Our bipartisan amendment will establish national standards for law enforcement officers to carry concealed firearms so that they may respond immediately to crimes across State and other jurisdictional lines, as well as protect themselves and their families from vindictive criminals.

I look forward to the Senate approving our bipartisan amendment today to make our communities safer and to better protect law enforcement officers and their families.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I am pleased to rise today as a cosponsor of the amendment offered by Senators CAMPBELL and LEAHY, the Law Enforcement Safety Act. This legislation will take sensible steps to improve public safety by allowing trained active and retired law enforcement officers to carry their service weapons across State lines without needless bureaucratic hurdles.

In my State of Washington, all law enforcement officers are permitted to carry concealed weapons, and many jurisdictions require officers to do so. In addition, all retired officers can obtain concealed weapons permits, and my State grants reciprocal privileges to any law enforcement officer visiting the State. This allows officers to continue to play a role in maintaining public safety wherever they may be. I believe that the successful example set by officers in my State shows that this legislation warrants the support of this body. I believe that this is solid policy and that extending a similar policy across the country will have beneficial public safety effects.

I fully support aspects of this bill that are stronger than the current policy in my State: Requiring retired officers to maintain their firearms skills, and preserving local laws barring firearms in specific locations, like churches and schools.

Police officers are entrusted by the public with an important responsibility. Since the events of September 11, we have placed new burdens of our Federal, local, and State officers. We have often done so without providing them the resources they need to do the job. This amendment is a step to correcting that oversight by allowing the people who are the most well-trained in how and when to use firearms to avoid outdated restrictions on carrying and traveling with firearms.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and to provide additional support to our law enforcement officers across the country. I look forward to working with the amendments sponsors to ensure its adoption.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, as we all know, law enforcement officers are never ''off duty.'' They are dedicated public servants who are sworn to protect public safety at any time and place that the peace is threatened. They need all the help that they can get.

That is why I am so proud to cosponsor this bipartisan amendment to allow off-duty and retired law enforcement officers to carry a firearm if they meet the same state firearms training and qualifications as an active officer.

Today, there is a complex patchwork of Federal, State, and local laws that govern whether current and retired law enforcement officers can carry concealed firearms. This patchwork approach is confusing and ineffective. This amendment will establish a measure of uniformity and consistency across the country.

Over 740,000 sworn law enforcement officers serve in this country. In the last decade alone, more than 1,700 law enforcement officers have been killed in the line of duty. That's an average of 170 deaths per year. And, roughly 5 percent of these were killed while taking law enforcement action in an off-duty capacity.

Even the death of one police officer is unacceptable. We can and must do more to protect them, and that is why I support this amendment. It will increase the ability of law enforcement officers to protect themselves, their families, and our communities.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I am under no illusion what the outcome of this vote is going to be. But this is gun legislation run amok. This is demonstrating that the Senate is more interested in the profits of the gun industry than protecting the citizens.

This legislation will override every mayor's decision that has ruled that they do not want concealable weapons in the bars and the churches or on the playgrounds of the schools of their district. This legislation will override every Governor's decision to protect local citizens by prohibiting concealable weapons in bars and churches and schoolyards across the country.

The mayors have made the decision. The States have made the decision. Now in the Senate of the United States we say it does not make any difference if the local community is making a judgment to protect their local citizens; we know better in the Senate.

I don't want to hear from the other side anymore about one size fits all. This is it. Override the States, override the local communities, that is what this does with concealable weapons which are deadly to the children and the people of this Nation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2623.

Mr. CRAIG. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 91, nays 8, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 26 Leg.]

YEAS—91

Alexander	DeWine	McCain
Allard	Dole	McConnell
Allen	Domenici	Mikulski
Baucus	Dorgan	Miller
Bayh	Edwards	Murkowski
Bennett	Ensign	Murray
Biden	Enzi	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Feingold	Nelson (NE)
Bond	Feinstein	Nickles
Boxer	Frist	Pryor
Breaux	Graham (FL)	Reed
Brownback	Graham (SC)	Reid
Bunning	Grassley	Roberts
Burns	Gregg	Rockefeller
Byrd	Hagel	Santorum
Campbell	Harkin	Schumer
Cantwell	Hatch	Sessions
Carper	Hollings	Shelby
Chafee	Hutchison	Smith
Chambliss	Inhofe	Snowe
Clinton	Jeffords	Specter
Cochran	Kerry	Stabenow
Coleman	Kohl	Stevens
Collins	Kyl	Sununu
Conrad	Landrieu	Talent
Cornyn	Leahy	Thomas
Corzine	Levin	Voinovich
Craig	Lieberman	Warner
Crapo	Lincoln	Wyden
Daschle	Lott	
Dayton	Lugar	

NAYS—8

Akaka	Fitzgerald	Lautenberg
Dodd	Inouye	Sarbanes
Durbin	Kennedy	

NOT VOTING—1

Johnson

The amendment (No. 2623) was agreed to.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. REED. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, we will now adjourn for lunch. When we return at 2:15, we will have under consideration the Frist-Craig amendment on armor piercing, the Kennedy amendment on the armor-piercing gun ban, and a Levin amendment to be tabled, and final passage. We will reconvene at 2:15.

RECESS

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now recess until 2:15 p.m. for the weekly party lunches.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:46 p.m., recessed until 2:16 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BUNNING).

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1637

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar 381, S. 1637, at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 3, 2004.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Nevada.