

SENATE RESOLUTION 294—DESIGNATING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2000 AS “CHILDREN’S INTERNET SAFETY MONTH”

Mr. ABRAHAM (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 294

Whereas the Internet is one of the most effective tools available for purposes of education and research and gives children the means to make friends and freely communicate with peers and family anywhere in the world;

Whereas the new era of instant communication holds great promise for achieving better understanding of the world and providing the opportunity for creative inquiry;

Whereas it is vital to the well-being of children that the Internet offer an open and responsible environment to explore;

Whereas access to objectionable material, such as violent, obscene, or sexually explicit adult material may be received by a minor in unsolicited form;

Whereas there is a growing concern in all levels of society to protect children from objectionable material;

Whereas the technological option for parents or guardians to filter, block, or review objectionable Internet material is available and effective;

Whereas information on Internet filtering or blocking technology is unavailable to many parents or guardians; and

Whereas the Internet is a positive educational tool and should be seen in such a manner rather than as a vehicle for entities to make objectionable materials available to children: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates October 2000 as “Children’s Internet Safety Month” and supports its official status on the Nation’s promotional calendar; and

(2) supports parents and guardians in promoting the creative development of children by encouraging the use of the Internet in a safe, positive manner with the aid of Internet filtering and blocking technologies.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to offer a resolution designating October 2000 as “Children’s Internet Safety Month” on our national promotional calendar. This resolution, which I am submitting along with my colleague, Senator MCCAIN, recognizes the valuable information and opportunities for creative development provided by the Internet. It supports parents and guardians as they work to promote children’s intellectual growth by encouraging safe, positive internet use with the aid of Internet filtering and blocking technologies.

Filtering and blocking technologies can help parents and guardians protect their children from objectionable material. This is particularly important in those frequent instances when such material is obtained by accident, via unsolicited correspondence. With more than 5,000 new web sites appearing on the Internet each day, we must recognize the problems raised by the significant number of sites containing objectionable material (defined as material that is violent, obscene or sexually explicit). Unfortunately, one-third of all Internet web sites are devoted to objectionable material. This presents our

nation with a moral challenge: to find the means to sustain the wonderful freedom of the Internet while protecting children from unwanted and potentially harmful Internet material.

By designating October 2000 as “Children’s Internet Safety Month” on the nation’s promotional calendar, we can help parents, guardians, and concerned community leaders in their efforts to provide responsible Internet protection for our children. We can focus public attention on this important issue and encourage development of positive, community based programs and events highlighting the need to protect children from objectionable Internet material.

This resolution will help empower the young people of the Internet Generation to share ideas and dreams; and to do so free from unwanted and intrusive, objectionable Internet material.

SENATE RESOLUTION 295—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE CARRYING OF FIREARMS INTO PLACES OF WORSHIP OR EDUCATIONAL AND SCHOLASTIC SETTINGS SHOULD BE PROHIBITED

Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself Mr. DASCHLE, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. KOHL, Mr. DODD, Mr. KERRY, Mr. REED, Mr. BAYH, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. REID, Mr. TORRICELLI, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. BREAUX, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mr. BRYAN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. ROBB, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. AKAKA, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. SARBANES, and Mr. LEAHY) submitted the following resolution, which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 295

Whereas repeated incidents of senseless and horrific gun violence have led many Americans to conclude that neither they nor their children can feel completely secure anywhere at anytime anymore;

Whereas the epidemic of gun violence in our Nation has invaded schools, youth sporting events, places of worship, and other spaces that the American people once thought of as sanctuaries of safety;

Whereas these shootings have shattered the confidence of parents and educators and clergy in their ability to protect children from the increasingly dangerous world around them;

Whereas in response to this trend, Congress previously acted to protect America’s children by prohibiting the possession of firearms in school zones;

Whereas no American adult or child should have to fear for their safety when studying, praying in their places of worship, or participating in any other activities at or related to their schools or places of worship;

Whereas it is the obligation of America’s elected leaders to do all they can to protect our children from harm and ensure that adults and children alike can learn, play, or pray in safety; and

Whereas there is no rational reason for anyone other than a law enforcement officer to carry a gun into a place of worship, a school, or a school-related event: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that the carrying of firearms into places of worship or educational and scholastic settings should be prohibited.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, the first anniversary of the Columbine massacre has been a time for great contemplation and reflection—contemplation of the horror and tragedy of that event, and reflection on what has become of the safety and security so many of us once took for granted. From Paducah, Kentucky, to Jonesboro, Arkansas, to Springfield, Oregon, to Mount Morris Township, Michigan, to Littleton, Colorado, the surreal has too often become mortally real. Senseless, horrific and seemingly random gun violence has invaded all corners of our nation. These incidents have shattered our collective sense of security. What’s worse, they have done so with respect to the very places where we and our children have the right to feel most secure: our schools and our places of worship.

There are many facets to this problem—a media culture that desensitizes our children to violence, a feeling of hopelessness that invades too many of our children and the often too easy accessibility of firearms. We must address all of these problems, and I hope we soon will start to do so by taking action on the long-stalled juvenile justice bill with its several sensible gun-safety provisions and its measures aimed at the culture of violence surrounding our children.

But there is one more thing we can do for ourselves and our children: restore a sense of sanctuary and safe haven to spaces where guns have no place. Ask parents, educators or congregants, and they’ll say every community is entitled to at least a few sites of sanctuary, where they can honor their families and their God without fearing for their safety or their lives. But the reality is that at least 22 states permit gun owners to carry concealed weapons into places of worship, and many allow them at school events off campus.

Why does anyone other than a law enforcement or security officer need to carry a firearm into these spaces? Why at this moment of such concern about gun violence do we want to add to it the potential for more terror and tragedy in what should be our safest places? Why after at least a dozen shootings in American churches and synagogues over the last five years do we want to invite another?

Making clear that guns have no place in what are supposed to be sanctuaries would put the law on the right side of reason. It would help diminish the odds that another Columbine is around the corner. And it would reassure the American people that it is possible for us to come together on common ground to fight this threat to our safety and security.

With these thoughts in mind, and with the Million Mom March against gun violence soon to occur in Washington, I am today joining a coalition