

## SENATE RESOLUTION 95

At the request of Mr. THURMOND, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. HELMS), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. FITZGERALD), and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUE) were added as cosponsors of Senate Resolution 95, a resolution designating August 16, 1999, as "National Airborne Day."

## SENATE RESOLUTION 98

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. ABRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of Senate Resolution 98, a resolution designating the week beginning October 17, 1999, and the week beginning October 15, 2000, as "National Character Counts Week."

## SENATE RESOLUTION 109

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SANTORUM) was added as a cosponsor of Senate Resolution 109, a resolution relating to the activities of the National Islamic Front government in Sudan.

## SENATE RESOLUTION 111

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. CHAFFEE) was added as a cosponsor of Senate Resolution 111, a resolution designating June 6, 1999, as "National Child's Day."

### AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

#### COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be granted permission to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 29, for purposes of conducting a full committee hearing which is scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m. The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony on S. 161, the Power Marketing Administration Reform Act of 1999; S. 282, the Transition to Competition in the Electric Industry Act; S. 516, the Electric Utility Restructuring Empowerment and Competitiveness Act of 1999; S. 1047, the Comprehensive Electricity Competition Act; S. 1273, a bill to amend the Federal Power Act to facilitate the transition to more competitive and efficient electric power markets, and for other purposes; and S. 1284, a bill to amend the Federal Power Act to ensure that no State may establish, maintain or enforce on behalf of any electric utility an exclusive right to sell electric energy or otherwise unduly discriminate against any customer who seeks to purchase electric energy in interstate commerce from any supplier.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the full Com-

mittee on Environment and Public Works be granted permission to conduct a business meeting to mark up (1) S. 1100, a bill to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to provide that the designation of critical habitat for endangered and threatened species be required as part of the development of recovery plans for those species; (2) Nomination of Timothy Fields, Jr., nominated by the President to be Assistant Administrator, Office of Solid Waste, Environmental Protection Agency; and (3) Committee Budget Resolution. The meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 29, 10:00 a.m., Hearing Room (SD-406).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, the Finance Committee requests unanimous consent to conduct a hearing on Tuesday, June 29, 1999 beginning at 10:00 a.m. in room 215 Dirksen.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR AND PENSIONS

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet for a hearing on "ESEA: Arts Education and Magnet Schools" during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 29, 1999, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## SUBCOMMITTEE ON FOREST AND PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Forests & Public Land Management of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be granted permission to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 29, for purposes of conducting a hearing which is scheduled to begin at 2:30 p.m. the purpose of this oversight hearing is to receive testimony on fire preparedness on Federal lands.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## SUBCOMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND SPACE

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Science, Technology, and Space of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet on Tuesday, June 29, 1999, at 2:30 P.M. on NOAA, U.S. Fire Administration, and Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program reauthorization.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

#### TRIBUTE TO RABBI MOSHE SHERER

• Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, it is a privilege to join in this tribute to

Rabbi Moshe Sherer. To all of us who knew him and worked with him, Rabbi Sherer was a great friend, a great leader, and a great champion of democracy and freedom.

Rabbi Sherer was an inspiration to all of us, especially in his work on immigration and religious freedom. He worked skillfully and tirelessly to free prisoners of conscience in the former Soviet Union, to reunite divided families, and to protect freedom of religion across the globe.

Even in the darkest hours of communism, Rabbi Sherer was an eloquent advocate for the right of the oppressed to leave the Soviet Union. He had an enduring belief that the freedom to emigrate to escape persecution is one of the most basic and fundamental human rights.

As the President of Agudath Israel of America for over three decades, Rabbi Sherer was instrumental in developing that organization into a powerful force for justice in our nation and across the world. He inspired us all with his generous spirit of tolerance, his extraordinary knowledge and understanding, and his deep commitment to human rights and religious freedom.

We are fortunate to have worked with Rabbi Sherer, and we mourn his loss. His brilliant legacy will continue to be an inspiration for future generations. We miss his leadership and we miss his friendship.●

#### JUVENILE CRIME IN AMERICA

• Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I rise today to express my support for the recent passage by the Senate of S. 254, the "Violent and Repeat Offender Accountability and Rehabilitation Act of 1999."

One of the most complex issues facing our society is how communities confront the troubling trends in violent crime committed by young people. In particular, the recent tragedy in Littleton, Colorado underscores that all elements of our society, including parents, faith-based organizations, local officials, educators, students, and law enforcement officials should be encouraged to work together to develop innovative and effective solutions to reducing and preventing violent acts committed by our nation's youth.

In 1997, young people under the age of eighteen represented 17 percent of all violent arrests; 50 percent of all arson arrests; 37 percent of burglary arrests; and 14 percent of murder arrests. Overall in 1997, law enforcement agencies made approximately 2.8 million arrests of persons under the age of eighteen. These sobering statistics indicate the need to combat youth violence in America to ensure that the young offenders of today do not become the career criminals of tomorrow.

For these reasons, I am pleased to have voted for passage of S. 254, the

“Violent and Repeat Juvenile Offender Accountability and Rehabilitation Act.” I believe that many of the provisions within this legislation will hold violent juvenile offenders accountable for their actions and also integrate many young offenders back into their communities. We should all recognize that federal legislation is not a “silver bullet” solution to the problem of youth violence, and that our response to this epidemic is only one aspect of nationwide efforts to reduce and prevent violent juvenile crime.

