

across racial and ethnic lines—it does not discriminate based on race or economic status. Eighty-eight percent of victims of domestic violence fatalities had a documented history of physical abuse and 44 percent of victims of intimate homicide had prior threats by the killer to kill the victim or self. These are frightening statistics and show us that violence against women is a real threat. How will a Constitutional amendment prevent these crimes or even provide safety and support to the victims?

VAWA changed the entire culture of violence against women and empowered communities to respond to this devastating plague. Since 1995 we have provided close to \$1.8 billion to address violence against women. VAWA funding supports well over 1,000 battered women shelters in this country. The National Domestic Violence Hotline enacted as part of VAWA, fielded 73,540 calls in 1996 alone, and in 1998 the hotline fielded 109,339 calls. We have many success stories and we know what works.

There is no reason to delay reauthorization. We still have so much more to do. We know the demand for services and assistance for victims is only increasing. As a result of more outreach and education, women no longer feel trapped in violent homes or relationships. Domestic violence is no longer simply a family problem but a public health threat to the community. While we have seen an explosion in funding for battered women's shelters, we also know that hundreds of women and children are still turned away from overcrowded shelters. We have heard reports that individual states had to turn away anywhere from 5,000 to 15,000 women and children in just one year. I know that limited safe shelter space is a growing problem in Washington state. What can we do for these victims? What rights do they have? The reauthorized legislation, S. 51, provides much greater hope to these victims than even federal and state laws to protect the rights of victims in the court process. The bill currently has 47 co-sponsors.

If we are concerned about victims and the rights of victims we should be acting to reauthorize and strengthen VAWA.

SUPPORTING THE CAPITOL HILL POLICE OFFICERS

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I have decided now to start speaking about this subject again on the floor of the Senate. I think I will devote only 10 minutes a week on it. But I am going to do it every week. I must say, though, if we continue to operate the way we have been operating, I might as well speak about it much more because while we are dealing with a very serious question now, we are not about the

business of legislating. I call on the majority leader to start getting legislation out and going at it on amendments. Let's bring some vitality back to the Senate.

I do want to, one more time, say to my colleagues that most all of us attended a service for Officers Chestnut and Gibson. These were two police officers who were murdered. They were murdered in the line of duty. They were protecting us. They were protecting the public.

I say to my colleagues one more time, I believe Senator BENNETT and Senator FEINSTEIN on the Senate side are very supportive of doing whatever they can. But up to date, including today again, we have stations here where you have one police officer for lots of people coming through. That police officer is not safe. That police officer cannot do his or her job.

We made a commitment to do everything we possibly could to make sure we would never experience again the loss of a police officer's life. We can never be 100 percent sure, but we ought to live up to the commitment to have two police officers at every station.

I say this on the floor of the Senate—and I will pick up the pace of this later—if we cannot do that, then we ought to start shutting these doors, really. If we cannot have two officers per station and give them the support they deserve—I am talking about appropriations—then we basically ought to just close the doors.

I think on the Senate side we have bipartisan support. I do not know what is happening on the House side. I must say, today I am pessimistic, in terms of what I have heard, that we might even be looking at cuts. But whatever we need to do, whether it be paying overtime or hiring additional officers, we need to do it so we do not lose any lives and we give the Capitol Hill police officers the support that we promised to give them.

I say to my colleagues that I am worried that on the House side, in particular, we are not going to get the support. I think it should be bipartisan. I do not think anybody should have any question about this. Everybody says they are for police officers, and everybody says they are for protection and safety, and everybody says they will never forget the two fine officers whose lives were lost, and yet when it comes to digging in our pockets and doing it through appropriations, we are not there. Something is amiss.

I will try to keep bringing this up every week and hopefully we can get this work done.

I thank my colleagues and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I will be very brief because my good friend, the

distinguished Senator from Florida, is on the floor. I know he wishes to speak in morning business. I do not want to hold him up on that.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed as in morning business.

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

TREATMENT OF FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have to take issue with the extreme rhetoric that some are using to attack our Federal law enforcement officers who helped return Elian Gonzalez to his father.

For example, one of the Republican leaders in the House of Representatives was quoted as calling the officers of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, the U.S. Border Patrol, and the U.S. Marshals Service: "jack-booted thugs." The mayor of New York City, a man who is seeking election to this body, called these dedicated public servants "storm troopers."

I know both men who made these remarks. I hope they will reconsider what they said because such intemperate and highly charged rhetoric only serves to degrade Federal law enforcement officers in the eyes of the public. That is something none of us should want to see happen.

Let none of us in the Congress, or those who want to serve in Congress, contribute to an atmosphere of disrespect for law enforcement officers. No matter what one's opinion of the law enforcement action in south Florida, we should all agree that these law enforcement officers were following orders, doing what they were trained to do, and putting their lives on the line, something they do day after day after day.

Let us treat law enforcement officers with the respect that is essential to their preserving the peace and protecting the public. I have said many times on the floor of this body that the 8 years I served in law enforcement are among the proudest and most satisfying times of my years in public service.

Thus, this harsh rhetoric bothers me even more. I do not know if I am bothered more as a Senator or as a former law enforcement official. But I am reminded of similar harsh rhetoric used by the National Rifle Association. In April 1995, the NRA sent a fundraising letter to members calling Federal law enforcement officers "jack-booted thugs" who wear "Nazi bucket helmets and black storm trooper uniforms."

Apparently, the vice president of the NRA was referring to Federal Bureau of Investigation and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agents involved in law enforcement actions in Idaho and Texas.

President George Bush, a man who is a friend of ours on both sides of this