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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, on March 19, I was in Florida participating in my close friend Ted Winpenny's wedding as his best man and therefore, missed four recorded votes.

I take my voting responsibility very seriously and would like the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to reflect that, had I been present, I would have voted yes on recorded vote number 65, yes on recorded vote number 66, yes on recorded vote number 67, and yes on recorded vote 68.

CONGRATULATING THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE U.S.A. ON ITS 90TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PAUL RYAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, this month the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. (GSUSA) is celebrating its 90th anniversary. Additionally, the Girl Scout Council of Kenosha County is celebrating its 80th anniversary. I would like to recognize the accomplishments of the Girl Scouts in Wisconsin's First Congressional District: the Girl Scout council of Kenosha County, the Girl Scouts of Badger Council, and the Girl Scouts of Racine County.

Juliette Gordon Low believed girls needed a supportive community for girls and young women to develop physically, mentally, and spiritually. On March 12, 1912, Ms. Low assembled twelve girls in Savannah, Georgia, for the first Girl Scout meeting. The idea spread quickly. In 1918, six years after that inaugural meeting, Kenosha County organized its first meetings and joined the Girl Scout movement. Four years later, in 1922, the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. awarded the Girl Scout Council of Kenosha County its official charter.

The Girl Scout Law, on which the Girl Scout mission rests, encourages all girls to uphold values such as honesty, fairness, and responsibility, while developing respect and compassion for the world around them. Girl Scouts continue to build on this foundation by adopting the practice of these values to the contemporary issues facing girls today.

In contrast to those first twelve Scouts 90 years ago, Girl Scouts today is comprised of over 2.7 million girls and 900,000 adult volunteers in the U.S. Globally, that number tops 10 million members in over 140 countries. Currently, the Girl Scout Council of Kenosha County proudly maintains an active membership of 3200 Scouts. To put that in perspective, one in nine girls are involved in Girl Scouting nationwide, while in Kenosha County, one in every five girls is a Girl Scout.

Girl Scouts depends on its volunteers and its community. As with all Girl Scout Councils, the secret behind the success of Scouting is

the hard work of the adult volunteers. This well-qualified team of volunteers works with the Council to organize and encourage the Scouts. Additionally, the support of the community is integral to the Girl Scouts. Troop meetings take place in local schools, churches, and other community centers, and outreach activities require the cooperation of community businesses and organizations. The strength of these relationships is visible in Southeastern Wisconsin. The adult members, businesses, and organizations work together to open doors for young women to learn and expand their horizons.

For 90 years, Girl Scouts has empowered girls with the values and skills it takes to become the next generation of leaders. The Girl Scout Council of Kenosha County, the Girl Scouts of Badger Council, and the Girl Scouts of Racine County, like Councils all over the world, are helping girls to grow strong and build the necessary foundation to be successful in all they do. It is with admiration that I congratulate the Girl Scouts and all who support them on the first 90 years of remarkable service, and with enthusiasm that I wish them all the best on the next 90 years.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "GUN SHOW BACKGROUND CHECK ACT OF 2002"

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the "Gun Show Background Check Act of 2002", legislation designed to close the loophole in federal gun laws which allow criminals to buy firearms at gun shows. I am joined by Representatives FRANK, BERMAN, NADLER, LOFGREN, WATERS, MEEHAN, DELAHUNT, WEINER, ACKERMAN, ANDREWS, BROWN, CLAY, CROWLEY, CUMMINGS, DAVIS (IL), DEGETTE, HASTINGS (FL), JACKSON (IL), KILPATRICK, LEE, MARKEY, SCHAKOWSKY, and WEXLER.

As you know, under current law federal firearms licensees are required to maintain careful records of their sales, and under the Brady Act, to check the purchaser's background with the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) before transferring any firearm. However, a person does not need a federal firearms license—and the Brady Act does not apply—if the person is not "engaged in the business" of selling firearms pursuant to federal law. My bill corrects these deficiencies by (1) requiring background checks for all firearms sales at gun shows, (2) defining gun shows to include any event at which 50 or more firearms are offered or exhibited for sale and (3) by improving firearm tracing measures—in the event that a firearm becomes the subject of a law enforcement investigation.

I do not believe we can close a loophole by opening a dozen more. We should not weaken the Brady law by shortening background checks to 24 hours—thereby allowing more than 2,200 additional felons, fugitives and stalkers to purchase guns in an 18 month period; we should not allow states to limit the search of individual records to "disposition information"—which, as you may know, excludes mental health records and restraining

orders; and we should not create an unprecedented exemption that would allow a gun trafficker to sell thousands of guns from his home without conducting any background checks.

