

friendship among fellow members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority—the Nation's largest predominately African-American women's organization. And in 1965, she became the first African American to graduate from the University of Alabama, earning a degree in Business Management.

Ms. Malone was not just a symbol of courage; she also set an example of forgiveness. In 1996 Governor Wallace, who 3 decades earlier stood in the entryway to the university's auditorium, flanked by State troopers, to prevent Ms. Malone from enrolling, awarded her with the first Lurleen B. Wallace Award for Courage. Later recalling their conversation, Ms. Malone said that she simply spoke with Governor Wallace about forgiveness.

Throughout her life, Ms. Malone was dedicated to the preservation and enforcement of our civil rights laws. After graduation, she worked for the U.S. Department of Justice in the Civil Rights Division. In 1977, she took over as Executive Director for the Voter Education Project following the resignation of another civil rights legend, Congressman JOHN LEWIS. Eventually, Ms. Malone rose to become a Director of Civil Rights and Urban Affairs for the Environmental Protection Agency in Atlanta, GA, before retiring there in 1996.

In 2000, she gave the commencement address at the University of Alabama and advised the new graduates: "If there is any lesson for the graduates to take from my experience, it is that you must always be ready to seize the moment." Ms. Malone passed away on October 15, 2005, but her legacy continues. It lives on through her children, grandchildren, and siblings. It also lives on through the important work of her brother-in-law, Attorney General Eric Holder. He has done so much in the past 5 years to return the Civil Rights Division to its core mission. I have no doubt that his sense of purpose is informed by the proud history of the Malone family including his sister-in-law, Vivian, and his wife, Dr. Sharon Malone.

As we honor our Nation's civil rights heroes in preparation for next month's momentous anniversary of Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech and the historic March on Washington, let us honor another courageous icon who told those University of Alabama graduates in 2000, "You may not live in a time of great social change as I did, but you will just as certainly face moral choices." I hope Ms. Malone's courage, determination, and forgiveness will serve as a guiding light for generations to come, and to make the right moral choices in our own lives.

#### CRIME GUN TRACING ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak about a new bill I have introduced called the Crime Gun Tracing Act. This bill will create a strong incentive for police departments and

sheriff's offices across the nation to trace every crime gun they recover. I am pleased that my colleagues Senators FEINSTEIN, WHITEHOUSE, BLUMENTHAL, LEVIN, BOXER, JACK REED and MURPHY have joined me as cosponsors of this legislation. I thank them for their support.

The issue of gun regulation is complicated, and people may not always agree on all aspects of it. But one thing we can all agree on is the need to reduce criminal gun violence. Far too many violent shootings are taking place across America. We need to catch the criminals who commit violent gun crimes, and we need to identify and stop the people who are putting guns in criminals' hands.

Crime gun tracing is a powerful tool that helps law enforcement solve gun crimes and identify gun traffickers. Law enforcement agencies should be tracing 100 percent of guns they recover in criminal investigations, and the legislation I am introducing will help get us closer to that goal.

Here is how crime gun tracing works. When a gun is recovered in a criminal investigation, a police department or sheriff's office can send the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives—ATF—information about the gun's make, model and serial number. ATF can then trace the gun from its manufacturer to its first retail purchaser. This information can help generate leads in identifying the person who used the gun to commit a crime. Also, when all crime guns in an area are traced, it can help law enforcement identify broader crime gun trends and trafficking patterns.

ATF has described crime gun tracing as a "cornerstone" of its efforts to combat gun crime and illegal gun trafficking. And ATF has made it free and easy for local police departments and sheriff's offices to trace guns. ATF has created an online tracing program, called E-Trace, that it makes available for free to any law enforcement agency that signs up for it. E-Trace allows gun trace requests to be sent to ATF quickly over the internet. And it provides a searchable computer database that police departments and sheriffs can use to analyze all gun traces and gun crimes in their jurisdiction.

Let us be clear: This is only a database for crime guns. This is not a registry of law-abiding gun owners. ATF only traces guns that are part of criminal investigations by law enforcement.

E-Trace is a great law enforcement tool. I have been working for years to get every police department and sheriff's office in Illinois to sign up for E-Trace and to use it for every crime gun they recover.

