Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: International treaty upholding individuals' human rights to be free of discrimination on the basis of race.


European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms—European treaty upholding the rights under the Universal Human Rights Declaration.


ICCPR—International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: International treaty protecting individuals' civil and political human rights.


Treaty Monitoring Bodies (TMBs)—United Nations Treaty Monitoring Bodies refer to the six committees which monitor governmental compliance with the major UN human rights treaties. While the TMBs are not judicial bodies; they influence governments by issuing specific observations about states' progress and compliance with human rights obligations. Four committees also hear individual complaints.


The Center for Reproductive Rights Board of Directors—Primary Affiliation Information: Executive Committee Members

and false statements in any matter involving a contract.

We need strong disincentives for those who defraud taxpayers. These controls must be in place now because criminal statutes cannot be applied retroactively. We cannot in good faith ask American families to sacrifice for postwar reconstruction and then allow so many others to unfairly profit at their expense.

Mr. Speaker, we must send a clear message that cheating U.S. taxpayers is completely unacceptable and will not go unpunished. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the War Profiteering Prevention Act of 2003.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF DR. ROBERT PAVLICA

HON. NITA M. LOWEY
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, December 8, 2003

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the great contributions to education made by Dr. Robert Pavlica. I also wish to congratulate him on being one of only six teachers from around the world, and one of only two from the United States, to be honored by INTEL, Innovation in Education with the prestigious 2003 “Excellence in Teaching Award.” He received this accolade for his pioneering development of the “Authentic Science Research in the High School” program.

Dr. Pavlica, a White Plains, NY, resident, who has a Ph.D. in biochemistry, along with master’s degrees in philosophy, cell biology, and biology, has been inspiring students as a science teacher at Byram Hills High School in Armonk, NY, for the past 33 years. In 1990, he began teaching scientific research after one of his students asked for his help in pursuing an independent research project.

This would lead Dr. Pavlica to create the “Authentic Science Research in the High School” program, a three-year science research course in which sophomores, who elect to participate, are instructed in the methods and processes of research. This culminates in each student conducting an original research project into an area of particular interest to the student. To help guide his or her work, each student is mentored by a respected scientist in the student’s field of research.

This program has been enormously successful. Since its creation little more than a decade ago, thirty-nine of Dr. Pavlica’s students at Byram Hills have become semifinalists for the Intel Science Talent Search Award, formerly known as the Westinghouse. Amazingly, eleven of his students have even reached the finals of the esteemed competition. This program has also prepared many more students for the arduous research that they will face in college.

Dr. Pavlica has taught his techniques to numerous educators, who wish to replicate his success in getting students excited about scientific research. Presently, over 170 school districts throughout the country have instructors who are using his program. In fact, over seventy percent of public and private high schools in Westchester County, NY, now employ the program.

The success of the program at Byram Hills has been mirrored in these schools, as well. Indeed, in 2002 and 2003, roughly forty percent of all of New York State’s INTEL Science Talent Search semifinalists went to students who were taught using the “Authentic Science Research in the High School” program.

I am truly honored that I have this opportunity to congratulate Dr. Pavlica on his well-deserved award and to thank him for helping so many students in Westchester and around the country learn more about science and the potential that lies within them.

PROTECTING PUBLIC SAFETY IS AT THE HEART OF GUN PURCHASE BACKGROUND RECORDS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF
OF VIRGINIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, December 8, 2003

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to provide some additional information to follow up on my RECORD statement of November 25 regarding the provision in the FY 2004 omnibus spending bill which decreased the destruction of background records checks 24 hours after a gun purchase.

I submit for the RECORD letters from two law enforcement officers groups who share my deep concerns about the impact on public safety of the current 90-day period for retaining data related to firearms purchase and approval. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, Agents Association, wrote: “The more the retention period is reduced, the more difficult it would become to use the paperwork to investigate and prosecute crimes related to the use of sales of the firearms in question. Any such efforts can only complicate the already difficult task of law enforcement and jeopardize public safety.”

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION,
AGENTS ASSOCIATION

Re: Issues Related to Retention of Firearms Paperwork.

Hon. Frank Wolf, Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary Appropriations Committee, H-309 Capitol Washington, DC.

Dear Chairman Wolf: On behalf of the FBI Agents Association (FBIAA), I am writing to express the FBIAA’s concerns regarding the possibility of an appropriations rider that would reduce the current 90-day retention period for data related to firearms purchase and approval. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, Agents Association, concluded that 90 days was the shortest period established by the Brady Act.

As Congress moves forward in the appropriations process I urge you to remove any rider attempt that would weaken the background check system. We believe that decreasing the amount of time the purchase records are kept will weaken the background check system and allow more criminals to illegally obtain weapons.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF CHIEFS OF POLICE,

Mr. TIMOTHY MUNSON,
Section Chief, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Module A-3,
Clarksburg, WV.

DEAR MR. MUNSON: The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed rule that would reduce the amount of time that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) maintains National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NCIS) records on approved purchases from 90 days to one business day. The IACP is world’s largest and longest association of law enforcement executives with more than 18,000 members in 100 countries.

The IACP believes that the 90-day retention period should not be shortened. Decreasing the retention period of these records to one business day will weaken law enforcement with sufficient time to perform the necessary audits on the NCIS system as established by the Brady Act.

In March 2000, the Department of Justice issued a proposed rule to (adore the retention period from 180 days to 90 days. They concluded that 90 days was the shortest practicable period of time for retaining records of allowed transfers that would permit the performance of basic security audits” of the NCIS system. However; the Justice Department also acknowledged that law enforcement officers groups who share my concerns regarding the difficulty it would become to use the paperwork to thwart the background check system. To run these crucial audits, the FBI needs the time background records on both approved and denied purchases are maintained in the NCIS system.

The FBI has stated that it requires at least 90 days to audit the records in order to ensure the accuracy and legitimacy of background checks performed by federally-licensed firearms dealers. These audits allow the FBI to search for patterns of fraud and abuse by both gun dealers and purchasers. Through these audits, the FBI can identify instances in which the NCIS system is used for unauthorized purchases such as gun deals with people other than gun buyers. In addition, audits can also help determine if gun buyers have submitted false identification in order to thwart the background check system. To run these crucial audits, the FBI needs the records on both approved and denied purchases. If these records are quickly destroyed, it will be much more difficult for law enforcement to investigate and prevent abuses of the background check system.

We believe that decreasing the amount of time the purchase records are kept will weaken the background check system and allow more criminals to illegally obtain weapons. In addition, it is important to note that any information retained in the records has been misused.