

Less than a month before the hearing, a constituent of Senator LAUTENBERG's went missing while on a cruise, and was believed to have gone overboard. The family was not immediately notified of the incident. This incident occurred 4 years after Ken Carver's daughter, Merrian, went missing on a Royal Caribbean cruise to Alaska. Since then, Ken has been instrumental in organizing victims to promote safety on cruise ships, including starting the International Cruise Victims organization and developing a 10-point program to improve safety on cruise ships.

Today, as a result of Mr. Carver, Ms. Dishman, and all of the many families of victims who have suffered so greatly, I am introducing a comprehensive reform bill with my esteemed colleagues CHRIS SHAYS, CAROLYN MALONEY, LLOYD DOGGETT and JOHN LEWIS to address the public safety concerns on cruise ships.

Our legislation seeks to improve ship safety, provide transparency in reporting, improve crime scene response, improve training procedures and enforce safety and environmental standards.

Improve Ship Safety. Our legislation would improve ship safety by mandating guard rails to reach 54 inches in height and entry doors of each passenger stateroom and crew cabin to have peep holes, security latches, and time sensitive key technology. Ship owners would be required to implement fire safety codes as well as technology to detect when a passenger falls overboard. Procedures would also be established to determine which crew members have access to staterooms and when.

Provide Transparency in Reporting. The legislation would establish a reporting structure based on the current voluntary agreement in place between the cruise industry, the FBI, and the Coast Guard. Additionally, each ship would be required to maintain a log book, which would record all deaths, missing individuals, alleged crimes, and passenger/crew-member complaints regarding theft, sexual harassment, and assault. The log books would be available to FBI and Coast Guard electronically, as well as to any law enforcement officer upon request. Statistical information would be posted on a public Web site maintained by the Coast Guard.

Improve Crime Scene Response. Each ship would be required to maintain antiretroviral medications and medications used to prevent sexually transmitted diseases after assault, as well as equipment and materials for performing a medical examination to determine if a victim has been raped. A United States licensed medical practitioner would be on every ship to perform the necessary examinations and to administer treatment. Private medical information would be protected, and would require written authorization for release. Additionally, all passengers would be given free, immediate, and confidential access to a National Sexual Assault Hotline and the FBI.

Improve Training Procedures. The legislation would establish a program designed by the Coast Guard and the FBI, and certified by the Administrator of the Maritime Administration, to train appropriate crewmembers in crime scene investigation. Each ship would be required to maintain one crewmember trained and certified under such a program.

Enforce Safety and Environmental Standards. The Coast Guard is authorized to dispatch personnel to monitor discharge of waste, to verify logbook entries related to waste treatment and disposal, and to act as public safety officers by securing and collecting evidence of alleged crimes. Additionally, the Secretary of the Coast Guard shall conduct a study of passenger security needs and report findings to Congress.

Established Equitable Remedies. The bill also establishes fair and equal remedies for persons injured in boating disasters.

Madam Speaker, nearly all cruise ships operate under a foreign flag. U.S. citizens who are victimized onboard cruise ships often do not know their legal rights or who to contact for help in the immediate aftermath of crimes. Unfortunately, few U.S. nationals are aware that they are at risk of being the victims of crime while on their vacations. And, it is even more concerning that these victims have inadequate access to assistance or law enforcement in the aftermath of the crime. Cruises operate in a legal vacuum, where a lack of accountability empowers predators and obstructs their victims' pursuit of justice. That is an unacceptable situation, made worse by the cruise lines' own efforts to avoid scrutiny of and accountability for their own handling of the security of their passengers.

My hope is that with increased Congressional oversight, the cruise lines will finally take these crimes seriously and enact necessary reforms. This comprehensive legislation will give Americans who are victims of crime on a cruise ship access to justice, and require that necessary steps are taken to bring the perpetrators of such crimes to justice. The legislation will also ensure that the cruise industry provides information to passengers about security risks and maintain necessary security personnel on each ship.

The Cruise Vessel Security and Safety Act of 2008 addresses the ongoing safety concerns on cruise ships and will help ensure that the millions of men, women and children who cruise each year are informed, aware and safe on cruise ships. I urge all of my colleagues to cosponsor this important bicameral, comprehensive legislation.

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#### TRIBUTE TO LARRY HEDLUND

### HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 26, 2008*

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Special Agent Larry Hedlund as a recipient of the Iowa Law Enforcement Victim Service Award. The awards were created by the Federal Law Enforcement Victim Task Force of the U.S. Attorneys' Offices for the Northern and Southern Districts of Iowa.

Agent Hedlund was nominated by the Webster County Attorney's Office for his role in protecting a victim and successfully prosecuting the defendant in the State of Iowa vs. Perry Bender case. Agent Hedlund was able to gain the victim's trust and cooperation after she was threatened with physical harm by the defendant if she appeared for a deposition in

the pending case. He used the information he gained from the victim to locate a digital recorder that included a conversation of the defendant threatening the victim. This evidence eventually led to the conviction of Mr. Bender.

Agent Hedlund's 20 years of dedicated service to the Iowa Department of Public Safety has made a positive impact on the lives of many victims caught in dangerous circumstances. His courage illustrates the compassion of Iowans; willing to risk his own safety for people in need.

I commend Special Agent Larry Hedlund for his outstanding service to his community and performance on the job. I am honored to represent Agent Hedlund in the United States Congress, and I wish him the best in his future work protecting the citizens of Iowa.

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#### IN RECOGNITION OF LT. RON HAUGSDAHL

### HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 26, 2008*

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lt. Ron Haugsdahl of the Fairfax County Police Department. Lieutenant Haugsdahl has helped lead the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force and has personally supervised the evolution of the task force from its beginning to today's nationally recognized unit dedicated to fighting gangs and crime. His tireless efforts coordinating the 15 participating agencies have led to marked achievements in the fight against violent gangs in northern Virginia.

Lieutenant Haugsdahl has served in the Fairfax County Police Department since 1993, and previously served in the city of Falls Church Police Department from 1986 to 1993 as well as in the U.S. Army as a military police officer from 1983 to 1986. Over his many years in law enforcement, Lieutenant Haugsdahl's duties have included patrol sergeant, gang detective, criminal investigator, and firearms instructor, in addition to his more recent leadership role with the task force.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor to acknowledge today this fine public servant devoted to upholding the law and protecting the residents of northern Virginia. His service is greatly appreciated.

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#### HONORING HOUSE FELLOWS

### HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 26, 2008*

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the participants of the House Fellows Program on the completion of their weeklong program. As an initiative of the Office of the Historian, this program has been a unique opportunity for a select group of secondary education teachers of American history and government to experience firsthand how Congress really works. They were chosen because they were educators with demonstrated excellence in the classroom.