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**POTUS REMARKS
RE: GUNS**

Divider Title: _____

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 21, 2000

VIDEOTAPED REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
FOR NATIONAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST YOUTH VIOLENCE

THE PRESIDENT: Good evening. I'm so pleased to join you as the National Campaign Against Youth Violence kicks off its City-by-City initiative.

Seven years ago, I had the honor to speak at the Church of God in Christ in Memphis. That morning I spoke about the awful toll of youth violence and gun crime in our communities. On that day, I said, unless we deal with the ravages of crime and violence, none of the other things we seek to do will ever take us where we need to go.

Together, we have come a long way in the last seven years. With our strategy of putting more cops on the beat and getting more guns off the street, overall crime has fallen for the seventh year in a row. The juvenile violent crime arrest rate is the lowest in 10 years. And with 100,000 new community police officers and the Brady law, we've kept guns out of the hands of a half-million felons, fugitives and stalkers.

But while we've made great progress, one act of violence is still one too many. Nearly a year has passed since the awful tragedy at Columbine, and gunfire continues to take the lives of nearly a dozen young people every single day.

If we're going to reach our goal of making America the safest big country on Earth, all of us have a responsibility to act. And Congress has to do its part, too, by sending me common-sense gun legislation that mandates child safety locks; closes the gun show loophole; bans the importation of large ammunition clips; and holds adults accountable when they allow young people to get their hands on deadly guns.

Our administration is trying to do its part, by strengthening the enforcement of our gun laws, supporting more after-school programs, more mentoring and more conflict resolution and peer mediation. Last year, we helped to launch the National Campaign Against Youth Violence, and we established a new White House Youth Violence Council to coordinate the wide-ranging efforts of the federal government.

We're also working hard to ensure that all Americans are treated with dignity, and that no American is victimized by violence because of his or her race, gender, religion or sexual orientation. That's why we've fought so hard to pass a strong hate crimes law, to promote diversity, to end discrimination in the work force. We must all recommit ourselves to respecting one another, to seeing our diversity as our greatest strength, and to recognizing the fundamental values that define us as one America.

Ultimately, this effort begins on the ground, at the grass roots. You can reach out to troubled youth. You can help to change a culture that too often glorifies violence and hate. You can talk to your children, teach them to resolve their conflicts peacefully, and raise them with the right values. I'm grateful, because in Memphis, you're doing these things. And there's no mission more important for our nation.

Your work in Memphis, and the work of the Memphis Shelby Crime Commission, is a testament to the fundamental goodness of the American spirit. It sets an example I hope cities all across our land will follow.

Thank you, and God bless you.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Denver, Colorado)

For Immediate Release

April 12, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT SAFE RALLY
(Sane Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic)

Colorado Convention Center
Denver, Colorado

11:40 A.M. MDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you so very much for making me feel welcome. And I thank you for reminding me again what this is all about. I want to thank my long-time friend, Wellington Webb, for his leadership in this fight and his leadership of Denver. (Applause.) I thank Tom Mauser, for having the courage not to be broken by his loss, but to give his son the legacy he deserves. (Applause.)

I thank John Head and Arnie Grossman for reminding us that this is not about party politics, it's about saving people's lives. (Applause.) And I also want to thank my longtime friend, your former governor, Dick Lamm, who's here, and former governor, John Love, who's not here, for also reminding us this is not about party politics. (Applause.)

I thank Attorney General Ken Salazar and Governor Bill Owens, who is also not here, but I want to thank them both for what they tried to do in the legislature and for what they're trying to do to help you pass this referendum. (Applause.)

I want to thank the other SAFE board members who are here on stage. And I want to acknowledge -- it's already been mentioned by Arnie, but I want to tell you that I had the privilege of meeting with the SAFE students -- David Winkler, Ben Gelt and their other colleagues in Washington -- they told me today they've now been to 30 states and they have 10,000 young people across America enlisted in this cause. So I want to thank them. I think we ought to give them a big hand. (Applause.)

Finally, I will say more about this in a moment, but as you know, I'm trying to pass some legislation on this subject in Washington, and there are three people I want to acknowledge: First of all, a former congressman from Maryland, Mike Barnes, who's the President of Handgun Control, who came with me and he's up here today. Mike, thank you for coming. (Applause.) Secondly, Representative Diana DeGette from Colorado, who is supporting our legislation in Washington. Thank you, Diana, for what you're doing. Thank you. (Applause.) And someone who's not on the platform, I don't think, today, but who came all the way from Washington with me because he believes so strongly in this, and he wanted to express his solidarity with you, the Democratic leader in the House of Representatives, Dick Gephardt from Missouri, came all the way from Washington to be here today. And I want to thank him for doing that. (Applause.)

Let me say that not only Denver, but the whole state of Colorado, is a mile high in the eyes of your fellow Americans today. You come from all backgrounds, different communities, and surely different political parties, to speak with a single voice for common sense and

safety, and the future of our children. I want to tell you, first, you are not alone; and second, America is listening.

All across America, people like you are speaking up: Here, where you're taking the lead, working to close the gun show loophole because the legislature wouldn't do it for you, in spite of the leadership of Governor Owens and Attorney General Salazar. In Maryland, another state with a lot of hunters and sports shooters, which yesterday became the first state to require built-in safety locks for all new handguns. (Applause.) In California, which banned junk guns, a new generation of assault weapons and limited handgun sales to one a month. In Massachusetts, now enforcing consumer product safety rules for guns, banning junk guns, requiring child trigger locks and other devices to prevent children from firing guns.

All these steps have helped to protect more of our children. But every child in America deserves these protections. Reducing gun violence is a national challenge. I came here, first, to say I support what you're doing. And in spite of all the attempts to put roadblocks in your way, you must not be deterred.

Your leaders told me you need 62,000 signatures to put this initiative on the ballot. The purpose of all these delaying tactics is to put off the day when you can start gathering the signatures. I want every one of you who is here today to sign up with these folks when you leave, because you ought to be able to get 62,000 signatures in two hours if everybody who is for this will sign up and go get the signatures. (Applause.)