Considering the many recent tragedies and threats of violence we have had in our nations schools and the recent reports indicating that the U.S. gun industry sold numerous guns to members of Osama bin Laden's "al Qaida" terrorist network, the importance of enacting legislation that will promote a more secure nation can not be overstated.

It's time for smarter, better gun safety prevention and enforcement. The bill we are introducing today will move us in that direction, I am hopeful that Congress will move quickly to enact this worthwhile and timely legislation.

HONORING P.J. CORR

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor P.J. Corr. Mr. Corr will be recognized on Saturday, March 23rd for his many achievements, and for his years of loyalty to the Cavan P&B Association.

P.J. Corr was born in the parish of Mullahoran in Ireland. He is the eldest son of the late Patrick Corr and Cecilia Corr, nee Lynch. They were the proud parents of four children, P.J., Thomas (deceased), Peter who lives in England and Nuala who resides in Dublin.

Mr. Corr completed his formal education at Loungduff National School and was later employed in Dublin by James Caffrey of Jervis Street, a well-known Cavan man. After four years in Dublin, Mr. Corr immigrated to New York where he found employment for eight years in the A&P Supermarket.

In late 1957, Mr. Corr joined the fighting 69th Regiment serving on active duty for six months and the reserves for eight years, eventually reaching the rank of Company Sergeant. In 1965, Corr went to work for Danny Brady, also a Cavan man. After two years, he joined the staff of Killarney Rose and remained there for twenty years. After working in the financial district, he moved on to the restaurant business, working as a manager at the Greentree Restaurant for fifteen years.

In addition, Mr. Corr is very socially involved. He has been a member of the Cavan P&B Association for the last forty years and was the President of the football club from 1985 to 1987. An ardent golfer, Corr is also a member of the Cavan Golf Club. He presently serves as the President of the Mullahoran Social Club, and is a member of clubs such as the Irish American Society of Nassau, Suffolk and Queens, the Greenville Irish American Club, the Michael J. Quill Irish Culture Center in East Durham and the Ancient Order of Hibernians Division 9 Bronx County.

On a more personal note, Corr met the lovely Kathleen McGovern from Blacklion West Cavan in 1959. In 1963, the couple was married. Together, they have three children; Patrick, who is one of the New York's Bravest, Thomas, a member of 32BJ and Noreen who is married to NYPD Sergeant Gerry Dowling. In 1992, Kathleen passed away, God rest her soul.

Mr. Speaker, please join me and the many friends, family and colleagues of P.J. Corr in commending P.J. Corr for his lifetime of service to this nation, his community and his family. We look forward to his continued leadership and inspiration in the years to come and we wish him continued happiness and success.

HONORING UNITED NATIONS
INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE
ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DIS-
CRIMINATION

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. As the world celebrates this day, we must reflect and take action against the existing discrimination and hate within our borders. Since the terrorist attacks on September 11th, thousands of assaults have been reported across the country on people of South Asian, Arab, Muslim, Sikh, and Jewish backgrounds. By October 11th, the Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee had already collected more than 700 reports of hate crimes in the month following September 11th. People have been physically and verbally attacked, others shot and killed, temples were firebombed, and houses were vandalized. Innocent Americans, touched by the devastation of September 11th like the rest of us, must not be singled out for hate just because of their skin color or religious beliefs.

We in Congress condemn this hate and violence. But we must do more. It is time to take the next step and strengthen our current laws to protect victims who are chosen because of their gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, or disability. It is our duty. It is especially important that our children learn that hate crimes will not be tolerated. This is why we must pass H.R. 1343, The Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2001, which would elevate the status of hate crimes within federal law and ensure that state governments and local police have the tools needed to fight and prosecute these crimes. This bill would not take away the ability of state and local authorities to continue prosecuting most hate crimes. It would allow federal officials to assist overstretched states and local officials investigate and prosecute these crimes. It would also provide states and localities with grants designed to combat hate crimes committed by juveniles.

Sadly, the prevalence of hate crimes goes beyond the backlash from September 11th. The Southern Poverty Law Center estimates that last year alone, over 50,000 hate crimes took place. In the summer of 1999, the Midwest, including my district in Illinois, was rocked by the killing spree of Benjamin Nathaniel Smith. A follower of the World Church of the Creator, Benjamin Smith killed Ricky Byrdson, an outstanding role model in the community and a constituent, and Won Joon Yoon, a student at Indiana University. The Jewish Community in my district was also assaulted on the Sabbath with rounds of gunfire.

