

public life, law, education, employment, health care, commercial transactions, and domestic relations.

The United States is one of the only leading democracies in the world that has yet to ratify this important treaty. In fact, our partners outside the Convention include Iran, North Korea, and Sudan. Are these countries with whom we share the values of democracy, freedom, and respect for human rights? Are those the countries we can count on in the international arena?

Women and girls around the world who turn to the United States for leadership in advancing their rights are mystified that we do not take the simple step of ratifying the Convention. When we do, the sky will not fall, the sun will rise in the morning, and the Constitution will still be the law of the land.

By ratifying the Convention, the United States will reclaim its leadership status as a champion of the rights of women and girls and send a strong signal to those states who abuse those rights.

On International Women's Day, I call on my colleagues in the Senate to move forward and ratify the Convention.

While women have made great strides internationally in recent years, abuse of women remains a global problem. Worldwide, it is estimated that 1 in 3 women is abused or sexually assaulted in her lifetime. And anywhere from 20 to 50 percent of women worldwide have experienced some type of domestic violence. These numbers are astounding.

Even in the United States, certainly a leader in promoting women's rights, a woman is battered every 15 seconds and battering is the leading cause of injury to women between ages 15 and 44. On average, 3 women are murdered by their husbands every day in the United States. And as many as 750,000 women and children have been trafficked into the United States over the last decade. Certainly, we must do more at home to protect women from domestic and sexual abuse.

On International Women's Day, the United States must also reaffirm its commitment to combating HIV/AIDS, an epidemic that has had devastating effects on women and girls.

Transmission of HIV from men to women is twice as likely as transmission from women to men and the International Center for Research on Women has shown that there is a high correlation between violence against women and HIV infection.

The impact that this disease has had on the lives of women is shocking. In 2002, 2 million women were infected with HIV and 1.2 million women died from AIDS-related illnesses. Young women, ages 15–24, represent 66 percent of people with HIV in the 14 most-afflicted countries designated in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Teenage women in Sub-Saharan Africa are five or six times more likely to contract HIV than teenage males.

This is truly a women's issue that must be addressed.

Mr. President, on this day, we honor women. On International Women's Day, the United States and the international community must take a strong stand and issue a clear warning to those who attempt to rob women of basic rights—the world's governments will no longer ignore these important issues.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

(At the request of Mr. DASCHLE, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

#### HONORING DOTTIE POTTER

• Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the contributions and accomplishments of a dedicated journalist serving readers in my State of South Dakota. For years, Dottie Potter has served as a reporter covering important news impacting South Dakota's Native American population. As a writer for the Indian Country Today and the Lakota Nation Journal, Dottie is truly a credit to her profession.

She has worked hard over the years to educate the general population of the talents, accomplishments and skills of Native Americans in South Dakota. Dottie has helped educate and inform thousands of readers. I have always respected her professionalism and skill as a journalist, and her sensitivity to the issues affecting her readers.

Her tireless efforts to dig for details and to explore all sides of particular issues symbolizes her dedication to the field of journalism. She is a well-respected reporter in South Dakota. But she is also well-known for her empathy and care when writing human interest stories. Dottie has delivered stories to her readers on almost every topic, from those that involved the road to success for a favorite son or daughter to words of wisdom from a tribal elder to the plight of South Dakota Indian families.

Among the many awards she has received over the years, she received the South Dakota Education Association Golden Apple Award in October of 2002, in recognition of outstanding media coverage of public education issues and events in South Dakota.

Dottie now works on a personal story, a fight to overcome cancer. A reporter to the core, Dottie continues to make an impact on her community. With remarkable spirit and bravery, she still works as a reporter with Lakota Nation Journal as she educates, entertains and informs readers. Her fight against cancer serves as an inspiration to others.

I congratulate and commend Dottie Potter on her many years as a journalist. Her body of work serves as a long-standing tribute to her commitment to the Native American populations of South Dakota and the Nation.●

#### LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

• Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

On May 6, 1999, in Santa Clarita, CA, two men were charged with suspicion of committing a hate crime after they allegedly burglarized a residence and beat three gay men.