The second thing I wanted to do is to say that you deserve a national government that follows your lead, and Congress is the only body that can provide the kind of national approach we need to protect all the children in every state. That's why I asked -- (interruption from someone in the audience.) That's why I asked -- (continued interruption) -- Sir, this meeting is not about you and not about me. So would you please let me give the speech? (Applause.)

I'll be glad to speak to him out there, but you came here to talk about something else. (Applause.)

Now, let me say to all of you, the thing -- I'm very proud of the fact that you've made this a bipartisan effort. And as John said when he spoke, it is true that even in Washington, not every Democrat is for this legislation, and not every Republican is against it. This is largely a matter of political organization and power among the opponents of this legislation -- here, too -- and a matter of culture.

One of the reasons I wanted to come here is that I grew up in a state not all that different from Colorado. I was 12 years old when I first shot a can off a fencepost with a .22. Unlike most elected officials in Washington, I've actually been to gun shows. I understand what is going on here. But I will say this -- the message you are sending the country is not that this is the only answer, but it's an important answer. The message you are sending the country is not that we shouldn't have stronger enforcement of the laws -- we should; not that we shouldn't teach firearms safety -- we should; not that we shouldn't have community efforts like our national campaign against youth violence is promoting, to strengthen the role of parents and families and schools and community groups -- we should. But that is not an excuse for saying that guns are the only area of our national life where there will be no prevention. That is their position, and that is wrong. (Applause.)

We punish reckless drivers, but we still have seatbelts in our car, and child safety seats for our kids. (Applause.) We punish people who

hijack airplanes, and terrorists who blow them up, but we still, thank God, have got airport metal detectors. Every one of us, just about, at least my age were raised by usually our mothers telling us that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Gun safety cannot be the only area of our national life where we say no to prevention. Colorado is here to say we have lost enough of our children; it's time to have prevention, too, in this important area of our national life. (Applause.)

When I signed the Brady Bill into law in 1993, a law which had been vetoed by the previous President, the same people who are fighting you said the Brady Bill would do no good because all the criminals bought their guns at gun shows and urban flea markets -- (laughter) -- and out of the back of trunks from one another. And, therefore this prevention would do no good; it would just be a terrible burden for hunters and sportspeople.

Well, six years later and a few months, over half a million felons, fugitives and stalkers have been unable to get handguns. (Applause.) Gun crime down more than 35 percent; homicide down to a 31-year low. It worked.

But no one believes this country is safe enough. I don't want any future President to have to go to Columbine; or to Springfield, Oregon; or to Jonesboro, Arkansas; or to all the other places I have been. It's tough enough to comfort the families of our servicemen and women who die in the line of duty. Children have no duties, except to their studies and their families. Our duty is to protect their lives, and give them futures. (Applause.)

I know I'm talking to the converted here, but I want the evidence to get out. This gun show loophole is now a serious problem. Last year, a study by the Departments of Justice and Treasury of 314 gun show investigations showed the following: 34 percent of the sales investigated involved guns later used in serious crimes, a total of 54,000 gun crimes. This is a serious problem.

Now, should we have -- I will say again -- should we have a comprehensive strategy? Of course, we should. Does the media have a responsibility? Do communities have a responsibility -- schools, parents? Absolutely. Is teaching people gun safety an important part of this responsibility? Of course it is. When the NRA was focusing on teaching young people gun safety in my home state, I supported them in every way I could. But it is no excuse not to have prevention. (Applause.)

Let me tell you something. I come from a state where factories in small towns shut down on the first day of deer season every year. And when we were debating the Brady Bill and the assault weapons ban, I heard all this stuff and I told them, I said, if you miss a day, even an hour in the deer woods, I'll be against this bill. Of course, they haven't. That's not what this is about. So I say to you, you have to go out and say this. Now, people say -- the same people who said six years ago that all these criminals were getting their guns at gun shows and urban flea markets and, therefore, the Brady Bill wouldn't work, now say you can't have background checks at gun shows because it would be so burdensome.

Well, let me tell you what the burden is. More than 70 percent of these checks can be done within minutes; 95 percent can be done within a day. The 5 percent that can't be done within a day should still be done. Why? Because they are 20 times more likely to be rejected because of a criminal background or another problem. Those are the facts. (Applause.) Now, I don't know about you, but I think it's worth a little bit of inconvenience to save a few thousand lives over the next

few years. (Applause.)

Now, should we enforce the law? Yes, we should. Gun crime prosecutions are up by 16 percent since I've been President. The average person convicted is serving two years longer. Gun crime down, as I said, by 35 percent.

Here in Colorado, your U.S. Attorney, Tom Strickland, is working with local officials on Colorado's Project Exile. They're enforcing the laws more vigorously, including against those who violate the Brady Bill. But I will say again: The real question is, with the children's lives at stake, with the accidental gun rate of kids under 15 in this country -- the accidental gun rate -- 9 times higher than that of the next 25 biggest economies combined, how can we say prevention has no role?

You all believe this, but I want you to have these facts to argue. And I want you to understand that the country is looking very closely at Colorado. We know it's a state that has Republicans and Democrats. We know it's a state that has a strong culture that favors hunting and sport-shooting. We know it's a state with a broken heart over Columbine. We know it's a state where people can put aside their partisan differences, and maybe even their lifetime culture, to look at the facts.

Now, other states will follow your lead. I hope and pray Congress will follow your lead, as well. But you must not get tired or frustrated. You must not even get angry. You've got to go talk to these people. Believe me, not every member of the National Rifle Association is dead set against you. They get this stuff in the mail, they hear this stuff over the airwaves, but they love their children, too. I wouldn't give up on anybody.

But the main thing you have got to do is win here. So I will say again: If you haven't signed up to be with SAFE, sign up on your way out, and find out when those petitions get circulated, and do your part.

Look how many people are here. If everybody in this room -- everybody in this room -- there's about 3,000 people here, right -- if you got 20 signatures, it would be a done deal. (Applause.)

In the end, change is always difficult. But you must understand how important it is, for your children and people all over the country. If you do this, you will give so much energy to people who have been sitting around in other states like yours, thinking it was a hopeless battle, thinking they couldn't win. If you do this, you will give enormous impetus to our efforts in Congress to try to provide national protections.

And most important, if you do this, you will say, we're going to treat this area of our life like every other area of our national life. America is the country that respects the rights of people. But we've still got our rights over 200 years later, since we started, because we also exercise our responsibility, especially for our children and their future.

