

choose between heating their homes or buying school clothes for their children?

I support higher Federal LIHEAP funding, but almost 30 million American families still cannot afford to pay their heating bills. How many millions more will suffer under this bill?

Millions of fixed-income seniors have no room in their budget for higher power bills. Will we force them to choose between air conditioning in the summer or buying their prescription medicine?

Blue collar workers supporting middle class families will also suffer when their manufacturing jobs flee the U.S. for cheaper energy sources in other countries.

Are we telling millions of auto assembly, steel, aluminum, plastics, fertilizer, cement, and lime workers we do not care about them supporting their modest families?

The Lieberman-Warner bill admits it hurts vulnerable families and workers and tries to help them through rebates funded by carbon auctions. But vulnerable workers cannot afford to pay higher energy bills now and wait months later for a rebate check. Where do they get the extra money to pay their higher energy bills now? What do they go without while they are waiting to get their rebate check later?

The whole carbon auction and rebate system is inherently unfair and unnecessary. Some push it so that companies will not see windfall profits. I oppose windfall profits too, but they are only possible in 14 States, mostly in the northeast and west coast where electricity markets are deregulated. In the other 36 states with regulated markets, utilities are prevented by law from reaping windfall profits.

That means a national carbon auction unfairly punishes 36 States in the midwest, mountain, west and south where there would be no problem. Mr. President, 36 States will pay higher energy bills then needed. Families and workers in 36 States will suffer unnecessarily. We must find a better way.

Europe, in their system, made the mistake of passing out more carbon allowances then needed. We can easily avoid that mistake.

As long as the obligation we impose to submit carbon allowances for carbon emissions is greater than the amount of allowances we pass out, there will be no surplus profits in those 36 regulated States.

We must address the issue of preemption. We will create havoc with a national carbon cap system on top of regional systems.

We also need to set up a liability system for sequestering carbon underground. We do not want to set up an impossible situation where we capture all this carbon and have nowhere to put it.

We need to guarantee that we will not harm low income families and vulnerable workers. Protections should kick in automatically at a set level, so

that our struggling elements of society are not left to the whims of a fickle and vague cost containment system.

We need to calibrate any cap plan to the ability of technology to meet that plan. The welfare of millions are too important to roll the dice that low carbon solutions are around the corner. We also cannot inflict too much pain on struggling families and workers in the interim while we wait for those clean energy solutions to come on line.

There are many things we can do now to reduce carbon emissions. We have on the shelf or stuck in stalled legislative vehicles, measures to promote energy efficiency, promote low-carbon biofuels, cut vehicle emissions through aggressive but achievable stronger CAFE standards, require renewable and clean energy generation, increase renewable energy transmission, green buildings, carbon storage research and development, and clean energy research, development and deployment.

That is 8 different ways I am prepared to reduce carbon emissions today. So before we go down the road of hurting the poor, hurting vulnerable workers, sending jobs overseas, let us take advantage of what we have now. Let us get serious about our energy future and fund a Manhattan project for clean energy. Let us get to work where we can join together and do so now.

SCHOOL SAFETY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, more than 2 months ago, the Senate Judiciary Committee originated the School Safety and Law Enforcement Improvement Act of 2007, a legislative package that responds to the tragic deaths that occurred this past April, almost exactly 6 months ago, on the campus of Virginia Tech and to the ongoing problem of violence in our schools. We have attempted to show deference to Governor Kaine and the task forces at work in Virginia and to complement their work and recommendations. Working with several Senators, including Senators BOXER, REED, SPECTER, FEINGOLD, SCHUMER, and DURBIN, the committee originated this bill and reported it before the start of the academic year in the hope that the full Senate could pass these critical school safety improvements this fall.

Over the past few weeks, Senator SCHUMER and I have tried separately to pass the component of the bill designed to fix flaws in the Nation's background check system. Regrettably, our efforts were blocked by a single Senator.

