

the group of men were shouting derogatory terms regarding their sexual orientation before and during the beating.

I believe that our Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, in all circumstances, from threats to them at home. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a major step forward in achieving that goal. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF KEN SARO-WIWA

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise today in support of a resolution submitted by Mr. LEAHY, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. FEINGOLD, and myself on the 10th anniversary of Ken Saro-Wiwa's death. On November 10, 1995, a terrible injustice occurred when Mr. Saro-Wiwa and eight of his countrymen were hanged by Sani Abacha's regime in Nigeria. While we cannot undo that tragedy, we must never forget it.

Mr. Saro-Wiwa led the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, dedicated to defending the rights of his fellow Ogoni in the Niger Delta through nonviolent means. Over the course of his life, he had dozens of opportunities to take a different path, to stop speaking out, to let someone else intervene. Instead, he risked everything, over and over again, to call the world's attention to suffering and injustice, to demand action. In May 1994, Abacha responded by imprisoning Mr. Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni men, the Ogoni Nine, and unjustly accusing them of murder.

Ten years ago on this day, Mr. Saro-Wiwa is said to have told his executioners: "Lord, take my soul, but the struggle continues."

Sadly, the struggle has indeed continued for the Ogoni people, whose standard of living is among the lowest in the world, and whose oil rich land remains severely polluted. The names of the Ogoni Nine have yet to be cleared, and they remain convicted of the crime for which they were unfairly tried and hanged.

This resolution acknowledges not only the tremendous legacy left by Ken Saro-Wiwa, but also the battles that remain to be fought in the Niger Delta and beyond. I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort to honor his memory, his vision, and his struggle which continues today.

LABOR-HHS APPROPRIATIONS

ENHANCED STUDY AND EXCHANGE ACTIVITIES

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, I want to bring the attention of my colleague from Kentucky to a provision Senator BINGAMAN and I offered to the Labor-HHS appropriations bill regarding a strategic plan for enhancing access of legitimate foreign students, scholars, scientists, and exchange visitors in the United States for study and exchange

activates. Since September 11, restrictive visa policies and negative perceptions of the United States have led to a drastic decline in the number of foreign students studying in the United States, a development which has a negative consequences for both American foreign policy and economic competitiveness. A strategy is needed to proactively counter negative perceptions about America as unwelcoming to foreign students, and to enable us to successfully compete with places like the EU, the UK, and Australia, which have developed strategies to recruit the world's best and brightest. In my amendment to the Labor-HHS bill, I initially requested the Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Secretaries of State, Commerce, Homeland Security and Energy and others, to prepare this plan.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I am aware of this provision and have been alerted by the State Department that they would prefer that the Secretary of State take the lead in coordinating this strategic plan, given Secretary Rice's jurisdiction over this matter. Had this provision been offered to the fiscal year 2006 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act, I can assure my friend that it would have been included as a requirement for the State Department to fulfill.

Mr. COLEMAN. I, too, have been informed of the State Department's jurisdictional concern. Given that this issue is more appropriate to the Foreign Operations bill, I wonder if my friend from Kentucky will work with me and the State Department to ensure that this provision is fulfilled, specifically that within 180 days of enactment of the foreign aid bill the Department provide the relevant congressional committees with a report detailing this strategic plan, in consultation with the Departments of Education, Commerce, Homeland Security, and Energy, as well as institutions and organizations involved in international education. The strategy should seek to use innovative media like the Internet to develop a marketing strategy. It should also include policy recommendations for streamlining the procedures related to international student access.

Mr. MCCONNELL. My staff has already discussed this matter with the State Department and they have committed to providing such a plan within that timeframe.

Mr. COLEMAN. I thank the chairman of the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Subcommittee.

DECEPTIVE PRACTICES AND VOTER INTIMIDATION PREVENTION

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I proudly join as a cosponsor of Senator OBAMA's Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Prevention Act of 2005. This important legislation will protect voters from the deceptive practices that

aimed to keep them from the polls on election day.

Free and fair elections are the foundation of our democracy—a democracy built on the unassailable principle that every single American should have an equal say in their government. No American should ever approach their polling place in fear. No American should ever worry that they will somehow be penalized for exercising their fundamental right to vote. No American should ever be tricked into thinking they do not have the right to vote.

The Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Prevent Act takes great strides towards ensuring that no American will ever be denied the right to vote. It both criminalizes deceptive practices and provides affected individuals with a private right of action. It prevents the negative effects of deceptive practices by ensuring voters get accurate election information. It also requires the Attorney General to report allegations of deceptive practices, the actions taken to correct them, and any prosecutions resulting from those allegations.

We have worked hard to bring fair and free elections to people around the world—including the people of Iraq and Afghanistan. We must do everything in our power to ensure that our own elections are at least as fair and as free.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO CAROLYN HARRIS

• Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I am here today to honor my fellow Vermonter, Carolyn Harris, who has spent the last four decades improving the management and implementation of long-term health care.

A nurse by training, Carolyn Harris has worked in the management, administration, and certification of long-term care systems, as well as acting as a care provider. Additionally, through her work with the Vermont association of the American Health Care Association, AHCA, a national health organization representing more than 10,000 long-term care facilities and providers Ms. Harris has trained fellow physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals to provide appropriate and effective long-term care to patients.

Along with the Vermont Health Care Association, VHCA, Ms. Harris has worked for more than 30 years to promote affordable, accessible quality care in Vermont nursing and assisted-living facilities. Her efforts have gone a long way to assure the privacy, rights, dignity, comfort, and well-being of Vermont nursing home residents and to foster a spirit of cooperation and excellence in long-term care. Most remarkably, Ms. Harris continues to provide personal attention and care to her patients while sharing her wisdom, energy, and compassion with her colleagues. Carolyn Harris has met the