

to this was charged with implementing one of the most important natural resource laws ever enacted, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act. The benefits of this legislation and her actions are already being seen on the ground on public land throughout the Nation.

Secretary Norton also recognized the importance of domestic energy production before many others; her legacy will help decrease our dependence on foreign energy sources. This understanding of energy needs was priceless as she worked with Congress on the most comprehensive energy reform legislation in decades.

She also worked tirelessly to improve the efficiency of DOI, reducing duplicative measures and cutting bureaucracy while improving citizen satisfaction with the Department.

She excelled at pushing issues on a national level, but was also instrumental in several projects which are closer to my heart as they are located in Colorado.

Secretary Norton helped with the creation of our Nation's newest national park, The Great Sand Dunes National Park in Colorado. She also helped to create the largest Wildlife Refuge in Colorado, the 92,500 acre Baca National Wildlife Refuge.

Secretary Norton worked to help take the Rocky Mountain Arsenal and Rocky Flats and transform them from national defense sites to wildlife refuges.

As Gale steps down I am somewhat saddened. Her moving on signals the closing of one of the most productive chapters in the Department of Interior's history. But I am excited to see what new endeavors she will take on. In these new adventures I have no doubt that she will meet challenges head on and find the same success that she has seen as Secretary of Interior. I wish Secretary Norton all of the best in her new adventures. Thank you, Gale, for all your hard work.

STATE GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION REPORT CARDS FOR 2005

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, unfortunately the U.S. Congress is not addressing the issue of gun violence prevention, and several States have enacted laws which have made communities, and especially the children who live in them, less safe. Earlier this month, the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence released its 9th annual Report Card on State Gun Violence Prevention Laws and highlighted the inadequacy of many state laws relating to gun safety.

Each year, the Brady Campaign report assigns individual states a grade of "A" through "F" on seven types of gun safety laws that protect children from gun violence. The Brady Campaign includes in its analysis such questions as: Is it illegal for a child to possess a gun without supervision? Is it illegal to sell a gun to a child? Are gun owners held responsible for leaving

loaded guns easily accessible to children? Are guns required to have child-safety locks, loaded-chamber indicators and other childproof designs? Do cities and counties have authority to enact local gun safety laws? Are background checks required at gun shows? And, is it legal to carry concealed handguns in public?

The grades assigned by the Brady Campaign show that State gun laws around the country continue to fall well short of what is needed to adequately protect children from gun violence. While six States received an "A," unchanged from last year, 32 states received a grade of "D" or "F," an increase of one. Only one State improved its grade from last year, while three others took actions that will make communities less safe from the threat of gun violence.

The Brady Campaign notes a few positive developments in State legislatures, including the consideration of state-level assault weapons bans by at least four states. Despite bipartisan support for its reauthorization, the 1994 Federal assault weapons ban was allowed to expire in 2004 due to inaction by the President and Republican leadership in the Congress.

Fortunately, the lack of Federal leadership on the assault weapons ban and several other gun safety issues has not discouraged citizens from working within their own communities and urging State legislatures to address the problems associated with gun violence. The Brady Campaign specifically recognized the importance of gun violence prevention advocates and leaders in several major cities, including Detroit, for their grassroots efforts. These efforts by local community leaders are needed now more than ever. Congress should take up and pass commonsense gun safety legislation to reauthorize and strengthen the assault weapons ban and help keep other dangerous firearms out of the hands of criminals and children.

WOMEN: BUILDERS OF COMMUNITIES AND DREAMS

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I rise today in celebration of Women's History Month during which we as a Nation reflect on the momentous contributions women have made over the course of American history. Throughout our history, women have played vital roles that have helped initiate and guide important social, economic and political change, which has helped to solidify the greatness and prosperity of this Nation. I also want to, in turn, acknowledge that, while great strides have been made, there are still many barriers to equality that must be overcome.

This year's theme for Women's History Month is Women: Builders of Communities and Dreams. This theme recognizes the efforts of women in laying the foundation for greater equality and in building and buttressing movements that have resulted in profound change.

Of course, the foundation of all of our lives begins with our own communities, homes and families. We must not forget to honor the contributions of the women closest to us in their roles as mothers, grandmothers, wives, sisters, daughters, friends, and mentors—who transform and nurture us on a daily basis. As mothers and grandmothers, women spend each and every day building healthy, educated, productive, and happy families.

Building families goes hand in hand with building communities and a better society as a whole. Women have been at the forefront of this Nation's major social movements. One example is Anne Hutchinson, who in 1637 was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony because her beliefs ran contrary to Puritan teachings. Her courageous stand in the face of persecution helped lay the groundwork for religious freedom as a right. Even when their own rights were severely restricted, women rose up to fight for the rights of others. During the abolitionist movement, the social reform movement, the labor movement, and the civil rights movement, women emerged as leaders in the drive to make our society fairer and better for all Americans. During the civil rights movement, courageous women such as Rosa Parks, Coretta Scott King, and Ella Baker helped break down the walls of racism and ensure that equal justice was had by all regardless of the color of their skin.

The State of Maryland has a rich history of such leaders, including Harriet Tubman, who courageously led a shackled people to freedom via the Underground Railroad; Margaret Brent, who became America's first woman lawyer and landholder; and Clara Barton, founder and first president of the American Red Cross. Likewise, equality in the field of medicine was facilitated with the aid of Mary Elizabeth Garret and Martha Carey Thomas, whose financial support led to the establishment of the Johns Hopkins Medical School, after it was promised that women would not be excluded from admission. We in Maryland are particularly proud of Senator Barbara Mikulski who is Maryland's first female Senator and has served longer than any other woman currently in the Senate. In fact, it was Senator MIKULSKI who sponsored legislation establishing National Women's History Week, the precursor to Woman's History Month, in 1981. Maryland is also the birthplace of another distinguished public servant, House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, whose historic political career took root in the State of Maryland. Leader PELOSI, who hails from a legendary political family in Baltimore, is the first woman in our Nation's history to lead a major political party in Congress. And, in 2006, Maryland leads the country in the number of women serving in the State legislature.

Over the last 50 years, more women have entered the workforce and attained rights previously unavailable.