

large cities in the United States in 2006—406 murders in one year. The smaller city of Reading was ranked as the 21st most dangerous in the Nation, and the most dangerous city in the state of Pennsylvania. Cities across the state are experiencing disturbingly high levels of youth involvement in crime and gangs—an average of 15 young people between the ages of 10 and 24 are murdered every day in the state of Pennsylvania. The cost of crime to victims, neighborhoods, and communities across America is staggering: at a September 19, 2006 Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, economist Jens Ludwig estimated that the pecuniary and non-pecuniary costs of crime amounted to approximately \$2 trillion nationwide per year, or 17 percent of the GDP.

I have sought to examine the nature of crime and youth violence in cities across Pennsylvania by convening stakeholder meetings among Federal, State and local elected officials and leaders in the fields of law enforcement and crime prevention. These meetings have provided an avenue for understanding the nature of local problems, provided a constructive forum for discussing ongoing law enforcement and prevention efforts designed to combat these problems, and created an opportunity to discuss ideas for innovative solutions moving forward.

On January 19, I held a roundtable discussion in Philadelphia at which Mayor John Street, District Attorney Lynne Abraham, United States Attorney Pat Meehan, Philadelphia School District Chief Executive Officer Paul Vallas, and other leaders in the community discussed innovative solutions to the youth violence problem in the city of Philadelphia. We discussed the idea of bolstering mentoring efforts in the city of Philadelphia—an approach I find very promising. Research shows that children with the positive influence of an adult mentor in their lives are significantly less likely to start using drugs and alcohol or to be violent, and are more likely to be productive in school and to have healthier peer and family relationships. Following our meeting in Philadelphia, I have encouraged the participation of volunteers from Philadelphia area businesses, colleges and universities, and professional sports teams, including the Eagles, the 76ers, and the Phillies, in a citywide mentoring initiative. Volunteers from those organizations will be working in cooperation with the United Way and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, with whom we have partnered to ensure that volunteers have the training and support they need to form successful mentoring relationships.

On February 23, I held a roundtable discussion in Reading, PA, at which Representative Joe Pitts, Representative Jim Gerlach, and I discussed the collaborative efforts of State, local, and Federal law enforcement with United States Attorney Pat Meehan and representatives from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the United States Marshal, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Pennsylvania State Police, Reading City Police, and Berks County Sheriff's Department. The discussion capitalized, in part, on the previous efforts of community leader Albert Boscov, who has been hosting an ongoing working group focused on anti-crime issues in Reading. Our dialogue focused on the most effective and efficient methods of keeping the streets of Reading and surrounding neighborhoods safe. Presently, the largest Federal presence in the area is the Anti-Gang Initiative focused on the "222 Corridor" between Allentown and Lancaster—which has provided a \$2.5 million grant to facilitate a collaborative Federal, State and local response to the gang-related

drug and gun trafficking in the area. The initiative, which focuses on criminal law enforcement, prevention programs to steer kids away from criminal activity, and reentry programs to assist those returning from prison to integrate back into society, is already making headway into the gang problems in the area. Despite this progress, Federal, State and local law enforcement officers conveyed to me and to Representative Pitts and GERLACH the continuing need for more resources in order to get more cops out on the street.

I remain committed to ensuring that State and local law enforcement receive the support that it needs. I will be working with Federal law enforcement agencies to ensure that existing programs are meeting the needs of the communities in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and across the United States. I also plan to hold similar meetings in York, Lancaster, Allentown, Pittsburgh and other Pennsylvania cities in the coming months.

As the Senate moves forward in the 110th Congress, there are a number of important legislative items focused on crime prevention that demand our attention. The Juvenile Justice Act, which was most recently authorized in the 21st Century Department of Justice Appropriations Authorization Act (P.L. 107-273) is due to be reauthorized this year, and I will be working to ensure that Juvenile Justice programs are reauthorized in the form that most effectively and efficiently handles the challenges of youth violence and delinquency. The Recidivism Reduction and Second Chance Act, which I will be introducing with Senators Brownback, Leahy, and Biden, will provide essential reentry services to prisoners in order to reduce recidivism rates, keep former offenders productively engaged in society, and keep our streets more safe.

We must do everything we can to ensure that the Nation's youth receive the assistance they need to develop into productive, healthy adults and to protect our citizens from being victimized. I look forward to making a renewed commitment toward coordinated law enforcement and prevention efforts in the 110th Congress.

