

crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

Last month, a 19-year-old gay man from New York was brutally murdered. The victim's dismembered limbs were found throughout Brooklyn, including inside a subway tunnel.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join Senator LAUTENBERG in introducing the Terrorist Apprehension Record Retention Act. I cosponsored the Terrorist Apprehension Record Retention Act because I believe it is commonsense legislation which will strengthen our homeland security.

According to the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, anyone seeking to purchase or obtain a permit to possess, acquire, or carry firearms must undergo a background check through the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, or NICS. This process requires the applicant to provide a variety of personal information including name, date of birth, current residence, and country of citizenship which is then compared with data in the NICS system to determine whether the person is prohibited by law from receiving or possessing firearms. Disqualifying criteria include felony convictions and fugitive or illegal alien status. If no disqualifying information is found within 3 business days, the transaction is allowed to continue.

As part of the background check, applicants are also checked against known terrorist watch lists. However, under current law, membership in a known terrorist organization does not automatically disqualify an applicant from receiving or possessing a firearm. In cases where a positive match is made, Federal authorities search for other disqualifying information. If no disqualifying information can be found within 3 business days, the transaction is permitted to continue. In addition, all records pertaining to a positive match of an applicant to a terrorist watch list must, under current law, be destroyed within 24 hours if no disqualifying information is found.

A report released by the General Accountability Office on March 8, 2005, found that from February 3, 2004, through June 30, 2004, a total of 44 firearm purchase attempts were made by individuals designated as known or suspected terrorists by the Federal Government. In 35 cases, the transactions were authorized to proceed because Federal authorities were unable to find any disqualifying information.

Federal Bureau of Investigation counterterrorism officials stated "receiving all available personal identifying information and other details from terrorism-related NICS transactions could be useful in conducting investigations." Currently, counterterrorism officials do not have access to the majority of these records because they are destroyed within 24 hours of the transaction in the absence of disqualifying information.

The Terrorist Apprehension Record Retention Act addresses this issue by requiring that in cases where an NICS background check turns up a valid match to a terrorist watch list, all records pertaining to the transaction be retained for 10 years. In addition, the bill requires that all NICS information be shared with appropriate Federal and State counterterrorism officials anytime an individual on a terrorist watch list attempts to buy a firearm. Learning about a suspected terrorist's purchase of a firearm could potentially be critical to counterterrorism investigators working to prevent a terrorist attack.

This bill takes a commonsense approach to assisting Federal authorities in monitoring and apprehending suspected terrorists without compromising the privacy rights of law-abiding citizens. I am hopeful that the Congress will take up and pass this legislation to give Federal and State counterterrorism officials the information they need to help keep our families and communities safe.

AFRO-COLOMBIANS AND THE LEADERSHIP OF THE CBC

Mr. OBAMA. Today I wish to commend Congressman BOBBY RUSH and other members of the Congressional Black Caucus for their work on behalf of Afro-Colombians. The consistent advocacy of the CBC on this human rights issue has been critical to increasing consciousness and activism in the U.S. and Colombia. Significant progress has made through this alliance, and I look forward to working with the CBC and other community groups on this issue.

Throughout Latin America, Afro-Latino communities remain marginalized—socially, economically and politically. In the case of Colombia, the violence and disruption of the country's 40-year civil conflict have disproportionately affected Afro-Colombians. Many are now refugees in their own country after being forced to leave their homes, and they face widespread racial discrimination as they try to rebuild their lives. Although Colombia's 1991 Constitution granted Afro-Colombians territorial rights to the land they historically held, these rights are now being increasingly violated, as this land is taken from them. With little or no economic and educational opportunities available, many Afro-Colombian youths have turned to coca cultivation or joined guerrilla forces.

With the rise of Afro-Colombian advocacy groups and NGOs in Colombia, I believe it is possible to foster meaningful partnerships and alliances for positive change in this region. In addition to the CBC, there are many members of the religious community—in my home State of Illinois and across our country—who are working on behalf of Afro-Colombians. I commend them on their dedication to this important cause. Together we can and will make a difference.

BUDGET ESTIMATE—S. 600

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, when the committee report (109-35) to accompany S. 600 was printed, the Congressional Budget Office's cost estimate was not yet available. I ask unanimous consent that it now be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Also, the same report contained a table with a clerical error. I ask unanimous consent that the corrected table be printed in today's RECORD as well.

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

Congressional Budget Office Cost Estimate for the Foreign Affairs Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 2006 and 2007

COST ESTIMATE

In accordance with rule XXVI, paragraph 11(a) of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the committee provides the following estimate of the cost of this legislation prepared by the Congressional Budget Office.

U.S. CONGRESS, CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,

Washington, DC, March 18, 2005.

Hon. RICHARD G. LUGAR, *Chairman,*
Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for S. 600, the Foreign Affairs Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 2006 and 2007.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Sunita D'Monte.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS HOLTZ-EAKIN, *Director.*

Enclosure.

cc: Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr., *Ranking Minority Member*

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

S. 600—FOREIGN AFFAIRS AUTHORIZATION ACT,
FISCAL YEARS 2006 AND 2007

As reported by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on March 10, 2005

SUMMARY

S. 600 would authorize appropriations of almost \$30 billion in 2006 and such sums as may be necessary in 2007 for the Department of State, international assistance programs, and related agencies. The bill also contains provisions that would raise the cost of discretionary programs for famine and reconstruction assistance, debt relief, public diplomacy, personnel, and other programs over the 2007-2010 period. CBO estimates that those provisions and the indefinite authorizations for 2007 would require appropriations of \$34 billion over those four years. CBO estimates that implementing the bill would cost about \$59 billion over the 2006-2010 period, assuming the appropriation of the necessary amounts.