I admire you. I support you. Don't quit until you win. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END 11:56 A.M. MDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 11, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT BILL SIGNING OF
RESPONSIBLE GUN SAFETY ACT OF 2000

Maryland State Capitol
Annapolis, Maryland

12:04 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Governor and Mrs. Glendening; Lt. Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend; Secretary of State Willis; Attorney General Curran; Mr. Speaker; President Miller. I also want to acknowledge the members of Congress who are here, who are on the right side of this fight -- Senator Mikulski, Representative Morella and Representative Wynn. You can be very proud of what all three of them are doing on this issue. (Applause.)

I thank the members of the legislature, the overwhelming numbers of Democrats and the brave Republicans who joined you to pass this legislation. I thank the students from the Young Kids Against Violence, and the Students Together Against Guns, and from Largo and Potomac Schools for their work. And I want to say a little more about each of you in a moment.

Let me say, I think it is fitting that we are here today in this magnificent old place where our forebears walked the halls more than 200 years ago. It's a sight of firsts. The Speaker mentioned George Washington resigning his commission just a few steps from here. The Statehouse was also the site of the ratification of the Treaty of Paris, which officially put an end to the Revolutionary War and marked the birth of our new nation.

Today we are trying to end another kind of war, an ongoing struggle to reduce the staggering toll of violence on our citizens, and especially on our children. The Maryland legislature once again has made history. And I just want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. I came up here today more than anything else to say thank you. (Applause.)

I applaud first your Governor. I remember after I first met him, you know, he's sort of low-key, you have to keep listening to Parris Glendening. (Laughter.) But I must say, he wears well. The more I watched him -- I remember once a couple years ago, I was talking to people at the White House about what was going on in the states about a completely different issue. And I said, you know, it is astonishing -- in almost everything I have tried to accomplish as President, Maryland has been out there on the forefront of change, ahead of the other states in virtually every area -- (applause.)

And I might say, in the area of gun safety, it's worth pointing out for the record that Maryland has already banned assault weapons, cheap handguns known as "Saturday night specials," already limited handgun sales to one per month, and with this new law, you are again leading the way.

Last year, California passed legislation to limit handgun

sales to one a month, to ban junk guns, new generations of assault weapons. Last week, Massachusetts began enforcing consumer product safety rules for guns, to ban junk guns and to adopt devices to prevent children from firing guns.

Tomorrow, I'm going to Colorado to support a citizen ballot initiative to close the gun show loophole and require background checks on all gun sales. (Applause.)

We ought to talk for a moment about how this came to be. I was looking at Mike Miller up here, and I've had the privilege to know him well for many years now. I know what kind of district you represent; this can't have been an easy fight for him. I heard the Speaker talking. I used to go down to the Eastern Shore when I was a student at Georgetown. I've had the privilege of spending a little time at Camp David since I've been President, traveling in the neighborhood. I know not all of Maryland as Baltimore, and I know what the Speaker was saying. I know how hard this vote was for a lot of you.

And I know something else, too. None of us want to really pay tribute to the people who are truly responsible for us all being here today. We thanked each other. The truth is, we're all here because too many children got killed. And I was so moved by what Kathleen said, and I couldn't help thinking how proud her father would be of her today. (Applause.)

Most of the history of the United States to bring sanity to our gun laws has been a sad history, littered with the lost lives of people we could ill afford to lose. President Johnson, to his everlasting credit, proposed sweeping gun legislation in the aftermath of the deaths of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy. He got something passed the Congress in 1968, which was better than nothing, but woefully weak. I will remind you that that law only required gun sellers to ask, but not to verify, whether purchasers had a criminal record or a mental health history.

And then somehow we just forgot about it. And a lot of people like me, who came from places like Arkansas and Maryland, who always knew we ought to be doing something, just didn't. I remember in 1982, when I ran for governor, I actually blurted out what I thought. I said I would support a waiting period and background checks for gun sales, handgun sales, 18 years ago. It sparked a withering firestorm. And when I got elected I saw there was no support for it, so I just walked away and went on to other things.

My life was changed when a friend of mine who ran a hardware store in a small mountain town of about a thousand people -- a man, I knew him and his family very well -- was in his store one day and a guy came in he hadn't seen in a long time and he said, where you been? And he said, well, I went away to the service. And then I lived in other states and I just got back. I want to buy a gun, I want to do some target practice. And he kind of joked about the gun control form -- well, have you ever been in prison, ever had a background check, a mental health history. And the guy said, no, no. He handed him the gun; 18 hours later five people were dead. He had broken out of the state veterans mental hospital that morning.

And it nearly destroyed my friend. He lost years of his life trying to get over what had happened. He was not responsible. The law, in any case, would not have found out what had to be found out. It was totally inadequate. But he lived with the nightmares of those people.

And then the NRA started trying to pass legislation all over the country to actually require states to keep cities from having gun control laws more stringent than the state did, and I vetoed it a couple

of times -- and had some rather interesting exchanges with them.

Then, when the Brady Bill was vetoed, in 1991 or '92, whenever it was, I just promised myself if I ever had a chance to start again, I would. And, unfortunately, our cause has been aided by the deaths of all these children in all these schools, and in other settings. And I think we should pay tribute to them. They are why we're all here today. You know it and I know it. They are what made our constituents in places like rural Arkansas and rural Maryland -- who now know, because of the experience of the Brady Bill and the assault weapons ban, we have no intention of interfering with hunting season or sport shooting events or any other lawful activities -- they made those folks willing to say, you know, this is something we probably ought to do.

And now, in truth, the people are ahead of most of the politicians. And what I would hope today is that we could just keep on. We could make it clear that we have no intention of undermining the legitimate interests of people who hunt and sport shoot. We can also make it clear, to go back to what one of the previous speakers said, that we think the NRA ought to join us in this. What possible interest could anyone have in being against child trigger locks, or being for safe gun technology that would permit handguns to be fired only by the adults who own them?

There is a need, as they say, for more training of people, for more sensible education to make sure that responsible conduct is the rule for people who do lawfully own these guns. And it's time for us to get together.

