CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE
July 20, 2001

Mr. DOMENICI. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the bravery and fortitude of the Sixth Naval Beach Battalion, many of whom gave their lives for their country on D-Day, June 6, 1944. Recently, a small group of the living members of the Battalion gathered in Normandy, France to unveil a commemorative plaque dedicated to their fellow sailors who paid the ultimate price for the defense of liberty. This memorial will serve as a small reminder of the tremendous sacrifice that these men made in order to secure the freedoms that we, as a nation, now enjoy.

Unfortunately, for many years, the Sixth Naval Beach Battalion was known as the “Forgotten Sailors.” While many of its members were individually recognized for their bravery, the Battalion as a whole had never been recognized. However, thanks to the persistent efforts of its living members, the Battalion was finally honored last year with the Presidential Unit Citation. This great honor was presented to the Battalion at its annual reunion last year, and I am proud that the valiant members of the Battalion have been recognized.

The World War II generation is frequently referred to as America’s Greatest Generation,” and this is no more true of the Sixth Naval Beach Battalion. They landed on Omaha Beach early in the morning of June 6 and faced extraordinary peril on that
The plaque will be a perpetual reminder of the sacrifices made here on this beach, not only the 6th Naval Beach Battalion but the Coast Guard and Army too.

Last year at the 12th annual reunion of our battalion we were presented with the Presidential Unit Citation. It had been recommended by the Joint Command of Operation Overlord, which was the code name for the invasion of France, both the Army and Navy. The citation approval and recommendations that the 6th Naval Beach Battalion be honored with the citation.

When inquiries were made by some of our men, the Defense Department began looking into the situation and in September of last year there followed a full ceremony for the presentation of the award.

For 56 years we of the 6th Naval Beach Battalion were known by writers as the “Forgotten Sailors.” Many of the officers and men of the Battalion had been recognized for individual heroism but not the Battalion as a unit.

Our being here today is the cap-stone of our reason d’etre, the 6th Naval Beach Battalion stands as a monument to the men who have been immortalized here on these beaches. Permit me to close by quoting President Roosevelt, “The quality of our American fighting men is not all a matter of training, or equipment, or organization. It is essentially a matter of Spirit. That Spirit is expressed in their faith in America!”

That was the faith we had and the faith we have today. Thank you, may God bless America.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Madam President, I rise today to speak about hate crimes legislation I introduced with Senator KENNEDY in March of this year. The Local Law Enforcement Act of 2001 would add new categories to current hate crimes legislation sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred on July 27, 1990 in Grand Chute, WI. Two policemen, from Marathon County and Blanchardville, were accused of disorderly conduct in the beating of a gay man. Witnesses said the officers, who were in a local nightclub, began taunting the victim on the dance floor with anti-gay slurs. Witnesses said they later saw the officers beat and kick the man in the parking lot. The victim was treated for bruised ribs and internal injuries.

I believe that Government’s first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2001 is now a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation, we can change hearts and minds as well.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE NOMINATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am pleased that the Judiciary Committee has reported another group of executive branch nominees and that the Senate will be acting on the President’s nominations to head the Civil Rights Division and the Tax Division of the Department of Justice so promptly.

Just as the committee proceeded promptly with the consideration of the President’s nomination of John Ashcroft to be Attorney General, when I temporarily chaired the committee in January, we are continuing to move promptly on other nominations this month. In January, the Senate did not receive the nomination of John Ashcroft until January 19 and reported it to the Senate the very next day. In deference to the President, the committee had moved ahead with hearings on the nomination the week of January 16 in advance of receiving the nomination by the President.

The Senate has confirmed the President’s nomination of the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General and a controversial nomination to serve as Solicitor General. The President has yet to nominate anyone to be Associate Attorney General, the third highest ranking position at the Department of Justice. We have confirmed nominees to serve as Deputy Attorneys General to head the Criminal Division, the Antitrust Division, the Office of Legislative Affairs, and the Office of Legal Policy.

In late May, Chairman Hatch conducted a hearing on the nomination of Ralph F. Boyd, Jr., to be the Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Civil Rights Division. I had included Mr. Boyd’s nomination on the agenda for a business meeting of the Judiciary Committee last week, our first week in session after the adoption of a Senate organizing resolution and the assignment of committee membership. But less than 40 of the 100 senators of the committee showed up for the business meeting on July 12. We were unable to reach a quorum last week to report out the President’s nominations to the Justice Department. Yesterday, at our next business meeting of the Judiciary Committee, we reported that nomination to the Senate.

It took the Senate the entire month of June to pass S. Res. 120, a simple resolution reorganizing the committee. It was only last Tuesday that assignments to committees were completed. Last Wednesday, the first day after the committee membership was set, we proceeded to hold a confirmation hearing including an additional executive branch nominee, Eileen O’Connor, to be Assistant Attorney General for the Tax Division of the Department of Justice. Today the Senate has that nomination before it because we were able to expedite its consideration by the committee at our business meeting yesterday. I expect the Senate will confirm Ms. O’Connor, another of the President’s nominations to a key post at the Department of Justice. I am glad to be able to accommodate the