AMERICA COMPETES ACT OF 2007

Mr. REID. Mr. President, along with the Republican leader, Senator McCANNELL, I have introduced the America COMPETES, Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science, Act of 2007.

This legislation is the result of a truly bipartisan effort. Two years ago, Senators BINGAMAN and ALEXANDER asked the National Academies to make recommendations on the steps we should take as a nation to maintain our competitive advantage. The result was the Augustine Report, "Rising Above the Gathering Storm," which provided four primary recommendations:

First, the United States needs to dramatically improve K-12 science and mathematics education in order to increase our talent pool. Second, we must sustain and strengthen our Nation's traditional commitment to long-term basic research. Third, we must make the United States the most attractive place to study and perform research. And fourth, we need to provide incentives for innovation and long-

term investment so that the United States is the premier place to innovate.

The report warned that the Nation's traditional advantages "are eroding at a time when many other nations are gathering strength," and that "decisive action is needed now."

America has faced this challenge before.

In 1957, when the Soviets launched Sputnik, it caused great panic and concern about our ability to maintain our technological superiority. We responded to these threats quickly. The following year, Congress passed the National Defense Education Act, to keep the United States ahead of the Soviets through increased investment in math and science education.

We trained a whole new generation of engineers and scientists, and thus ensured our preeminence in technology and innovation for a generation.

That fact is, Federal investment in the basic sciences and research has long been a critical component of America's competitive dominance globally. In fact, some economists have estimated that about half of the country's economic growth since World War II has been the result of technological innovation.

Today, however, our position of dominance has been lost. We are challenged by emerging countries like India and China, where national investment in basic research and subject areas such as math and science continues to grow at a far greater pace than here in the United States.

The Augustine panel cited many examples, but some of the statistics are striking.

Consider that in 2005, more than 600,000 engineers graduated from institutions of higher education in China, compared to 350,000 in India and only 70,000 in the United States. China's population is more than three times that of the United States, yet they graduate more than eight times the number of engineers.

The report also found that American 12th graders performed below the international average for 21 countries on general knowledge in math and science. Another study cited in the report had American 15-year-olds ranked 24th out of 40 countries on a math assessment. In my home State of Nevada, the situation is equally alarming, with our students ranked 43rd in the Nation on a 2005 math assessment.

And even though technological giants like Microsoft, Apple, and Intel are American companies, the report indicates that the United States is now a net importer of high technology products—a shift from the early 1990s, when we had a \$54 billion surplus in high-tech exports.

As other countries become more competitive, it is clear we must refocus our energies on enhancing the Federal commitment to funding basic research and education.

We must preserve the competitive edge of the United States in science

and technology by getting kids motivated to study math and science. To do this, we need to provide more training for math and science teachers, increase the number of students taking advanced placement courses, offer grants to establish high schools that specialize in math and science, and provide scholarships and fellowships for future scientists and engineers.

The legislation we are introducing today addresses some of these concerns. It is, in effect, a downpayment, a modest first step to ensuring that America retains its competitive edge.

I wish to thank Senators BINGAMAN and ALEXANDER for authorizing the Academies Study. This study, along with a number of recent reports and books—among them, Tom Friedman's "The World is Flat," which I know that many of my colleagues have read—brought a much-needed sense of urgency to this issue.

Many of these provisions were included in the Protecting America's Competitive Edge Act, or PACE, which Senators BINGAMAN and DOMENICI introduced in the last Congress, and I was pleased to cosponsor that important legislation.

I also want to recognize the hard work of a number of my colleagues, Senators INOUYE, STEVENS, KENNEDY, ENZI, LIEBERMAN, ENSIGN, MIKULSKI, HUTCHISON, and Senator NELSON of Florida, who have been instrumental in crafting this legislation.

The legislation that we are introducing will double the Federal investment for the National Science Foundation over the next 4 years, and for the Office of Science at the Department of Energy over the next decade.

America COMPETES will create a DARPA-modeled research project at the Department of Energy and increase investment for basic research at NASA and other science-related Federal agencies.

The bill provides grants to States in order to better align elementary and secondary school curriculum with the knowledge and skills needed for the global economy. Nevada is already doing something similar, with our State P-16 Council.