We are about halfway there in Illinois—around 400 out of 800 law enforcement agencies in my state are using E-Trace, and I am reaching out to the rest to urge them to sign up. But we can do better, both in Illinois and nationally.

I am introducing my bill, the Crime Gun Tracing Act, to help move us to-

ward 100 percent tracing of crime guns nationwide. There are about 18,000 law enforcement agencies in America, and right now about 4,700 have signed up to use E-Trace. All of these agencies should sign up to use E-Trace and should use it every time they recover a crime gun.

My bill will require law enforcement agencies that apply for Federal COPS grants to report how many crime guns they recovered in the last year and how many they submitted for tracing. The bill will then give a preference in COPS grant awards to agencies that traced all the crime guns they recovered.

To be clear, police chiefs and sheriffs should not just wait for this legislation to pass before they start tracing. They should start tracing today, and I hope many will. But for those local agencies that need a push to start tracing their crime guns, my bill will give them a significant incentive.

Gun violence is a complicated problem, and there is no one solution that will stop all the tragic shootings in our nation. But comprehensive crime gun tracing will make a big difference when it comes to solving gun crimes and identifying gun traffickers. Crime gun tracing is free, it is easy, and law enforcement leaders will tell you that it is a powerful tool that helps them fight crime.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation. And I also urge my colleagues to call on law enforcement in their States to start tracing all their crime guns, as I have done in Illinois. Many police departments and sheriff's offices simply do not know about this free law enforcement resource called E-Trace, and once they learn how easy it is to sign up and use E-Trace, they are thrilled with it.

We can make important progress on the issue of crime gun tracing right now if we alert all our State and local agencies about this powerful investigative tool. Every additional crime gun that gets traced makes it harder for illegal gun traffickers to hide. If we can identify and root out these trafficking networks, it will help reduce gun violence in our communities. That is a goal we should pursue, and I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort.

#### SMARTER SOLUTIONS FOR STUDENTS ACT

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the choice before the Senate yesterday was very difficult. If we had failed to pass the student loan bill, students and their families would be stuck with interest rates for student loans that are double what they were just last year. American students and parents who worry every single day about whether they can afford college cannot be burdened with such an enormous rate hike.

The cost of tuition at public 4-year colleges is up more than 15 percent since 2009. Student loan debt has reached historic proportions. Yet we allowed the rate on new federally subsidized student loans to double, to 6.8

percent, as of July 1. If we had allowed this rate increase to continue, we would have subtracted thousands of dollars from the wallets of American students and their families or, worse, be responsible for pushing college beyond the financial means of some families who already wonder whether they can afford to give their kids the education they need and deserve.

The bipartisan legislation we passed yesterday will temporarily resolve this crisis for American families, but it is far from perfect. It switches these interest rates for these critical student loans from fixed rates to floating rates, with caps that are far too high. This opens the door to rising interest rates 4 years from now that students and their families simply cannot afford.

The student debt problem which for many families is a student debt crisis requires a carefully considered long term solution. I am hopeful that such a solution will eventually emerge, but this legislation is not it.

That is why I supported an amendment offered by my colleagues, Senators REED and WARREN, and another amendment offered by Senator SANDERS, which would have mitigated some of the long-term damage of this legislation. Even though we did not adopt those amendments, I supported this bill for the simple reason that it removes the burdens facing America's students and their families in the next few years.

The chairman of the HELP Committee, my friend TOM HARKIN has pledged to try to fix the likely spiking interest rates facing students when the higher education reauthorization bill comes up next year. I will strongly support that effort.

Yesterday we in the Senate had a choice, but America's college students do not they have no choice but to pay the ever-rising cost of a college education, not if they want the skills and knowledge that hold the promise of a better life. They have no choice but to live with the decisions we make here in this Chamber.

#### REMEMBERING MICHAEL WINTER

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, this week Americans are celebrating the 23rd anniversary of the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act. As chief Senate sponsor of that legislation, I know that we could not have prevailed without the tireless, passionate, never-give-up advocacy of disability rights advocates and leaders across America. One of those outstanding leaders, Michael Winter, cannot be with us to celebrate this year's anniversary. He passed away earlier this month. But I would like to take a few minutes today to celebrate the life of this wonderful person.

Michael was born with a disability, and grew up in Chicago at a far less enlightened time, when students and other young people with disabilities were excluded from the mainstream.