The weekend after the September 11th attacks, I marched in solidarity with the South Asian, Arab, Muslim, Sikh, and Jewish com-

munities to stand against the terrorist attacks and the attacks on the community. I saw not only overwhelming sadness, but the fear of violence on the faces of those walking with me. Members of my community and the district that I represent were afraid to send their children to school. They did not want to leave their homes even to go grocery shopping. But I also saw the commitment from community members to combat bigotry and racism.

Those who commit hate crimes perpetuate the sense of terror in our communities and undermine the ideals of our nation. This is why it is so important that hate crimes be recognized for what they are and punished accordingly. These crimes not only devastate victims and their family and friends, but they devastate the community to which the victim belongs. This community becomes stricken with grief as well as the fear that they could be next. The violence inflicted on those based solely on skin color or religion violates the very essence of what our nation is about. Our country represents tolerance and acceptance. We must pass the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act. I am proud to represent one of the most diverse districts in the nation and I will work to protect and honor the civil rights of all our people, without any exceptions.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE
AND MEDICAID NURSING FACIL-
ITY QUALITY IMPROVEMENT
ACT OF 2002

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Medicare and Medicaid Nursing Facility Quality Improvement Act of 2002.

This session, legislation has been introduced on numerous important long term care issues ranging from criminal background checks for nursing home staff to additional funding for the Medicaid program that provides the lion's share of financing for long term care. A variety of other financing and regulatory proposals have been introduced or are being discussed. This gives us an important opportunity to discuss a broad range of options intended to improve the quality of care provided to residents in long term care facilities. Today, I am introducing legislation that would improve the quality of care in our nations nursing homes where thousands of our most frail and elderly seniors live. It is my hope that these provisions perhaps combined with other valuable proposals can be enacted into law.

My legislation will provide incentives for the best facilities to improve and give facilities experiencing quality of care issues additional opportunities provide better care for residents. I believe the changes will also focus regulatory efforts on improving outcomes, fostering innovation and ensuring that the federal and state oversight system is more fair and accurate, to the benefit of residents and providers alike. This legislation would:

Alleviate the shortage of well-trained staff. The legislation would restore the ability of more facilities to train nurses aides in order to help hundreds of facilities in Michigan as well as many others across the nation respond

more effectively to the shortage of long term care workers and to the needs of their residents. Unfortunately, current law prevents nursing facilities from training nurses aides on site for a full two years after the original problem that led to the prohibition on training is remedied. This penalty is highly counterproductive. It does not serve the interests of residents and hinders rather than enhances the provision of quality care.

Flexibility and Innovation. The legislation would allow for an eight state survey and certification waiver demonstration program so states can adopt innovative regulatory process for nursing homes that focus on improving resident outcomes. States should work together with consumers, providers, labor representatives and other involved parties to craft innovative systems that can improve the quality of care. For example in the state of Washington there is broad support among all key stakeholders for such a waiver, and I believe other states would come forward with valuable waiver applications if such a process were available. In addition, states would be given some narrow additional discretion to work within the current enforcement process to avoid any unintended consequences of current law which could harm resident quality of life.

Establish incentives and additional opportunities for technical assistance to help all facilities improve the quality of care. The legislation would establish a range of incentives to encourage nursing homes that are providing the best possible care to exceed their already high standards, while facilitating the provision of technical assistance and advice on best practices to facilities that need to improve care for residents. Such measures will help both good facilities to implement even more effective care practices and assist those that face challenges in their efforts to provide excellent services. Current law provides many penalties to deter and punish those who provide low quality care but strangely absent are incentives for the overwhelming majority of responsible nursing facilities to improve the quality of care.

Insure fair and accurate survey results. Residents, families and health care providers are best served if all disputes concerning surveys of long term care facilities can be resolved quickly and cost-effectively through an independent review process. In fact, in my home state of Michigan providers and regulators are able to resolve many disputes through an independent dispute resolution process. Unfortunately, in many states the process is not independent enough of the state regulatory agency to provide for fair and impartial review. Our independent process in Michigan, as well as the independent systems in several other states can offer many lessons for the nation. Michigan also believes additional steps are needed to insure that all citations, even those that do not result in the immediate imposition of a penalty, can be subject to an appeal. Basic fairness and the principles of due process require us to allow nursing facilities to appeal all publicly reported deficiencies.

Ensure proper medical care. The legislation would prevent government inspectors from overturning the orders of patient's own physicians. Inspectors are charged with evaluating the medical condition of nursing home patients and for making sure nursing facilities provide the best possible care. However some inspectors, even though they are not physicians,