The legislation will strengthen our math and science teaching workforce by recruiting and training teachers to teach in high-need schools.

America COMPETES will expand the important Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate, IB, programs by increasing the number of math, science, and foreign languages AP and IB courses, and preparing more teachers to teach these challenging courses. This is essential for States such as Nevada, where only 6 percent of 12th graders took the AP calculus exam and only 7 percent took an AP science exam.

The bill will help develop an infrastructure for innovation by establishing a President's Council on Innovation and Competitiveness to promote innovation and competitiveness.

Also, this legislation will help improve math instruction at the elementary and middle school level, through Math Now grants.

If signed into law, our bill will do many of the things that the Augustine Report recommended, but the truth is, in years to come, we will have even more to do.

Though we make new and significant investments in research, we still must address our tax structure and make sure that we do as much as possible to encourage investment in research and development. We should start by finally making the R&D tax credit permanent.

We must also do more in education. This bill strengthens educational opportunities in science, technology, engineering, math, and critical foreign languages, but this is just a first step. For example, we must take a very hard look at our high schools. As Bill Gates has often said, our high schools were designed for a 20th century economy and often do not address the needs of the 21st century workforce.

We should also realize that unless our most basic commitments to America's students are met—by properly funding title I and No Child Left Behind and making a college education accessible and affordable—these efforts alone cannot prepare our students for the global economy.

Mr. President, Senator McCONNELL and I began the 110th Congress by promising a new spirit of bipartisanship. Of course we have had our differences on some issues, but I hope that, in jointly introducing this important legislation, we send a signal that investing in America's future is not a partisan issue.

The America COMPETES Act is an important first step in maintaining this Nation's competitive advantage, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that we follow through on the investments we are making in this legislation.

TRIBUTE TO DR. SUSAN LINDQUIST

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I recognize Dr. Susan Lindquist for her cutting-edge work in the field of medical research. Dr. Lindquist's research today has the potential to lead to future cures for some of the most devastating illnesses we face. Her work has attracted national recognition, and next month Dr. Lindquist will be honored as Desert Research Institute Medal Recipient in Nevada. I would also like to thank the Desert Research Institute for their continued commitment in recognizing the best and brightest in our scientific and engineering communities.

Dr. Lindquist has a diverse background of experience in the medical field. She is a member and former director of the Whitehead Institute. She is also a professor of biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology,

as well as the Albert D. Lasker Professor of Medical Sciences at the University of Chicago. Dr. Lindquist has been acknowledged by several institutes, including being elected into the prestigious Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1997.

Her life work in the medical field is nothing short of extraordinary. Potential cures for Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's, and many neurodegenerative diseases lie in the most fundamental building blocks of the human body—our proteins. Lindquist and her colleagues have made it their professional mission to understand how long strands of proteins fold to create intricate shapes or misfold and clump together. In her work, Dr. Lindquist found that when proteins misfold, they can contribute to cystic fibrosis, Alzheimer's, and even mad cow disease. Dr. Lindquist and her team have studied this exciting line of research so that we can better understand these diseases and hopefully develop new treatments.

Dr. Lindquist's work has led to stunning medical breakthroughs in medicine, biology, and bioengineering. But the true impact of her work is felt by mankind. Today millions of Americans across Nevada and our Nation who suffer from neurodegenerative diseases have hope. Cures for some of the most debilitating diseases are on the horizon as a result of Dr. Lindquist's work.

Again, it is with great pride that I recognize Dr. Susan Lindquist before the Senate. She is a deserving recipient of the Nevada Medal for her extraordinary work. I look forward to her continued accomplishments in this important field.

A MESSAGE FROM IRAQ

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the superb contribution of the thousands of men and women deployed in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. The following e-mail, forwarded to my office by family members of a naval officer serving in Iraq is indicative of the fighting spirit and considerable sacrifice that members of the armed services are making on a daily basis. We owe all of these men and women a tremendous debt of gratitude for their outstanding service. This officer's perspective is most deserving of being considered by the American public.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the e-mail to which I referred be printed in the RECORD.

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

Friends and Family:

Many of you watched the President address the nation two nights ago regarding the way forward in Iraq. A few people have asked me whether or not this surge will affect me. The answer is yes, but only for a short time. Instead of coming home in a few weeks, I will not be leaving until March at the earliest.