There is just one other thing I would like to say. The Governor talked about the terrible toll of deliberate killing, handgun killing, and how the -- if my math is right -- the death rate is roughly 30 times in America of what it was in the other countries that he mentioned. I think it's worth also mentioning that the accidental death rate of children from handguns is over 9 times that of the next 25 biggest industrial countries combined. And this is something else that's worth pointing out. We are here not just to prevent crimes; we are here to prevent accidents that also, tragically, take the lives of these children.

I hope that the United States Congress is paying attention to this event today, because every child in America deserves the protection you have given Maryland's children, and only Congress can provide that. There are very few people in Congress who represent districts any tougher, any more resistant to the argument that will be made against such legislation than some of you do who are sitting here. Very few.

There are more than enough people in the Congress who represent districts who would support this kind of action by more than 2-1, to pass this legislation in a landslide -- legislation to require child safety locks, to ban the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips, to close the gun show loophole. But for nine months now, there has been no action. Oh, a good bill passed the Senate, as the Governor said, because the Vice President broke the tie. And a weaker bill passed the House and we have been in conference. And the Democrats, through Congressman Conyers, have even offered a reasonable compromise. But nothing has happened.

And I'll say again, every single day Congress waits, we lose 12 children, nearly 90 people overall, to gun violence. Congress should follow Maryland's lead -- (applause.)

Since the passage of the Brady Bill, a half-million felons, fugitives and stalkers have been unable to get handguns at gun stores; gun crime is down by more than 35 percent. The people who opposed

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19
GOOD FRIENDS
MIND ON MARYLAND
OWNERS AFTER
NANCY NEARBY
JAMES KEARNEY
ALL HAD BULLET PROOF VESTS

closing the gun show loophole six years ago said the Brady Bill would be ineffective because criminals didn't buy guns at gun stores, they only bought guns at gun shows and urban flea markets. Now they say, well, even if that's true -- which it wasn't entirely true -- it's just too burdensome.

But it isn't. It isn't. The modest amount of time that would be required at rural gun shows in the most isolated area where people drive the longest distances are more than worth it to save one child's life. Over 70 percent of these background checks can be done in about an hour; over 90 percent, in a day. People say, well, why are you holding out for the other 8 or 9 percent? Because the rejection rate of the 8 or 9 percent that can't be checked in a day is 20 times higher than the rejection rate of the 90 percent that can be checked in a day.

So I say to you, we have got to do this. Do we need more enforcement? Of course, we do. We've increased enforcement and I've asked for 500 new ATF agents and 1,000 new federal, state and local gun prosecutors.

You mentioned the Smith & Wesson announcement where they agreed to change the way guns are manufactured, marketing and sold. I hope that did help you. It was a courageous thing for Smith & Wesson do to. And let me just explain the practical issue here again. An enormous number of the guns used in crimes that are bought from stores are bought from a very small percentage of the stores. That's what this is about, primarily. And I only hope that other gun manufacturers will follow their lead instead of excoriating them. They don't deserve to be condemned, they deserve to be applauded. And others ought to step up to the plate and do the same thing. (Applause.)

Now, Governor, you said the NRA ought to stop attacking me. I'll tell you what -- if they stop attacking this legislation, I'd be happy for them to attack me for the rest of my life. I've kind of gotten used to it. What we say about each other doesn't amount to a hill of beans. But whether all these kids here live to have their children, standing on these steps some day fighting for some other issue, that's what matters. That's what matters. (Applause.)

So, again, I say a simple thank you. Thank you, once again, for leading the nation to a better tomorrow. And again, I say, Washington should follow Maryland's lead. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END 12:21 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 17, 2000

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT
ON NEW GUN SAFETY AGREEMENT WITH SMITH & WESSON

The Oval Office

2:20 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon. For seven years, our administration has worked on every front to reduce violence and to keep our communities safer. That's why we've pushed for common-sense gun safety legislation, why I've taken executive action to crack down on bad gun dealers; and why, in December, I said we would engage gun manufacturers in ways to seek changes in how they do business.

Today, I am pleased to report that a key member of the industry has decided to set a powerful example of responsibility. Earlier today, Smith & Wesson signed a landmark agreement with the federal government and states and cities across our nation.

For the very first time, a gun manufacturer has committed to fundamentally change the way guns are designed, distributed and marketed. Under the agreement, Smith & Wesson will include locking devices and other safety features, and will develop smart guns that can be fired only by the adults who own them. The company will cut off dealers who sell disproportionate numbers of guns that turn up in crimes, and will require all its dealers not to sell at gun shows unless every seller at the shows conducts background checks.

The company has also agreed to design new firearms that do not accept large capacity magazines, and will work with ATF to provide ballistics fingerprints for all its firearms. This agreement is a major victory for America's families. It says that gun makers can -- and will -- share in the responsibility to keep their products out of the wrong hands. And it says that gun makers can -- and will -- make their guns much safer without infringing on anyone's rights.

It has taken courage and vision for Smith & Wesson to be the first manufacturers to negotiate. And I applaud their determination to do right by their company and their country. As I've said all along, there are responsible citizens in the gun industry who do want to make progress on this issue. I hope today's announcement will encourage others to respond in kind.

This agreement could not have come to pass without the leadership of many mayors, city attorneys and state attorneys general. I'm glad to be joined today by Attorney General Elliott Spitzer of New York and Attorney General Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, as well as Mayors Alex Panelas of Miami, Bill Campbell of Atlanta.

In a moment, I'll be telephoning some other mayors -- Joe Ganim of Bridgeport, Dennis Archer of Detroit, Roosevelt Dorn of Inglewood, California; Marc Morial of New Orleans, Jimmy Yee of Sacramento, as well as city attorneys Jim Hunt of Los Angeles and Louise Renne of San Francisco, and the city attorneys of Berkeley, California, Camden, New Jersey and St. Louis, to congratulate them as well on joining this agreement and to urge them to continue to work to keep our children safe.

I would also like to express my appreciation to former Congressman Mike Barnes, the new President of Handgun Control. I thank them all as well as the members of our administration team who worked so hard on this: Treasury Secretary Larry Summers and Deputy Secretary Eizenstat; Attorney General Reno and Deputy Attorney General Holder, HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo and my Domestic Policy Advisor, Bruce Reed. They have also worked very hard to bring us to this historic moment.

