hold liquor seller's liable for their part in the wrongful death of a person who left their establishment intoxicated, yet none for people who recklessly leave firearms in the presence of children. There is definitely a problem in this society if we allow special interest groups to prevent us from protecting our precious children.

Furthermore, our children's schools should be safe and secure places for all students, teachers and staff members. All children should be able to go to and from school without fearing for their safety. However, there are

signs that we should all pay attention to in order to prevent such acts of violence.

For example, according to news reports from the heartbreak at past school shootings, the young assailants were outcasts in the school community. During the shooting, the children reportedly said that they were "out for revenge" for having been made fun of last year. This is truly a cry for help that was not heard in time.

This incident underscores the urgent need for mental health services to address the needs of young people like the suspects from yesterday. Without concerted efforts to address the mental health disorders that affect our children, we may witness more terrifying violence in our schools.

I am dismayed by the string of violent incidents that have occurred in our schools within the past 24 months. In the past months my office has received many calls and letters from constituents who believe that we support legislation that will take away their guns.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned about children and their access to guns. I am concerned that guns are not regulated in the same way that toys are regulated. I am concerned that we do not have safety standards for locking devices on guns. I am concerned that we do not prohibit children from attending gun shows unsupervised. I am concerned that we have not focused on the statistics on children and guns.

By now, we are familiar with the statistics on gun violence among young people. In 1996, male high school seniors were about three times as likely to carry a weapon to school. According to the most recent data compiled in 1997 by the National Center for Health Statistics, 630 children 14 years and under died; 3,593 children ages 15–19 died. In total, 4,223 children died in this Nation due to the scourge of gun violence in our communities. The most troubling statistic is that today, 13 children die from gun violence.

The United States is leading the country even among Brazil and Mexico, countries we often think of having extreme incidences of gun violence. And, the statistics indicate that youth violence is a growing percentage among the total number of homicides occurring per year.

How long must we wait until legislation is passed that will begin to adequately address this growing phenomenon. We as a nation, cannot sit idly by as our children are inundated by firearm violence on television, at the movies, on the streets and now in the classroom.

If I have not stressed the urgency of this matter, let me further bring to your attention the result of inadequate firearm safety legislation. August 10, 1999, Buford O. Furrow, Jr. in Los Angeles, California used an Uzi semiautomatic, Glock 9mm handgun in a Jewish community center and wounded three children, a teenager, a 68-year-old receptionist and killed a postal worker.

Mr. Speaker, now is the time to act and pass enhanced gun legislation and Children's mental health legislation to address the proliferation of school shootings and gun violence in general. I urge my colleagues to join me in committing to addressing this problem today.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, once again, we must lower our Nation's flag in one solemn accord, to mourn two young children who were stolen in their prime. Randy Gordon and Bryan Zuckor are cherished by all who

love them. We all extend our prayers and thoughts to the families of the victims and to the community Santee, where they are struggling to find answers to a dreaded and unfortunate situation.

The horror of the shootings at Santana High School, and the proliferation of teenage shootings across the country has forced us to confront an increasing problem that leave the doorsteps of every school in every community vulnerable. As we scramble ardently to attack the problem, we realize that children are falling through the cracks. Misguided youth are taking unhealthy measures to cope with growing pains of adolescence—open communication is now transformed into acts of violence.

We must never rest until we inoculate the epidemic of teenage violence that afflicts our communities. On this sad occasion, we must forge ahead and continue our attempts to resolve random acts of youth violence.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 57, condemning the recent school shooting that occurred in Santee, California, and I thank the distinguished gentleman from California, Mr. HUNTER, for bringing this issue to the House floor.

With the passing of this resolution, we will show our support for the families and friends of the victims of this school shooting at Santana High School. This act of violence by a fifteen-year-old boy has not only disrupted the lives of those in Santee, but has shaken and disturbed our entire Nation. We join in recognizing and commending the rapid, efficient response of the law enforcement professionals and school officials in handling this situation. Without their immediate and professional response, we could have been faced with even more greater fatalities.

Condemning this action is only the first step in our struggle to end school violence. I ask you also to consider H.R. 255, the safer America for Everyone's Children Act. This act authorizes the Attorney General to provide grants to local governments with gun buyback programs, school violence initiatives, and activities which meet child care needs of parents during non-school hours. With this act, we encourage communities to implement these programs and help to strengthen the already existing programs.

The gun buyback program will remove unwanted guns from American homes by paying one hundred dollars for semiautomatic weapons and fifty dollars for all other firearms.

