

Steps to Prevent Firearm Injury In the Home, STOP 2, developed by the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, supplies health care providers across a wide range of disciplines including nurses, social workers, psychologists, health educators, and counselors, with the tools to educate diverse populations about the dangers of guns in the home and proper gun storage. Health care providers routinely discuss ways to prevent many types of injury, such as using child car seats, wearing bicycle safety helmets, and locking up prescription drugs. STOP 2 helps health care providers incorporate firearm injury prevention along with these other safety messages. Health care providers, as important messengers of health and safety information, are able to speak with patients and their families about the dangers of guns in their own homes as well as the homes of relatives or friends they visit. The program also assists health care providers in alerting families to the typical warning signs of gang involvement and suicide, and outlines action steps that can help prevent these possible tragedies.

STOP 2 expands on the original STOP program, which was launched in 1994 as a joint effort of the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, CPHV, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. STOP was designed specifically for pediatricians. STOP 2 broadens the program's scope to include other health care providers and health educators who work in a wide range of disciplines with diverse populations. With funding through the Metropolitan Life Foundation, CPHV is providing STOP 2 kits free of charge to the health care community. Health care providers can request a free STOP 2 kit that contains patient/client brochures, waiting room posters, and other gun violence prevention information, by contacting the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence.

I commend all of those who fight gun violence through safety education. Their common sense approach provides parents with practical steps to help protect themselves and their families from tragedy. I am hopeful that the 109th Congress will do more to support their efforts by taking up and passing sensible gun safety legislation.

COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, we have all learned in our personal lives that in times of difficulty and challenge, all the extraneous matters of life disappear and we wisely cling to those relationships and values we hold most dear. As we as a nation confront a dangerous set of circumstance in the Middle East, we would be wise to do the same thing.

The United States made a solemn, unequivocal, irrevocable commitment to the State of Israel in 1948. We did so for two reasons. First, we were responding in moral revulsion to centuries of persecution of the Jewish peo-

ple around the world and specifically in Nazi Germany. Second, we were affirming the formation of a democratic society in the Middle East because we believed, then and now, the democracy is, in Lincoln's words, "the last best hope of Earth."

That commitment had absolutely nothing to do with politics, partisanship or the price of a gallon of gasoline. Today on this floor we renew that commitment to Israel, and by doing so, remain faithful to our own creeds and national moral identity.

We as a nation are committed to democracy and the rule of law. We believe that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. We know from our own history that many disagree with that commitment. We know that those values are not self-actualizing. Sometimes free nations have to fight violent people to preserve the circumstances under which they can live in peace and freedom. We stand with Israel today to support its right to defend itself against terrorists and those who support them.

Israel is a small country, surrounded by many who are hostile to their existence. Over the last six decades, Israel has made risky territorial concessions to its neighbors in hopes that moderate Arab voices would prevail over extremists. Those extremists' view of peace in the Middle East are predicated on the destruction and removal of Israel.

Despite the fact that southern Lebanon and the Gaza Strip have been the launching point for violence against Israel in the recent past, Israel agreed to withdraw from them in the hope of peace. That hope has been dashed by Hamas and Hezbollah, both in the abduction of Israeli soldiers and the launching of rocket attacks.

Some in the European community and even in the United States have said criticized Israel's response as "disproportionate" and urged Israel to negotiate. When their very survival is at stake, how do you measure proportionality? With whom do they suggest Israel negotiate?

I am not saying there is not role for diplomacy or a diplomatic solution.

But the foundation of such a solution must be No. 1, Israel has an absolute right to defend itself and No. 2, we must make absolutely certain that our actions do not embolden terrorists to continue their inexcusable tactics.

No one supports armed conflict or the injury of civilians. A terrible price is always paid by those who bear the least guilt for the battles. But when Israel is faced with terrorists who work for its destruction, firm steps must be taken.

I commend the President for his active work with the leaders in the region, the United Nations and Europe. This is a situation where public statements should be few and maximum influence exerted in private networks of diplomacy.

I believe the President is honoring our Nation's commitment to Israel and

forcefully pursuing our Nation's wider objectives in the War on Terror in this situation.

I think the American people can be reassured and proud that the United States is acting as a great power, in pursuit of high moral principles. We hope that through our strength and advocacy, those who initiated this conflict in Lebanon and Gaza will cease their actions, that their ability to continue to inflict terror and destabilize the region is eliminated or at least severely curtailed, and those who work for peace can regain control.

Israel is the only democracy in the region and they need our friendship and support right now. By demonstrating our resolve, we help ensure that our other friends in the region will work for a solution which is best for Israel and all the legitimate forces in the Middle East.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO REAR ADMIRAL JAMES E. MCPHERSON

• Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and pay tribute to RADM James E. McPherson, the Judge Advocate General of the U.S. Navy. Admiral McPherson will retire from the Navy on July 28, 2006, having completed over 27 years of distinguished service to our Nation.

Admiral McPherson, a native of San Diego, is a graduate of San Diego State University and University of San Diego Law School. He also earned a master of laws degree from the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School.

Admiral McPherson began his military career as an enlisted man in the U.S. Army. He served over 3 years as a military policeman at the Presidio of San Francisco, with the Eighth Army in South Korea, and with the First Infantry Division. Notably, he is the first Navy Judge Advocate General to begin his career as an enlisted man. After receiving his commission as an ensign and completing Naval Justice School in Newport, RI, Admiral McPherson was assigned as an Assistant Force Judge Advocate for Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet. He continued his distinguished career with assignments at the Naval Legal Service Office in Norfolk, VA; the Naval Air Station, Cubi Point in the Philippines; and as Command Judge Advocate on-board the USS *Theodore Roosevelt*. Following completion of graduate school, Admiral McPherson returned to the Naval Legal Service Office in Norfolk and served tours as senior defense counsel and senior trial counsel. He was then assigned as Force Judge Advocate for Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet; the assistant for legal and legislative matters for the vice chief of Naval Operations; and as special counsel to the Chief of Naval Operations. In September 2000,