

the fiscal year 2007 Defense appropriations bill, S.A. 4911 to H.R., 5631, with Senator REED to restore full funding for Predator unmanned aerial vehicles, UAVs, for the U.S. Special Operations Command, SOCOM. This amendment will allow SOCOM to receive its full complement of Predators by 2010 by adding \$64.4 million to the fiscal year 2007 Defense appropriations bill.

Our brave troops and intelligence collectors must have the tools they need to find, fix and eliminate terrorists intended to do our Nation harm. The Predator, which comes in armed and unarmed modes and has advanced sensors and cameras, is one of the most important systems we have to monitor terrorist activity in hostile environments. The Predator also is a critical intelligence gathering platform in fighting insurgents in Iraq and the Taliban in Afghanistan. According to Defense News, the Predator was central to the detection and killing of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in Iraq this past June.

I have been pleased to fight for putting more Predators in the hands of our Special Operations Command ever since U.S. Special Operations Command Deputy Commander Eric Olson responded to my question about whether he had all the tools he needs to win the war on terror in an April 6, 2006, hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee's Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee. Admiral Olson said his command did not have enough Predators, and was not slated to have adequate numbers of Predators for several years. This is unacceptable, and I expressed my concern to Chairman WARNER and Ranking Member LEVIN in an April 27, 2006, letter urging committee action on this shortcoming.

I was equally pleased that the Senate Armed Services Committee adopted my amendment calling for full funding of the Predators for the Special Operations Command during mark-up of the fiscal year 2007 Defense authorization bill.

Unfortunately, defense appropriators cut back funding for Predators in its mark-up of the fiscal year 2007 Defense appropriations bill. My amendment restores full funding for a second squad of Predators for our Special Operations Forces' war-fighters and intelligence collectors by 2010. Giving our military and our intelligence personnel the best tools, as quickly as possible, to win the war on terror is something we must do.

COMBATING GUN TRAFFICKING

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I have long supported law enforcement's efforts to combat gun trafficking. Earlier this summer, 11 people were charged with purchasing firearms in gun shops in Virginia and illegally dumping them on the streets of New York City between 2004 and 2005. These arrests bring attention to the need to vigorously enforce our gun laws in order to stem the flow of guns to the black market.

These individuals have been charged with making straw purchases of handguns at various gun shops in Norfolk and Portsmouth, VA, and transporting them to New York City, where they were allegedly sold on the streets at a significant markup. Straw purchases are transactions that violate Federal law in which one individual submits to the required Federal background check for a gun that is clearly intended for use by someone else. Such purchasers play a crucial role in the illegal trafficking of guns by purchasing with the intention of reselling them to prohibited buyers. The alleged conspiracy, which took place from September 2004 through June 2005, was first uncovered in 2004 when New York City police officers began making undercover purchases of firearms from this organization on the streets. The guns were traced back to gun shops in Virginia where the original straw purchases are said to have taken place. More than 50 guns were involved.

Gun trafficking has also been a problem in my home State of Michigan. According to an Americans for Gun Safety analysis of ATF trace data from 1996—1999, over 40 percent of the guns traced to crimes committed in Michigan in 1998 and 1999 originated in other States, a much higher rate than the national average. The largest number of out of State suppliers of guns to Michigan during that period were in Ohio, Kentucky, Georgia, and Alabama.

These statistics demonstrate the length to which criminals are willing to go to circumvent our gun laws. This kind of activity can be stopped by vigorously enforcing our gun laws, providing law enforcement with stronger tools to crack down on gun trafficking, on corrupt gun dealers and other armed criminals, and by passing sensible gun safety legislation.

I commend the hard work of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and other Federal, State and local law enforcement officers. Vigorous law enforcement is an integral part of reducing gun violence.

IN MEMORIAM OF CONGRESSMAN BOB MATHIAS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I rise to honor the life of Congressman Robert "Bob" Mathias Olympian, Congressman, and San Joaquin Valley son. Congressman Bob Mathias passed away on September 2, 2006.

Bob Mathias was born in Tulare, CA, on November 17, 1930. Mr. Mathias attended and graduated from Tulare Union High School in 1948. In 1953, he graduated with his bachelor of arts degree from Stanford University, and in 1954 he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps, where he rose to the rank of second lieutenant. In 1966, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives for the 18th Congressional District that also included his hometown of Tulare, and continued his service until 1974.

By all accounts such impressive accomplishments would be considered aspects of a fruitful life. However, Mr. Mathias was also a gifted athlete. Mr. Mathias' athletic career was laden with accomplishments, including consecutive gold medals in the Olympic decathlons, four national Amateur Athletic Union—AAU—championships, and three world records in the decathlon. Seventeen-year-old Bob Mathias first competed in the 1948 London Summer Olympics, only months after picking up the sport. He became the youngest Olympic gold medalist, winning the decathlon. His meteoric rise in 1948 led to his depiction on the cover of LIFE magazine and the Sullivan Award for Athlete of the Year from the AAU. At the 1952 Helsinki games, Mr. Mathias again won the gold medal in the decathlon, and continued to make history as the first person to ever win consecutive Olympic decathlons. That same year Bob Mathias was named the Associated Press Male Athlete of the Year recognition of his feats on the track and on the football field. Mr. Mathias was also a member of the 1952 Stanford football team, playing an integral part of that team that went on to the 1952 Rose Bowl.

His athleticism and accomplishments earned him a place in the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame, as well as the National Track and Field Hall of Fame. He also went on to guide younger generations of athletes as the Director of the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, the National Fitness Foundation, and the American Kids Sports Association.

Throughout his life, Congressman Mathias remained a humble man, true to his roots, dedicated to his family and his country, unfazed by fame. As a young child, Mr. Mathias battled anemia and other illnesses. His perseverance in athletics and academics despite these problems no doubt prepared him for his work later in life. After his athletic career and service in the Marine Corps, Bob Mathias served as a goodwill ambassador for youth programs on behalf of the U.S. Department of State. His service to his country continued in his dedication to the constituents of the 18th Congressional District.

Congressman Mathias is survived by his wife Gwen; his 4 daughters, Romel, Megan, Marissa, and Alyse; his son Reiner; his 10 grandchildren; his sister Patricia; and his two brothers, Jim and Eugene. I extend my deepest sympathies to his family.

Congressman Mathias will be missed by his family, his friends, his fans and all those whose lives he touched. May his kindness, humility and hard work remain an inspiration to us all.

FASD AWARENESS DAY

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, tomorrow is the ninth day of the ninth month, a day designated as International Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Awareness Day. I rise today to state