The school violence initiatives will help to implement comprehensive strategies to ensure that our schools are safe and drug-free. The majority of juvenile crimes occur between the hours of 3 and 7 pm, when children are without any supervision. To combat this surge of crime, activities during non-school hours will be designed to focus on the social, physical, emotional, moral, or cognitive well-being of students. Those activities may include leadership development, character training, delinquency prevention, sports and recreation, arts, tutoring, or academic enrichment. By taking these pro-active measures to ensure the safety and well-being of students, we will help reduce the risks of school violence for our future.

Now is the time to act to protect our children. We must ensure the safety of our children and our faculties in schools across the Nation. We cannot continue to merely react to school shootings. We must be pro-active and

take action to prevent school violence from occurring. With this legislation we encourage our Nation to bring forth solutions to prevent school violence and to work together to help ensure the safety of students, faculty and staff in our schools.

Two students lost their lives on March 5th in Santee, CA. Many before them have died. If we ignore this problem, many more may lose their lives. School violence will not diminish without concerned action on local and national levels.

I thank Mr. HUNTER for bringing to our attention this issue of immense importance and I urge my colleagues to support the passage of this resolution.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, today I sadly join my colleagues in mourning the loss of two young lives in the tragic and senseless act of violence that occurred in San Diego County last week, and in expressing our deepest sympathy to their family and friends of the students who were killed. I also join my colleagues in condemning such acts of violence, and in urging all Americans to search for ways to reach out to our young people in an effort to prevent future tragedies of this nature.

All too often in recent years, we've been coming to the floor for resolutions of this nature. While the result remains shocking, unfortunately, the story is no longer new; a child gets his hands on a gun, and in fit of rage, uses it on his classmates and teachers.

We all want to find blame. We all want to know why. The questions are endless, but the answers are few.

What we know is that no one is immune from these tragedies. They have occurred in big cities, suburbs and small towns. What is obvious is that some of our children feel alienated and estranged from their peers and community, and choose to express their anger and frustration through increasingly violent acts of aggression. And what is perhaps most frightening in this case, is the fact that some students and perhaps adults may have been able to foresee this tragedy, but for a variety of reasons, chose not to believe it possible, not to act, or not to do more to stop it.

It is imperative that we, as Americans, do more to communicate with our young people, and know what is going on in their lives. We must, as communities, act to give all children a sense of belonging; in their families, their schools, and their neighborhoods. We must offer young people our friendship and earn their trust, so that they will come forward for help when feeling outcast, or when sensing a friend is slipping into despair or rage.

Today, we, as representatives of individuals and families across the Nation, mourn with individuals and families in Santee, California. But we cannot simply express our shock and horror today; we must, each of us, take action in our communities, to connect with our young people, and try with all our might, to prevent tragedy in our hometowns.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 57 introduced by Congressman HUNTER expressing sense that Congress condemns the heinous atrocities that occurred on March 5 at Santana High School in Santee, California. Congress offers its deepest condolences to the families and friends of those killed in the shooting.

Last July, I had the opportunity to meet with a group of high school students from Colorado to discuss gun safety legislation. In response to school shootings across the Nation, these

students formed an organization to call on Congress to approve reasonable, common-sense gun control measures. Without question, these students, some from Columbine High School, are the best authorities on the terrible effects of gun violence. Childhood is supposed to be a time of shelter and learning. Instead, our Nation and our youth are facing an epidemic of gun violence. I believe that there are more steps that we can take to help restore innocence, a sense of security, and safety to childhood.

Unfortunately, it has taken another shooting at one of our schools, in this case, the Santana High School in Santee, California, to remind us of our duty.

The plague of gun violence too often attacks the most innocent members of our society. Every day in our Nation, 13 young people are senselessly killed in homicides, suicides, and unintentional shootings. We lose the equivalent of a classroom of students every two days. According to a study by the Centers for Disease Control, the rate of firearm death of children in the United States is nearly twelve times higher than in 25 other industrialized countries combined. It is clear that we must have an increased commitment to responsibility, education, and safety.

As a Nation, as a community, we have the responsibility to protect our children from the horrors of gun violence. Limiting their access to firearms and ending the violence should be a common goal for the Nation.

I want to thank the leadership for bringing this resolution to the floor and I wish to extend my condolences to the families of the victims and commend the staff and faculty of Santana High School for their rapid response to the situation. It is my hope that we, in Congress, can prevent a tragedy of this nature from ever happening again.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart. A little over a week ago, a troubled young man committed an act of unspeakable evil, which changed the lives of all San Diegans forever.

Today we consider a resolution to condemn the heinous atrocities that occurred on March 5, 2001, at Santana High School in Santee, California. I rise to support the resolution offered by my good friend and colleague from California.

Tragically, today nearly 1,900 students will return to Santana High School without many of their classmates, one teacher, and one security guard.

