

Legion has been the standard bearer in the representation of our veterans. I want to extend my sincerest appreciation to the American Legion for its continued leadership.●

ELIZABETH BURKE

● Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Elizabeth Burke, who has been chosen as a 1999 Community Health Leader by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for her efforts to combat domestic violence. As one of 10 outstanding individuals selected each year to receive this distinguished award for finding innovative ways to bring health care to communities whose needs have been ignored and unmet, Ms. Burke's work on behalf of domestic violence victims has become a national model.

A former victim of domestic violence, Elizabeth Burke was hired to start up the Domestic Violence Medical Advocacy Project at Mercy Hospital in Pittsburgh in 1994. The project is a joint effort between Mercy Hospital and the Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh, and since its start five years ago, the hospital has increased the identification of domestic violence victims by more than 500 percent. Women are offered counseling, education, shelter and employment programs in the 24 hour, 40 bed facility. The Center screens all women who are admitted into the hospital, identifying domestic violence victims at a point when they are most receptive to help.

Ms. Burke is responsible for training hundreds of physicians, nurses, social workers as well as others in prevention diagnosis, treatment and advocacy for victims of domestic violence. Since coming to the project she has successfully bridged the gap between the domestic violence and medical fields to create a comprehensive response to victims of domestic violence. From emergency room screenings to follow-up services to an extensive prevention network, she ensures that abused women get help before the violence destroys their lives.

Ms. Burke's efforts don't stop there. She also chairs the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence and makes presentations on domestic violence to a broad community. In addition, she serves as adjunct faculty at the University of Pittsburgh, University of Missouri and West Virginia University.

Mr. President, many victims of domestic violence have been touched by Elizabeth Burke's compassionate spirit. I ask my colleagues to join with me in commending Ms. Burke for her extraordinary contribution to the Pittsburgh community and to all victims of domestic violence.●

YOUTH VIOLENCE

● Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, our nation has been riveted by the violence in Littleton, CO and Conyers, GA and our youth's easy access to guns. Communities have become increasingly concerned about their own schools and are more sensitized to the dangers of youth violence. Yet, despite this scrutiny, firearms continue to claim the lives of our young people. Every day on the average, another 14 children in America are killed with guns because of the gaping loopholes in our Federal firearms laws. We took steps to eliminate some of these loopholes during Senate consideration of the juvenile justice bill. Unfortunately, the legislation passed by the Senate did not go far enough to reduce the easy availability of lethal weapons to persons who should not have them.

Today, I saw an ABC News Wire report called "Michigan sting operation shows felons can buy guns." According to this report, two investigators in Michigan, one posing as a felon and the other as his friend, went to ten different firearms dealers to purchase guns. Remember, selling a gun to a felon is illegal but these investigators had no problems with the gun dealers they approached. Out of the 10 dealers in this investigation, nine reportedly allowed, apparently, illegal purchases. In total, 37 guns were apparently purchased illegally during this selling spree. And still, the NRA wants Congress to expand the loopholes in our firearms laws, rather than taking modest steps to close them.

Since the moment the Senate passed the Juvenile Justice bill, NRA lobbyists in Washington have been working around the clock to lobby Members of the House of Representatives. The NRA has named as its "top priority, the defeat of any Lautenberg-style gun show amendment in the U.S. House." The Lautenberg amendment, adopted by the Senate, simply requires dealers at gun shows to follow the same rules as other gun dealers, by using the existing Brady system for background checks. It accomplishes this goal without creating any new burdens for law-abiding citizens and without any additional fees imposed on gun sellers or gun buyers. But the NRA wants to create additional loopholes by creating a special category of gun show dealers, who would be exempt from even the most minimum standards. They also want to weaken the bill by establishing a 24-hour limit on the time that vendors have to complete background checks, rather than the current standard of 3 business days, the time the FBI says is necessary. It will be a sad day if the NRA can successfully lobby the House to eliminate these moderate proposals in the Juvenile Justice bill.

I hope the House will amend its current bill to include language, passed by the Senate, to limit the importation of

large capacity ammunition devices, clips that domestic companies were prohibited from manufacturing in 1994. Again, this is a moderate measure designed to keep clips with rounds as high as 250 off our streets and out of the hands of young people.

As the House begins their consideration of the juvenile justice bill next week, I hope it will strengthen, not weaken, the moderate gun control measures that we passed in the Senate. For example, Congress should take steps to prevent unintentional shootings, which occur as a result of unsafe storage of guns. These daily tragedies, resulting from the careless storage of guns, can easily be prevented by requiring the use of locking devices for guns, which are inexpensive and easy to use. We should also take steps to eliminate illegal gun trafficking and ban semiautomatic assault weapons and handguns for persons under 21 years of age.

The legislation passed in the Senate was a step in the right direction, but those moderate reforms are in jeopardy if Congress allows our legislative priorities to be dictated by the NRA.●

OUTSTANDING STUDENT—
COURTENAY BURT

● Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I rise today to acknowledge the achievements of an outstanding student from Kalispell, Montana. The Montana chapter of the American Association of University Women sponsors an annual essay contests for students in grades 11 and 12. The topic of the essays was "Women in Montana History."

Courtenay Burt, an Eleventh Grader at Bigfork High School, had her essay chosen as the best of all submitted in Montana. She writes about her grandmother, a woman of integrity and wisdom who died when Courtenay was only eight months old. Her essay tells us the story of a woman who grew up during the Great Depression, survived the often harsh climate of Montana, raised a family, earned the respect of her community, and maintained a healthy sense of humor throughout it all.

I ask that Courtenay Burt's essay "Big Mama" be printed in the RECORD.

The essay follows:

"OLD MAMA"

(By Courtenay Burt)

"Dear Courtenay, I wish you could only know how much I had looked forward to watching you grow up, but I guess that just wasn't meant to be. Not to worry, though—we'll get better acquainted later." My grandmother, who was affectionately referred to as "Old Mama," wrote those words in a shaky hand just before she passed away in 1982. I was eight months old, then, and so I have no memories of her; instead I've borrowed the memories of those who knew and loved her, as I wish I could have. Through reminiscing with those close to her, I have discovered the courageous, colorful woman