I do not think the Senate should continue to stand by and wait for the next horrific school tragedy to make the critical changes necessary to ensure safety in our schools and on our college campuses. Risks of school violence will not go away just because Congress may shift its focus. In just the last few weeks we have seen tragedy at Delaware State, University of Memphis, and SuccessTech Academy in Cleve-

land, Ohio, as well as incidents in California, New York, Pennsylvania, and Oregon. I urge the Senate to move aggressively with the comprehensive school safety legislation. It includes background check improvements, together with other sensible yet effective safety improvement measures supported by law enforcement across the country. Accordingly, I urge the Senate to take up and swiftly pass S. 2084. If we are prohibited by objection from doing so by unanimous consent, then let us move to it and let those with objections seek to amend those provisions to which they object.

There are too many incidents at too many colleges and schools nationwide. This terrorizes students and their parents. We should be doing what we can to help. Just a few weeks ago, a troubled student wearing a Fred Flintstone mask and carrying a rifle through campus was arrested at St. John's University in Queens, NY, prompting authorities to lock down the campus for 3 hours. The next day, an armed 17-year-old on the other side of the country in Oroville, CA, held students hostage at Las Plumas High School, also resulting in a lock-down. The incidents have continued this month, with the arrest last week of an armed student suspected of plotting a Columbine-style attack on fellow high school students in Norristown, PA. Just today, in Happy Valley, OR, police arrested a 10-year-old student who brought a semi-automatic weapon into his elementary school. The students in these situations were lucky and escaped without injury.

University of Memphis student Taylor Bradford was not so lucky. He was killed on campus on September 30 in what university officials believe was a targeted attack. He was 21 years old. Shalita Middleton and Nathaniel Pew were not so lucky. They were both wounded during an incident at Delaware State. They are each only 17 years old. High school teachers Michael Grassie and David Kachadourian and students Michael Peek and Darnell Rodgers—all of whom were wounded by a troubled student at SuccessTech Academy on October 10—were not so lucky.

The School Safety and Law Enforcement Improvement Act responds directly to incidents like these by squarely addressing the problem of violence in our schools in several ways. The bill enlists the States as partners in the dissemination of critical information by making significant improvements to the National Instant Background Check System, known as the NICS system. The bill also authorizes federal assistance for programs to improve the safety and security of our schools and institutions of higher education, provides equitable benefits to law enforcement serving those institutions, and funds pilot programs to develop cutting-edge prevention and intervention programs for our schools. The bill also clarifies and strengthens two existing statutes—the Terrorist

Hoax Improvements Act and the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act—which are designed to improve public safety.

Specifically, title I would improve the safety and security of students both at the elementary and secondary school level, and on college and university campuses. The K-12 improvements are drawn from a bill that Senator BOXER introduced in April, and I want to thank Senator BOXER for her hard work on this issue. The improvements include increased funding for much-needed infrastructure changes to improve security as well as the establishment of hotlines and tip-lines, which will enable students to report potentially dangerous situations to school administrators before they occur.

These improvements can save lives. After the four students and teachers were wounded last week at SuccessTech Academy, the press reported that parents had been petitioning to get a metal detector installed and additional security personnel added, and that the guard who was previously assigned to the school had been removed 3 years ago. In fact, the entire City of Cleveland has just 10 metal detectors that are rotated throughout the city's more than 100 schools. Title I of the bill would enhance the ability of a school district to apply for and receive grant money to fund the installation of metal detectors and the training and hiring of security personnel to keep our kids safe. Over the past 4 years, this administration has spent over \$15 billion to equip, train, and build facilities for the Iraqi security forces. Surely, Congress can stand up for American kids who face unrelenting school violence by supporting just a small fraction of this figure for much-needed school safety improvements.

To address the new realities of campus safety in the wake of Virginia Tech and more recent college incidents, title I also creates a matching grant program for campus safety and security to be administered out of the COPS Office of the Department of Justice. The grant program would allow institutions of higher education to apply, for the first time, directly for Federal funds to make school safety and security improvements. The program is authorized to be appropriated at \$50,000,000 for the next 2 fiscal years. While this amounts to just \$3 per student each year, it will enable schools to more effectively respond to dangerous situations on campus.

Title II of the bill seeks to improve the NICS system. The senseless loss of life at Virginia Tech revealed deep flaws in the transfer of information relevant to gun purchases between the States and the Federal Government. The defects in the current system permitted the perpetrator of this terrible crime to obtain a firearm even though a judge had declared him to be a danger to himself and thus ineligible under Federal law. Seung-Hui Cho was not el-

igible to buy a weapon given his mental health history, but he was still able to pass a background check because data was missing from the system. We are working to close gaps in the NICS system. Title II will correct these problems, and for the first time will create a legal regime in which disqualifying mental health records, both at the State and Federal level, would regularly be reported into the NICS system.