I believe that Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.●

#### TRIBUTE TO MARY F. DIAZ

• Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, last month, this Nation suffered the tragic loss of one of its most effective and most compassionate advocates for women and children throughout the world.

Mary Diaz was only 43 when she died on February 12 in New York after a long battle of cancer. I know she will be profoundly missed by all who knew her and worked with her and were helped by her.

For the last 10 years, Mary was executive director of the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, an affiliate of the International Rescue Committee. She was there whenever she was needed and wherever she was needed—in Serbia or Angola or Rwanda or Pakistan or Nepal or Haiti and in many other places, often putting her own safety at risk to see firsthand the hardships of women and children displaced by war or fleeing persecution.

After each of her travels, Mary would return and eloquently share the stories of those she saw who needed help the most. She met with lawmakers and government agencies to urge them to respond. She worked with President Clinton to create a fund for refugee women in Bosnia. Visiting Tanzania, she worked to change the rules allowing Burundian women to distribute food with the men. Even in the all too short time she had, Mary inspired us all with her dedicated and tireless work on behalf of the disenfranchised.

It is easy to see where Mary learned her passion for helping others. Her father was a doctor and her mother is a nurse. Her two brothers are doctors. One sister is an inner-city teacher and another is a librarian. After studying international relations at Brown University, Mary worked for a television station in Philadelphia and volunteered in her free time to help refugees settle in the city. As her interest in

helping refugees grew, she enrolled at Harvard to pursue a master's degree in international education. A few years later, she became director of refugee and immigration services for Catholic Charities in Boston.

She was always there to help. Once, when 112 Haitian children arrived in Boston on a military plane, Mary was there to greet them with a friendly face. The children had lost contact with their families. They were barefoot, in a country they had never seen before. Mary comforted them, and took them to eat at a local restaurant called Buzzy's Fabulous Roast Beef. After that, she took them to a local swimming pool, and then she began the effort to reunite them with their families or place them in foster care. Stories like this about Mary are well known to all her colleagues.

Last year, Mary was honored for her work in protecting the rights of refugee women by Rudd Lubbers, the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees. When Commissioner Lubbers learned of Mary's death, he spoke for us all when he said that it "left a void in the refugee and humanitarian world, where she touched many lives."

Sadly, Mary died too young. But she made the world a better place, and we will always have our warm memories of her and her inspiring legacy to guide us as we carry on her mission.●

#### REMEMBERING RICHARD PARSONS

● Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, on February 16, 2004, a good friend of mine and a distinguished farm leader from my State was a victim of heart failure. At the age of 56, Richard Lynn "Rick" Parsons died at his home in Vance, MS, where he managed a family farming operation and served in numerous capacities of leadership for his community and the State.

Rick was a native of Water Valley, MS. He was an elder at the Sumner Presbyterian Church and a member of the local Rotary Club. In 2001, he was appointed by President George W. Bush and served with distinction as a member of the State Farm Service Agency Committee, which oversees the implementation of Federal farm programs in Mississippi. Rick was also a leader in Delta Council and the National Cotton Council, in addition to being on the Board of Directors of Delta Wildlife and Delta F.A.R.M., which are local organizations that promote wildlife conservation on the farm.

Additionally, Rick Parsons was selected to represent Mississippi as a finalist in the Southeastern Farmer of Year competition, and he was elected by his peers to serve on the board of directors for the successful Mississippi Boll Weevil Management Program and the Cotton Leadership Program for the National Cotton Council.