Among these students who will never return to Santana High School are Randy Gordon, a 17 year old who talked about going into the Navy after he graduated and Brian Zuckor, a 14 year old who thought someday he might become a stuntman. They went to school last week, figuring it would be just another day. Tragically, it was their last.

Other students injured in this terrible incident include: Heather Cruz, Trevor Edwards, Travis Gallegos-Tate, Barry Gibson, Matthew Heier, James Jackson, Karla Leyva, Scott Marshall, Melissa McNulty, Triston Salladay, and Raymond Serrato. Also among the wounded was Tim Estes, a student teacher, and Peter Ruiz Jr., a campus security guard.

This tragedy has caused us all to reevaluate and reflect on our own moral and social values and to reexamine the role that we play as parents, relatives, and family members in the lives of our country's children. This tragedy

has driven many of us to work to bring not only healing, but also a reformation of our way of life. Every America felt what happened to those students. The phrase, "it can't happen in my backyard" is now gone for the residents of Santee.

I ask that my colleagues in the United States Congress and my fellow citizens, pray for the students of Santana High School. Pray that carefree feelings that come with youth return to these students. Pray that we have the power and commitment to do our part to ensure that this horrible violation of innocence is never repeated again.

Mr. Speaker, we should all hope that this never happens again, we should all work to see that it doesn't.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 57, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM WILLING SELLER ACT

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 834) to amend the National Trails System Act to clarify Federal authority relating to land acquisition from willing sellers for the majority of the trails in the System, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 834

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "National Trails System Willing Seller Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) In spite of commendable efforts by State and local governments and private volunteer trail groups to develop, operate, and maintain the national scenic and national historic trails designated by Act of Congress in section 5(a) of the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1244(a)), the rate of progress towards developing and completing the trails is slower than anticipated.

(2) Nine of the twelve national scenic and historic trails designated between 1978 and 1986 are subject to restrictions totally excluding Federal authority for land acquisition outside the exterior boundaries of any federally administered area.

(3) To complete these nine trails as intended by Congress, acquisition authority to secure necessary rights-of-way and historic sites and segments, limited to acquisition from willing sellers only, and specifically excluding the use of condemnation, should be extended to the Secretary of the Federal department administering these trails.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS REGARDING MULTIJURISDICTIONAL AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM.

It is the sense of the Congress that in order to address the problems involving multijurisdictional authority over the National Trails System, the Secretary of the Federal department with jurisdiction over a national scenic or historic trail should—

(1) cooperate with appropriate officials of each State and political subdivisions of each State in which the trail is located and private persons with an interest in the trail to pursue the development of the trail; and

(2) be granted sufficient authority to purchase lands and interests in lands from willing sellers that are critical to the completion of the trail.

SEC. 4. AUTHORITY TO ACQUIRE LANDS FROM WILLING SELLERS FOR CERTAIN TRAILS OF THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM ACT.

(a) INTENT.—It is the intent of Congress that lands and interests in lands for the nine components of the National Trails System affected by the amendments made by subsection (b) shall only be acquired by the Federal Government from willing sellers.

(b) LIMITED ACQUISITION AUTHORITY.—

(1) OREGON NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL.—Paragraph (3) of section 5(a) of the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1244(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: "No lands or interests therein outside the exterior boundaries of any federally administered area may be acquired by the Federal Government for the trail except with the consent of the owner thereof."

(2) MORMON PIONEER NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL.—Paragraph (4) of such section is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: "No lands or interests therein outside the exterior boundaries of any federally administered area may be acquired by the Federal Government for the trail except with the consent of the owner thereof."

(3) CONTINENTAL DIVIDE NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL.—Paragraph (5) of such section is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: "No lands or interests therein outside the exterior boundaries of any federally administered area may be acquired by the Federal Government for the trail except with the consent of the owner thereof."

(4) LEWIS AND CLARK NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL.—Paragraph (6) of such section is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: "No lands or interests therein outside the exterior boundaries of any federally administered area may be acquired by the Federal Government for the trail except with the consent of the owner thereof."

(5) IDITAROD NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL.—Paragraph (7) of such section is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: "No lands or interests therein outside the exterior boundaries of any federally administered area may be acquired by the Federal Government for the trail except with the consent of the owner thereof."

(6) NORTH COUNTRY NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL.—Paragraph (8) of such section is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: "No lands or interests therein outside the exterior boundaries of any federally administered area may be acquired by the Federal Government for the trail except with the consent of the owner thereof."

(7) ICE AGE NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL.—Paragraph (10) of such section is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: "No lands or interests therein outside the exterior boundaries of any federally administered area may be acquired by the Federal Government for the trail except with the consent of the owner thereof."

(8) POTOMAC HERITAGE NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL.—Paragraph (11) of such section is