Among its most significant provisions, this bipartisan legislation will provide assistance to Minnesota and other states to help develop local programs that hold young criminal offenders accountable for their actions, including such reforms as drug testing offenders upon arrest; implementing graduated sanction programs for repeat offenders; and building detention facilities for juvenile offenders. Equally important, states will also be empowered to prevent juvenile delinquency through initiatives such as one-on-one mentoring programs aimed toward at-risk juveniles and providing treatment for juveniles who suffer from substance abuse.

Mr. President, this measure also addresses an area of increasing concern to communities in my home state of Minnesota—gang violence. Today, there are more than 12,000 gang members in Minnesota, the nation’s tenth-highest level of gang participation.

Throughout Minnesota, many communities have developed programs to stop the spread of gang activity, including the “South Metro Gang and Youth Violence Project” sponsored by Carver, Dakota and Scott counties. Among its achievements, this project has developed a computerized database to identify gang members, established a telephone hotline for graffiti removal, and formed the “South Metro Gang Task Force,” through which law enforcement agencies meet monthly to share information regarding gang activity in their jurisdictions. Through education, training and other community initiatives, this program has begun to tackle the threat of gang and youth violence.

In my view, the federal government can supplement local anti-gang initiatives by vigorously enforcing federal laws designed to combat interstate gang crime. The anti-gang provisions within S. 254 will also help to deter gang involvement by imposing stiff penalties on anyone who recruits a minor to become a member of a criminal street gang, or who uses a minor to distribute illegal drugs or participate in crimes of violence—common activities of gangs. By imposing enhanced penalties on those who wear body armor during crimes and prohibiting violent felons from owning body armor, we will also help to protect the lives of

law enforcement officers who put their lives on the line each day protecting our communities from the threat of gang violence.

As someone who has always supported the important role of local communities in developing anti-crime strategies, I am pleased that the Senate modified this legislation to encourage the active role of State Advisory Groups (SAGs) as part of the juvenile justice system. I am hopeful that the conference report to this legislation will preserve the same level of responsibility for SAGs as provided under current law.

In my home state, the Minnesota Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) is composed of twenty-two individuals appointed by the Governor, including local prosecutors, students, police chiefs, judges, and state agency personnel, representative of communities throughout Minnesota. In 1998, JJAC awarded more than \$1 million in federal funds to community-based organizations, schools, Indian reservations, and local law enforcement agencies to help develop effective and innovative juvenile offender programs. Statewide, more than 40,000 youth and their families were served by local programs identified and evaluated by JJAC last year. I ask that a list of the Minnesota Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee membership and a letter to me from the JJAC Vice-Chair be included as part of the RECORD following my remarks.

Mr. President, over the last several months, I have given careful thought to the aspects of our society that may contribute to incidents of juvenile crime, including the influence of the entertainment industry upon young people. My concerns are underscored by a recent e-mail I received from Andrew Backenstross, a young Minnesotan and Boy Scout who is working on his Citizenship in the Nation merit badge in the community of White Bear Lake.

Andrew wrote, “All my teachers say that school should be a safe place to go and study. But Colorado and other places show us how exposed we are and that it could happen to us. Public schools need to be able to discipline or remove anyone who is not a threat or will not meet standards. Metal detectors, searches and police walking the halls is not the answer. That was not needed when my Dad went to school. People thought differently. We have to ask, what has changed? Maybe we are being conditioned for violence.

“My parents have taught me about standards, acceptable behavior and respect for myself and others. Maybe more help could be given to parents to be parents. Maybe if they didn’t have to give so much of their income away in taxes they could afford to stay home and be parents.”

In response to the concerns expressed by young people such as Andrew, and

thousands of parents, I am pleased that the Senate bill encourages the entertainment industry to voluntarily establish guidelines to reduce violence in motion pictures, television programming, video games, and music lyrics. The bill also encourages Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to provide filtering software to consumers that could block juvenile access to unsuitable material. These provisions will provide parents with the tools needed to reduce their children’s exposure to the culture of violence.

Mr. President, there were several amendments offered to this legislation that would impose additional restrictions upon lawful Americans, without contributing to a reduction in juvenile crime. Throughout the debate over these proposals, I urged the Senate to promote greater enforcement of our existing firearms laws before passing new gun control measures that would infringe upon the constitutional rights of law-abiding citizens. I am very concerned that prosecutions of those who violate federal firearms laws have been far less zealous than what the American people deserve and expect.

According to the Executive Office of the United States Attorney, there were only eight prosecutions in 1998 of those who violated the federal prohibition on possessing a firearm in a school zone. From 1996 through 1998, there was only one prosecution of felons who have been denied the purchase of firearms after being subjected to a background check. These statistics underscore the reality that passing new, expansive gun control laws will not prevent violent crime or the illegal use of firearms.

As an alternative to far-reaching gun control proposals, I supported an amendment that encouraged the enforcement of existing gun laws, the rights of law-abiding citizens, and keeping firearms from children and criminals. This proposal provided \$50 million to hire additional federal prosecutors to prosecute those who violate our gun laws; a prospective ban on juveniles convicted of violent offenses from ever owning a firearm; and enhanced penalties for juveniles who illegally bring a gun or ammunition to school with the intent of possessing or using the firearm to commit a violent crime.

Additionally, this proposal requires all firearms transactions at gun shows to be subject to the National Instant Check System (NICS) without subjecting law-abiding purchasers to unnecessary fees or record-keeping requirements. Importantly, this provision preserves legitimate business transactions at gun shows while also addressing the public safety concerns of millions of Americans. In my view, this proposal was more reasonable than a more-restrictive proposal by Senator LAUTENBERG that was later passed by the Senate.