Let me say again today, the effort to reduce gun violence, to protect our children, keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children is not about politics. It is about saving lives. This agreement shows we can get so much done when we find the courage to find common ground.

Thank you very much.

Q What's the chance of other companies falling in line?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know. You know, Smith & Wesson is a real giant in this field. And as I said, it took a lot of courage for the company and its leader to do this. But I think the American people will have such an overwhelmingly positive response to what they have done, that I would hope the other manufacturers would follow suit.

We have had some success, you know. A number of other manufacturers are already embracing the idea that new handguns ought to have child trigger locks. So I hope that they will do these things.

The -- continuing to work on smart gun technology, and I think saying that they won't continue to allow their guns to be sold by dealers that don't clearly follow the law and that they won't participate in gun shows that don't do background checks, that's a big deal. That's a very important thing.

So I really -- I'm very pleased by what they've done, and I think, as I said, I hope the American people will express their appreciation to Smith & Wesson, and I hope that others will follow suit.

Q Mr. President, on the issue of oil, do you expect to announce any of the measures that you talked about yesterday that you hope to do in the next couple of days to reduce the effect of high oil, gas and diesel prices for the -- and the second question, if I may, on the same subject did you discuss the oil market with King Fahd -- yesterday or with any other Saudi officials, and did they give you any assurances regarding production increases for March 25th OPEC meeting?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the answer is yes, I expect to have something to say before I leave for India and, yes, I talked about the markets with His Majesty King Fahd. And I think it's appropriate for me to let the OPEC members make their own decisions. But the Saudis have already expressed their support publicly for a production increase.

I think everybody's struggling now to find a consensus. The point I've been trying to make is that it is necessary, in order to get the oil prices down to an acceptable level, but still have them at a high enough level to earn a fair return to the producing countries and to keep them from precipitously falling and destabilizing the world economy again as they did a couple of years ago, it's necessary to have a substantial production increase that will not only close the gap between production and consumption on a daily basis, but also enable the stocks to be rebuilt, because a lot of the oil price stocks have been drawn down too low, and that's one of the things that spiked the market so significantly.

But I think that in terms of the decision they will make,

that's for them to make and they'll have to announce it. I think they're struggling to try to get a consensus. But they are, I think,

concerned because the last time they increased production, there was this really big fall in the oil prices to a level that even those of us in the consuming countries thought was too low.

But the problem is, that time they increased production just as the global economy went down, the Asian financial crisis and other problems. This time, we had the reverse effect. Just as the global economy was coming up in Asia and the Europeans were growing, they cut production, which had exactly the reverse impact. So, first, prices went too low; now, they've gone way too high.

In our country, for example, lower-income motorists, other motorists who live in rural areas and places where they have to drive a long way to work, and a lot of truckers, particularly independent truckers, have really, really been hurt by this situation. So there is a stable, win-win situation here that -- where the fuel prices will be affordable by the American people and others, and they will still be able to have a fair return on their production and not risk the precipitous fall that they endured over the last couple of years. So they've got to find the right balance.

They can do that, but as I said, we need to have enough to meet daily consumption requirements and to rebuild the stocks.

Q Mr. President, any thoughts on China and the elections, on Taiwan?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we've already said publicly that we want to see a resumption of the cross-state dialogue as soon as the election is over. But the election in Taiwan is for the Taiwanese people, and I don't think I should comment on it until they have all their votes in and they'll elect a new president and then we'll go from there.

Q Mr. President, from a foreign policy standpoint, what is your best hope for this series of meetings this afternoon with Irish leaders, and what is your best hope on your upcoming trip to India and Pakistan?

THE PRESIDENT: First of all, the good news about Ireland is that even though the institutions have been taken down over the difference between the parties on decommissioning, no one wants to go back to the way it was or give up the peace process. The voters in Northern Ireland in both communities have overwhelmingly voted for it, and I think there's no sense that I got yesterday in my first round of encounters with the leaders that there's any desire to go back to the way it was.

I think what we've got to do is to find a formula by which the institutions can be restored, the people can get back to governing. They actually found out they were quite good at working together and they were getting a lot done, and we need to restore that process, and we need to restore a process that will eventually lead to all the requirements of the Good Friday Accord being observed, and we'll just keep working on it until we find that answer.

And on South Asia, obviously what I hope to do first is to rekindle the relationship between the United States and India. It's the world's largest democracy. No president has been there in 22 years. We have a lot of things that we can do together, a lot of mutual interests. I want to do what I can to reduce tensions on the Indian subcontinent to reduce the likelihood of weapons proliferation and the likelihood of conflict. And I want do to what I can to support the restoration of

democratic rule in Pakistan and to continue our cooperation with them against terrorism and in many other ways that we have both profited from over many decades.

I also will be going to Bangladesh and I'm looking forward to that. I have seen a lot of the initiatives taken in Bangladesh, particularly for the empowerment of poor people that I think are important there and throughout the world. And if you look at the size and the potential of the Indian subcontinent, if they could find a way to manage their difficulties, there's probably no other place in the world with the capacity for growth and modernization over the next two decades that you will find there. If you look at the success of Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the United States, that's clear evidence of that. So I'm going to do the best I can.

Q Do you have a meeting coming up with the Syrian President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't have anything else to say about my foreign policy agenda today. But I will in the next several days, continue to talk to you about all this stuff. And I thank you.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

2:30 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 15, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT RALLY FOR GUN LEGISLATION

The East Room

11:40 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Please be seated. Good morning and welcome to the White House. I want to thank all the members of the House who are here. We have a large contingent, as you can see, and a bipartisan one, for which I am very grateful. In a moment we will hear from Representatives McCarthy, Morella, and Lofgren, speaking on behalf of all the Democrats and Republicans who are here with me today.

I want to thank Attorney General Reno and Secretary Summers for being here and for their support of our endeavors. I thank Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder. The Chief of Police of the District of Columbia, Charles Ramsey, is here, and other representatives of law enforcement.

I want to thank Michael Barnes from Handgun Control, and former member of the House, for his leadership. And I want to say a special word of welcome to my friend, Suzann Wilson, who lost her daughter in the Jonesboro, Arkansas, school shooting, who has bravely carried on the struggle for a safer future for the children of this country ever since. And I want to welcome all the young people who are here today.