Rick was an unselfish and dedicated leader on behalf of agriculture in Mississippi. My office always relied on his sound judgment and good counsel in

matters which affected farmers. We extend to his wife Carlisle, his son Scott, and the entire Parsons family our sincerest condolences.●

#### HONORING THE AMADOR VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL CIVICS TEAM

● Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, on May 1-3, 2004, more than a 1,000 students from across the United States will converge on Washington, DC to compete in the national finals of the We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution program. Administered by the Center for Civic Education, the We the People program has a primary goal of promoting civic competence and responsibility among our Nation's elementary and secondary school students. It is the most extensive educational program in the country designed to educate young students about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and since its inception in 1987, more than 26 million students and 86,000 educators have participated.

I am very proud to announce that Amador Valley High School in Pleasanton will represent the State of California in this year's We the People national final. Four years ago I had the honor of recognizing Amador Valley for winning California's contest, and am proud to be able to do so again today. On February 6, this year's class from Amador Valley placed first in California's statewide contest. The school has a rich tradition of excelling in this program, having won California's competition five times from 1992-2000, and even winning the national championship in 1995.

During the national final, the class from Amador Valley will again have to testify as experts before a panel of judges on a wide variety of historical and contemporary constitutional issues. They will also be quizzed by the judges in an effort to illustrate depth of constitutional understanding, and ability to apply that knowledge. The competition is designed to resemble what hearings would be like in the U.S. Congress.

I congratulate the civics class at Amador Valley High School for winning this year's California We the People competition, and wish them best of luck as they conduct research and prepare for the national finals.●

#### TRIBUTE TO DANIEL L. MIHALKO

● Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, public service is a long and honored tradition in the United States. Through the dedicated commitment and tireless service of our Nation's Federal workforce, our country is safer and more secure than ever. I wish to take this opportunity to honor one such person, Daniel L. Mihalko, who since January 28, 1978, has served as a postal inspector in the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. After serving as a postal inspector for the past 26 years of his 31-year career with the Postal Service, Inspector Mihalko retired on March 2, 2004.

Inspector Mihalko was known to many in congress as their contact with the Postal Inspection Service in his capacity as the inspector in charge of congressional and public affairs. He was also known to the American public as the face of the Inspection Service when discussing issues such as the anthrax attacks through the U.S. mail in 2001 or pipe bombs in midwestern mailboxes. He professionally represented the Inspection Service in television appearances ranging from shows such as "60 Minutes" and "Larry King Live" to all the major television networks.

In addition to Inspector Mihalko's service as spokesman for the Postal Inspection Service, he was the guiding force behind several high-profile publicity campaigns: Project kNOw Fraud, National Fraud Against Seniors, and Awareness and Operation: Identity Crisis—important educational programs directed at increasing consumer awareness of mail fraud and deceptive mailing practices. His official appearances added to public confidence in the mail, and it is fitting that upon Inspector Mihalko's retirement from the Postal Inspection Service, we take a moment to recognize the Federal agency he promoted so well.

The United States Postal Inspection Service protects the integrity of our Nation's postal system and is one of the country's oldest law enforcement agencies. Founded in 1772 by the first Postmaster General, Benjamin Franklin, the Postal Inspection Service is the primary law enforcement arm of the U.S. Postal Service. Initially the Inspection Service helped regulate and audit postal functions, but in 1830, these functions were expanded and its auditors became special agents. By the late 1800s, special agents were renamed postal inspectors, and, in 1916, solved the last known stage-coach robbery in the United States. The modern Postal Inspection Service enforces more than 200 Federal laws relating to the U.S. mail, including identify fraud, mail bombs, child pornography, controlled substances, counterfeit stamps, money laundering, robbery, and mail theft. Because of overlapping jurisdictions, postal inspectors work closely with U.S. Attorneys, other law enforcement agencies, and local prosecutors to investigate postal cases and prepare them for court. Inspectors are aided in their work through five regional forensic crime labs strategically located throughout the United States which support field office operations.

As the former chairman of the Senate Postal Subcommittee, I have had the privilege of supporting this distinguished Department and have had to postal inspectors/attorneys as detailees on my staff. Inspector Mihalko is a fine example of the men and women who make up the Postal Inspection Service, and I wish Mr. Mihalko and his family well.●