Michael used a wheelchair, but he was not the kind of person to take discrimination sitting down. At an early age, he began to speak up. He discovered the power of advocacy. He was determined to change the world for people with disabilities.

In 1969, Michael was enrolled in Southern Illinois University. Because the school president's wife used a wheelchair, the SIU had made a commitment 15 years earlier to become one of the first accessible colleges in the United States. But Michael was not satisfied. He believed that the university needed to be more inclusive for students with disabilities. So Michael and other students with disabilities took over the university president's office and chained a wheelchair to his desk. They did so to drive home the point that the campus needed to have accessible transportation for people with disabilities. The university, to its great credit, made improvements, and Michael had found a special focus for his advocacy. His passionate and highly effective advocacy for accessible transportation became a constant throughout his life.

In addition, Michael was one of the early leaders in the Independent Living movement. In 1977, after college and attending graduate school, he went to the fledgling Berkeley Center for Independent Living, where he completed an internship with Judy Heumann. He ended up staying on as a staff member for another 4 years. He then directed a Center for Independent Living in Hawaii before returning to the Berkeley as director of the Center for Independent Living for 12 years. During that period, Michael also served as president of the National Council on Independent Living.

As I said, Michael's special passion was to advocate for more accessible transportation. Later in his career, he held various positions at the U.S. Department of Transportation, and was responsible for helping enforce civil rights with respect to transportation under the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, the Civil Rights Act, and other laws.

He also advocated for more accessible transportation internationally. Marca Bristo, CEO of Access Living in Chicago, recently shared a memory of Michael Winter, whom she considered a mentor on independent living. She wrote:

I'll never forget being in Seoul riding the most accessible subway I've ever been on with my son. Later I asked my host from Rehabilitation International, Dr. Il Yung Lee, how did it happen? He said: "The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Michael Winter."

Many Americans got to know Michael in Eric Neudel's award-winning documentary, "Lives Worth Living," which chronicled the rise of the disability rights movement in the United States. The documentary recounts the historic day in 1990 when hundreds of disability rights advocates crawled and climbed up the steps of the Capitol

Building in Washington to protest the slow progress in passing the Americans with Disabilities Act. One person who was there recalled the scene as follows:

A young girl with cerebral palsy, fiercely determined to reach the top ("I'll take all NIGHT if I have to!"), inspired the admittedly out-of-shape Michael Winter to follow close behind. When the activists gathered en masse in the Capitol rotunda, Winter was approached by a young, able-bodied woman who was excited by the crowd. Turns out she was a tour guide, expecting to host a group of "handicapped" people on a tour through the capitol. "I have to tell you something," Winter wryly informed her. "I don't think these people are here for a tour."

Hundreds of disability rights activists are in Washington this week to celebrate the 23rd anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. We also celebrate the contributions of leaders like Michael Winter, who are responsible for America's remarkable progress toward fulfilling the four great goals of the ADA—equal opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. Despite this progress, we know that our journey is far from finished. We have not yet achieved the full promise of the ADA. But we go forward inspired by the memory and example of Michael Winter and other outstanding leaders in this movement.

Thank you, Michael Winter, for a job well done. Thank you for helping us to create a better, fairer, more inclusive and accessible world for people with disabilities.

#### OBSERVING TED STEVENS DAY

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, this upcoming Saturday marks the third time Alaskans from across my home State will join together to "get out and play" in memory of the life and legacy of Senator Ted Stevens.

Since Ted's passing nearly three years ago, we have followed his example by getting out and embracing Alaska's great outdoors on this fourth Saturday of July. On this day, as envisioned by Senator Stevens' family, we embody his passion for Alaska's unique wilderness, his love for fishing, and his immense affection for nature. We celebrate his life, one dedicated to public service—from his days as a pilot in World War II to his four decades in the United States Senate fighting for roads, buildings, and other infrastructure needs in a State as young as ours.

This year, Alaskans in communities across the State—from Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, and the Kenai Peninsula—are coming together for BBQ's, Potlucks, and fishing, while countless others take part in their own unique and special way.

We remember Ted Stevens, among many things, as one of Alaska's great leaders, the Alaskan of the 20th Century, and a tireless advocate for the 49th State. He was committed to our people, our economy, and the role we played in the success of America—from