Six years ago, at the White House, I signed the Brady law. I was especially pleased that day to be standing beside two very brave fighters against gun violence, Attorney General Reno and Sarah Brady. Today, as I stand with Congresswomen McCarthy, Morella, and Lofgren, I'm reminded again that women from both parties have been and remain at the forefront of this fight. And I know I speak for the other people who are here today to say I'm glad they allowed some of their male counterparts in the House -- (laughter) -- to join them.

When I signed the Brady Bill, I said that our efforts proved once again that democracy can work. The American people in their grass-roots demand for common-sense action against gun violence, prevailed over a very powerful Washington gun lobby. Today America is a safer place, thanks to the Brady Bill, and other measures that many here in this room championed -- from banning assault weapons to cop-killer bullets, to putting 100,000 police on the street.

The overall crime rate has fallen seven years in a row, homicide to the lowest rate in 30 years. But time and time again we see still, from Columbine to Buell Elementary School, it is still far too easy for guns to fall into the hands of criminals and children.

We have been trying for some time now, as all of you know, to further strengthen our gun laws, by passing a strong juvenile justice bill that closes the gun show loophole, requires child safety locks with all new handguns, and bans the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips -- which, unbelievably, is still legal and threatens to make a mockery of our assault weapons ban.

Once again, the gun lobby and their allies in the leadership of the Congress are standing in the way of real progress. And once again, we battle not just for the safety of our families, but for the soundness of our democracy. For over eight months, the majority leadership, under pressure from the gun lobby, has refused to allow the House and the Senate conferees to meet and have a substantive debate on the juvenile justice bill.

Representative Conyers has negotiated in good faith with Representative Hyde. I had the conference leaders here last week, and it was clear to me, from the discussion between them and with the rest of us, that they were much closer together, even though still considerably apart, than the position that the NRA has taken against our legislation. But we still haven't been able to get the committee to meet.

Now Representative Zoe Lofgren from California has offered a simple motion. It simply says, one version of this bill passed the Senate; one version of this bill passed the House eight months ago; the conferees should meet. That's all it says. It says Congress ought to do the job it was hired to do. (Applause.)

Again, I want to thank the Republican members who have shown up here, to stand here today. I don't even know, because we haven't talked about it, whether they would agree with me on every provision of this bill. But they want a bill and they want the conferees to meet. And I will say again, I know the conventional wisdom is in election years we're not supposed to do anything. I think that's wrong. We all still draw a check in election years, just like we do in nonelection years, and we're all here. And these kids, they keep dying every day. They don't know it's election year. So I thank Zoe Lofgren, and all these people who are here, for saying that we ought to get on with the business of the nation.

Now, unbelievably enough, the gun lobby -- who would do well in this conference, I think; I don't like it very much, but I think they'd do pretty well -- they don't want this conference to meet. And they're actually threatening retribution against lawmakers if they vote for Zoe Lofgren's resolution to meet. Why is that? Because they know the people aren't with them, that's why. Because they know that the people who have experience out there in the country, whether they're Republicans or Democrats or independents, once they understand what the issue is and that nobody's trying to take any hunter's gun away or burden anybody's legal rights, we're just trying to keep children alive -- once they understand that, they know that they cannot win the public debate. (Applause.)

I got a little tickled over the weekend when they got a little rough with me. I mean -- (laughter) -- you know, I have so much scar tissue now, I can't even feel it. (Laughter.) So it's totally immaterial to me what they say. And that should not be an issue for any of you.

You know, none of us -- any of us get these elected jobs, we ask for them; nobody makes us take these jobs. So that's completely irrelevant. The only thing that should matter, the only thing that should matter, is what is the best course in our country to make America the safest big country in the world, and to save the lives of these dozen kids that are getting killed every day from gun violence. That should be the only thing that matters.

And there are legitimate, practical issues that have to be worked through in these areas. But believe me, I've been there. I'm one of the few Presidents that's ever been to any of these gun shows.

I've actually been to them. And I've been to them way out in the country, where all of the practical problems allegedly arise. And in all candor, I think that taking a little time and a little inconvenience to save a lot of lives is a good deal for America. (Applause.)

I also believe that we cannot make this the only area of our national life where our only response is punishment and no prevention. Suppose I gave a speech to you today, suppose I called you here to say, my fellow Americans, I am incredibly burdened by the fact that these airport metal detectors are a pain for a lot of people, and 99.9 percent of all the people who walk into airports are good, law-abiding citizens and would never do anything wrong, and a lot of them have money clips in their pockets and have to go through those metal detectors two or three times, and I just think it's terrible -- and so we're going to take the metal detectors out of the airport, and the next time somebody blows up an airplane we're going to put 10 years on their sentence. (Laughter.) Anybody want to support that policy? (Laughter.)

Suppose I said to you, my fellow Americans, I brought you here because I'm getting older and a little heavier and those seatbelts are really uncomfortable for me -- (laughter) -- and because the overwhelming majority of automobile drivers in America are good, law-abiding people and safe people, I want to abolish the speed limits and rip the seatbelts out of all our cars -- (laughter) -- and if somebody does something wrong, I want to add five years to their sentence. Now, that's the logic here.

Why should this be the only area of our national life where we say no prevention; only punishment? Attorney General Reno has increased gun crime prosecutions. Why do we fight for 100,000 police? Why are all these police groups here fighting for 100,000 police? Not primarily to catch criminals quicker, but because they knew if they were on the street in the neighborhoods, they would prevent crime in the first place. That's what this is about.

So, again -- there's an old proverb that says, he who throws the first blow admits he has run out of arguments. (Laughter.) In 1993, they said the Brady Bill would violate the 2nd Amendment. But the right to keep and bear arms in deer season is still alive and well in Arkansas -- but 500,000 felons, fugitives and stalkers weren't able to get handguns. It was the right thing to do. (Applause.)

Gun crimes have fallen by 35 percent-plus since 1993. Today, I'm honored to announce the results of the Justice Department's first annual review of the instant criminal background check system put in place in November of 1988 under the Brady law. In the first year, the Insta-check system, in one year, stopped 179,000 illegal gun sales -- over two-thirds to people who were indicted or convicted of felony crimes. Most of the rest were fugitives, or domestic or drug abusers.