Title III would make sworn law enforcement officers who work for private institutions of higher education and rail carriers eligible for death and disability benefits, and for funds administered under the Byrne grant program and the bulletproof vest partnership grant program. Providing this equitable treatment is in the best interest of our Nation's educators and students and will serve to place the support of the Federal Government behind the dedicated law enforcement officers who serve and protect private colleges and universities nationwide. I commend Senator JACK REED for his leadership in this area.

Title IV of the bill makes improvements to the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act of 2003. These amendments to existing law will streamline the system by which qualified retired and active officers can be certified under LEOSA. It serves us all when we permit qualified officers, with a demonstrated commitment to law enforcement and no adverse employment history, to protect themselves and their families wherever they may be.

Title V incorporates the PRECAUTION Act, which Senators FEINGOLD and SPECTER asked to have included. This provision authorizes grants to develop prevention and intervention programs for our schools.

Finally, title VI incorporates the Terrorist Hoax Improvements Act of 2007, at the request of Senator KENNEDY.

Let us go forward and act now on this important bill. The Virginia Tech Review Panel—a body commissioned by Governor Tim Kaine to study the Virginia Tech tragedy—recently issued its findings based on a 4-month long investigation of the incident and its aftermath. This bill would adopt a number of recommendations from the review panel aimed at improving school safety planning and reporting information to NICS. We must not miss this opportunity to implement these initiatives nationwide, and to take concrete steps to ensure the safety of our kids.

I recognize that there is no solution to fully end the sad phenomenon of school violence. But the recent tragedies should prompt us to respond in realistic and meaningful ways when we are presented with such challenges. I hope the Senate can promptly move this bill forward to invest in the safety of our students and better support law enforcement officers across the country.

CONGRATULATING WINNERS OF THE NOBEL PRIZE

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, it is fitting that the Senate has passed S. Res. 350 which honors the scientific work and accomplishments of Mario R. Capecchi, who, along with Sir Martin J. Evans and Oliver Smithies, received the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine for their contributions to the development of gene targeting technology.

What an honor to see these great men receive this distinguished award.

As with previous Nobel winners, one of this year's recipients has waded through much difficulty in his life to go on and accomplish such an amazing feat—Dr. Mario Capecchi. I would like to take a moment to review for my colleagues some of Dr. Capecchi's background and successes.

Dr. Mario Capecchi, who has worked at the University of Utah School of Medicine for nearly 35 years, has, through both his life and work, demonstrated that hard work and determination can and will lead to good results, even in the face of overwhelming adversity.

Mario was born in Verona, Italy, in 1937. His father was an Italian soldier who, soon after Dr. Capecchi's birth, was reported missing in action while manning an anti-aircraft gun in Libya. At the age of 3, his American mother was sent to the Dachau concentration camp as punishment for her association with an anti-Fascist organization. Prior to her arrest, she sold all her belongings and gave the proceeds to a peasant family to provide housing for her son. However, 1 year later, the funds were exhausted and, at the age of 4, Dr. Capecchi was left to fend for himself on the streets of northern Italy.

After 4 years of living in orphanages and moving from town to town with different groups of homeless children, he was located by his mother who, upon her release from Dachau, had engaged in a year-long search to find her son. She found him in a hospital bed in the town of Reggio Emilia, sick with a fever and suffering from malnutrition.

In 1946, his uncle, Edward Ramberg, a prominent American physicist, arranged for Dr. Capecchi and his mother to come to the United States. At that time, he and his mother relocated from Italy to a Quaker commune in Pennsylvania, where he would begin his education, graduating from a Quaker boarding school in 1956.

Dr. Capecchi received bachelor's degrees in both chemistry and physics from Antioch College in Ohio in 1961. He then went on to earn his Ph.D. in biophysics from Harvard University in 1967. In 1969, he became an assistant professor in the Department of Biochemistry at the Harvard School of Medicine, and was promoted to associate professor in 1971. Two years later, he joined the faculty at the University of Utah, where he began the work that would eventually earn him a Nobel Prize.