

the job because the NRA has been putting its money to work making sure my amendment stays bottled up in a conference committee.

Let's do the right thing and set this legislation free. Let's not allow extremists in the gun lobby to prevail over the families across this country who want to stop the gun violence.

April 20 will mark 1 year since the terrible tragedy at Columbine High School. On that day, people across this country will ask, What has Congress done? What have you done to stop gun violence in this country? What have you done to protect my child, my grandchild, my brother, my sister, my parents from this mad gun violence? It is not too late to give the public the answer they want, the answer they deserve. It is not too late to show them that common sense can prevail in this distinguished place.

AWARDING JOHN CARDINAL
O'CONNOR THE CONGRESSIONAL
MEDAL OF HONOR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, it is with great honor that I rise today to thank my distinguished Senate colleagues for their support, help, consideration, and, hopefully, passage of S. 2076, legislation which will bestow upon John Cardinal O'Connor the Congressional Medal of Honor.

I, along with Senators MOYNIHAN, SPECTER, and SANTORUM, introduced this bill last week. We believe now is the perfect time for Congress to publicly thank His Eminence for his 50 years of service to America, the Catholic Church, and for his numerous contributions as an ambassador of peace, freedom, and humanitarianism around the world.

Since being ordained 54 years ago, John Cardinal O'Connor has humbly captured the hearts of millions with a message of caring and compassion for all people. He has dutifully served the Church in Philadelphia, the Diocese of Scranton, and now from the steps of the treasured St. Patrick's Cathedral serves as the spiritual guiding force for the 10-county New York Archdiocese and its more than 2.3 million Catholic members.

He is loved in New York and by Catholics across the country. He has touched the hearts of millions whose spiritual life is richer from the words and deeds of our cardinal.

Since being named by the Pope as successor to the late Cardinal Terence Cook in 1984, Cardinal O'Connor has sought to reinforce the traditional teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church while putting a human face on the problems faced not only by Catholics but all New Yorkers.

He has advocated for an increase in the minimum wage. He has advocated for farm workers. He has advocated for working people throughout New York and throughout the world.

He has worked hard to improve relationships between Catholics and Jews, knowing that is so important to the future of the area he represents and to all Americans.

He has advocated relentlessly for fairness and justice. And even while reaffirming the Church's teachings on homosexuality, he set up AIDS clinics and volunteered anonymously in them.

I have not always agreed with Cardinal O'Connor. For example, he is a strong, vocal, and impassioned voice in opposition to abortion. I have respectfully disagreed with his position. But in some instances you earn an even greater respect for someone by the way they disagree with you, how they fight for their beliefs: With vigor, passion, and conviction, but also with humility and grace.

He is a man of immense conviction. He has been unyielding in his commitment to reaffirm the priorities of the Church and his faith.

I am left with nothing but respect and admiration for the way in which Cardinal O'Connor has advocated on behalf of his beliefs.

John Cardinal O'Connor's life of spiritual service began decades ago. He had 20-plus years of distinguished service in the Armed Forces. He heeded our Nation's call in 1952, joining the ranks of the military chaplaincy during the Korean war, and provided spiritual leadership for members of the Navy and Marine Corps during Vietnam. His career continued on as chaplain to the United States Naval Academy.

Eventually he rose with distinction to become Navy chief chaplain. He served in that capacity until 1979, upon which he retired from military service with the distinguished rank of rear admiral. An international ambassador for humanity, Cardinal O'Connor has traveled the world over—Israel, Jordan, Haiti, Bosnia, and Russia—and he also accompanied Pope John Paul II on his visit to Cuba.

He has called on governments to work for social development, provide international peace, and implored governments to provide their citizens with the freedom and ability to exercise their religious beliefs.

His work in volatile 1980s Central America helped clear the way for clergy members to be allowed to visit political prisoners and also helped end the expulsion of foreign missionaries. He has, with great resolve, worked to strengthen the human spirit whenever war, oppression, and poverty have threatened to weaken it, as a servant of the Roman Catholic Church and a compassionate American citizen.

Now the cardinal is ailing. We all pray and wish for his recovery. But there is no time more appropriate than now for the Congressional Gold Medal to be bestowed upon Cardinal O'Connor. It is not often that this gold medal is issued. But given the cardinal's serv-

ice, given the cardinal's ability to reach out to so many different kinds of people, no one is more deserving of the Congressional Gold Medal. The medal is an expression of public gratitude reserved exclusively for those who have distinguished themselves through their achievements and contributions to our great Nation. From his spiritual guidance to the members of the Armed Forces 50 years ago to his commitment to justice and holiness as head of the archdiocese in New York today, John Cardinal O'Connor has earned this rare and distinguished congressional honor.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAGEL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

AFFORDABLE EDUCATION ACT OF
1999—Continued

AMENDMENT NO. 2844

(Purpose: To make permanent the special coordination rule between qualified tuition programs and the Hope and Lifetime Learning credits)

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Graham amendment No. 2844 be called up.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Florida [Mr. GRAHAM] proposes an amendment numbered 2844.

The amendment is as follows:

Beginning on page 15, line 16, strike all through page 16, line 17, and insert:

“(iv) COORDINATION WITH HOPE AND LIFETIME LEARNING CREDITS.—The total amount of qualified higher education expenses otherwise taken into account under clause (i) with respect to an individual for any taxable year shall be reduced (after the application of the reduction provided in section 25A(g)(2)) by the amount of such expenses which were taken into account in determining the credit allowed to the taxpayer or any other person under section 25A with respect to such expenses.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table. This is not the amendment the Senator from Florida described earlier and has been vetted to the Finance Committee.

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

The amendment (No. 2844) was agreed to.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.