All told now, as I said, half a million guns have been stopped from falling into the wrong hands since 1993 -- proof positive that those who opposed the Brady Bill in 1993 were wrong.

This is not an argument -- we're having the same old argument. We have evidence now. And when it comes to the gun show, I would just remind you that back in 1993, the same crowd that's fighting closing the gun show loophole said, you don't need the Brady Bill because no bad actors ever buy guns at gun stores; they get them all at gun shows and urban flea markets, and out of the backs of pickups and trunks of cars. So now we say, well, we did get a lot of them, but you're right, there still are a lot of those bad -- now they say, oh, well, we can't do that, it's too much of a burden.

Now, I don't believe that we can't reach agreement here. But

the leadership of the Congress continues to resist, and to cling to arguments that won't stand up in honest debate. And I'll bet in their heart of hearts they're pretty embarrassed by some of the things that their allies have said in the last few days.

They say gun shows would be put out of business if unlicensed dealers who sell guns have to comply with the background checks, which can take up to three business days to complete. But licensed gun dealers at gun shows already have to do background checks, if they're licensed, and they're still doing a very brisk business. Nearly three-quarters -- now listen to this -- nearly three-quarters of all the Brady background checks are completed within a few seconds under the Insta-check system; 95 percent now completed in two hours or less.

Less than five -- here's the rub, and I want everybody to focus on this; this is the rub of this legislation -- less than five percent of the Brady checks take longer than 24 hours. So if we put this in, most of this will be over in two hours; 95 percent will be over in 24 hours. But of the 5 percent that take more than 24 hours, they are 20 times more likely to be rejected for a problem. So this whole big old fight here is, in large measure, about those 5 percent.

Now, why in the wide world any organized group would be in the business of worrying about the inconvenience of those 5 percent is beyond me. Ninety-five percent of the people are going to be out of here; 75 percent of them are going to be out of here in an hour or less. Representative Conyers here has offered an agreement that would have the whole thing done in 24 hours, except for those that can't be done.

So again I say, I've heard all this -- if you read the press on it, because so much of it is -- and this is not a criticism of the press, it's the rhetoric of the fight -- you would think this is about, will there be background checks or not. Why in the world would we not want to have an adequate check of these 5 percent that are 20 times more likely to be problem people and hurt innocent children and other people? That is the issue here.

And I'm telling you, I don't care what anybody says about people traveling to one town to the next to another gun show and being out in the rural areas and how much trouble it is -- it's not that much trouble. They deposit the guns at the local police department or the sheriff's office. There's 50 different ways to solve this problem.

This is all just a smokescreen. Every last issue is turned into some major battle over the Constitution, when all we're trying to do is save lives. (Applause.)

So, again, I want to say again, I'm grateful to the people who are here. I'm grateful that we have bipartisan representation. I hope the Republicans who are here don't get too much grief when they go back to Congress.

But I would like it if this were not a political issue. I would like it if it were not a partisan issue. I would like it if not a single vote could be made on this in the November election. I would like it if no one ever had to vote for any candidate on this ever again. I would like it if we had a national consensus to protect our children.

And it would not in any way, shape or form, interfere with Americans to go about their business in the ways that Americans in my part of the country have from the beginning, in the hunting season, in the skeet shooting, in the sport shooting and all that. It doesn't have anything to do with this.

But we're making a grave mistake when we continue to put up

excuses for that for which there is no excuse -- and to pretend that this is the only area of our national life when only punishment and not prevention is the answer.

So I thank the folks who are here. I wish Representative Lofgren well, and I particularly appreciate the leadership of the women members of the Congress in this issue that affects all of us.

I would like to now call on someone who, of all the people on this stage, has paid the highest price for our failure to do the right thing by our country -- Representative Carolyn McCarthy. (Applause.)

* * *

THE PRESIDENT: I want to leave you with two thoughts. First of all, not many people who pay the price Carolyn McCarthy did wind up having the personal strength to run for Congress. One of the biggest problems here is most of the people out there whose kids get killed in crimes or by accident, it's all they can do to put their own lives back together, take care of the rest of their kids and go on with their lives. I can't believe Suzann Wilson is still doing this after all these years.

There is only a -- it was just kind of a God's grace that Jim and Sarah Brady happened to be nationally prominent people and in a situation where they could go on. Mike Barnes is trying to organize people that don't have anything like the natural inclination or ability to come up with the kind of money and power and employ the kind of tactics that the typical lobby group does. But they're everywhere.

Yesterday I was contacted by a man that I've known for many years, to remind me of the incredible damage done to his family when his son and his son's friend were playing with a gun that killed the friend. His son doesn't have a mark on him, but it took him years to get over it, watching his best friend die there. There are people like this everywhere. And they shouldn't be denied and disenfranchised just because they're not organized. You have to speak for them.

The second thing I want to say is Congressman John Lewis is here -- the Sunday before last, I joined him in the 35th anniversary of marching over the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, a march that led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act. People in our lifetime, those of us that are old enough, over 35, actually died so all Americans could vote. I don't think they marched and died so that their votes would vanish in a howl of special interest politics in Washington. That's not what the Constitution or the Bill of Rights or the civil rights revolution was all about.

This is about more than guns. This is about whether democracy works. So I ask you, don't just go out and talk about how well these women did today, and how moved you are. Do something. Mobilize your friends to do something. We can win this battle -- with your help.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

12:18 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 7, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ON GUN LEGISLATION

The James S. Brady Press Briefing Room

12:40 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon. Given what I want to talk about today, it seems fitting that I am speaking to you in the briefing room we have just named for Jim Brady.

Last spring, the brutal shootings and Columbine gave a life and death urgency to the call for strengthening our nations gun laws. The Senate responded to that call, in spite of fierce pressures by the gun lobby. With a tie-breaking vote by the Vice President, the Senate passed an amendment to close the gun show loophole and pass other common-sense provisions that require child safety locks and ban the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips.

Unfortunately, the House narrowly defeated the McCarthy amendment to close the gun show loophole, and passed a much weaker bill than the Senate did. Now, for the past eight months, the leaders in Congress have done virtually nothing to complete a final bill.

That's why I called upon Senators Hatch and Leahy, and Representatives Hyde and Conyers to come to the White House this morning. I met with them in the Oval Office for nearly an hour. We had a very good discussion. My message was simple: Congress has kept the American people waiting long enough. I want Congress to finish the gun bill and send it to me by the anniversary of the Columbine tragedy, April 20th.

In the meeting this morning, I told the leaders the final bill needs to close the loophole that allows criminals to buy firearms at gun shows, without opening any new loopholes in the process.

I said I wanted a ban on the importation of ammunition clips that allow shooters, including those in Littleton, to spray bullets across a wide killing zone in a matter of seconds. And I said a final bill needs to require child safety locks, and should hold adults accountable when they allow young people to get their hands on deadly guns -- two measures that are particularly relevant in light of the heartbreaking shooting of Kayla Rolland last week.

I know the gun lobby is cranking up pressure on Congress again. But when first graders shoot first graders, it's time for Congress to do what's right for America's families.

All four members of Congress I met with this morning expressed their desire to work with us in good faith. I'm grateful for their willingness to meet with me today and to continue working together. But let's be clear here: Eight months is long enough. There's no more time for delay. The conference committee should meet and work out their differences, and send me a good bill. We owe it to our children and to the victims to get this done by April the 20th.

When I talk to the parents of victims, they just can't understand why people in Washington are always talking about what we can't do instead of what we can do. I'm not interested in talking about how little we can do. I'm interested in how much we can accomplish to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children.

Thank you.

Q Mr. President, did you get any kind of commitment from the leaders --

Q Mr. President, if Congress --

THE PRESIDENT: I'll take both of them.

Q If the congressional leaders and the gun lobby were not swayed after the Columbine shooting, what makes you feel that the time is, so to speak, more right now?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, how many more people have to get killed before we do something? I mean, we had a pretty rough week last week.

And let me say, one of the things that I did in preparation for this -- because, as you know, before last week we were pushing to try to get a conference on the juvenile justice bill -- I actually read the proposal made by Mr. Hyde on this subject, and the counterproposal made by Mr. Conyers. And the Conyers proposal, I think, is workable, and would keep -- would go a very long way toward, in fact, closing the gun show loophole. The Hyde proposal is a substantial movement away from just the total, what you might call the complete NRA position.

So I think that if we could get a conference meeting, and they could start working on the things everybody agrees on, and get these two leaders to work through this, and give us a provision that would actually work -- there's more than one way to do this; we need something that will actually work -- I think that it's quite possible that that could occur.

Keep in mind, there's a reason that there's such an effort to keep this conference from meeting. I think they know now that if a bill came out that had a reasonable gun show provision, loophole provision, in it that actually closes the loophole, that it would pass the House and the Senate and -- because the American people want it.

So we can't pretend that it's not the same as defeating the bill just to never have the conference meet. The conference needs to meet. And what I believe will happen is that you will have more talking and more thinking, and less shouting, if the conference committee will meet. That's what Congress hires on to do, to write laws. And I think it's very important that this be done. And I hope that the conference committee will meet soon. And I believe that there's a way to work through this that will satisfy some of the practical concerns that people who are interested in the gun shows have, and still allow us to have an air-tight guarantee that we're going to keep the guns away from the criminals and the other categories of people covered by the Brady law.

Yes, Terry?

Q Mr. President, did you get any commitment from the Republicans today that they would actually have a meeting, that there would be a conference? And would you be willing to accept any bill that did not include the gun show background check?

THE PRESIDENT: First of all, where we left it was that -- I

think that Leahy, Conyers and Hyde, I believe, are willing to start the conference -- I believe that. I don't want to speak for Mr. Hyde, but I think that's accurate. I believe that -- Senator Hatch said that he thought he had to go back and consult with the Republican leadership and the members of the caucus, and he would try to give us an answer in the next little bit here.

I think that Senator -- I mean, Mr. Conyers said he would work with Mr. Hyde to try to work out the gun show issue, but he didn't want to do that as a way of putting off the conference, and I agree with that. He said he thought we ought to have a conference; the conference ought to approve everything else, including the child trigger locks, the ammunition clip ban -- which is a big issue in view of some of the other things that have happened here lately -- and these other issues, and that, meanwhile, he would work with Mr. Hyde to try to work through this.

Now, all I can tell you is I think it would be a big mistake for Congress not to close the gun show loophole. Keep in mind -- let's everybody remember this -- one of the principal arguments used against the Brady Bill when we passed that and I signed it was that criminals don't buy guns at gun stores, they buy guns at gun shows. You go back and look at the debate. And one of the things they said, oh, the criminals don't buy -- they either get them on one-on-one sales or they get them at these gun shows or urban flea markets.

Well, it turned out that was wrong. We've had almost a half-million gun sales not approved through gun stores. But the same people who were telling us seven years ago, or six and seven years ago, that we didn't need the Brady Bill because all the criminals were buying their guns at gun shows now tell us we can't stop the criminals from buying guns at gun shows. I mean, I think it's very important to understand, there are people's lives at stake here. This will save lives.

Now, people that are very solicitous and understanding of all the sort of practical problems for these rural gun shows -- I'm telling you, there are ways to work through that. I've actually been to these rural gun shows. I know what they look like. I understand what these people are saying. I'd been to them when I was governor, I know -- you have something off in a field in the country and you've got all the pickups and the cars opened up, and 2,000 or 3,000 people come through in a day -- I understand that. We have the technology to do the background checks and we can do it, and we can do it without shutting these things down and all the law-abiding people that are involved in them down.

But if we act like because there are practical problems, we're just not going to save these people's lives and we're going to let all these criminals buy guns, I think that is, to me, it's unconscionable to walk away from that.

Q When you meet with the mother of the Michigan child this afternoon, do you think that you can reasonably assure her that there will be a bill this year? And secondly, can you make that kind of commitment knowing that there are as many Democrats as Republicans needed still to get support for something like this?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, I don't think that is true. I think that if -- among the Democrats that voted for Mr. Dingell's bill, I think if some practical changes were made in the law which would not undermine the ability of the checks to actually keep guns out of hands of criminals and felons, fugitives and stalkers, I think that most of the Democrats would vote for that bill. And I think a lot of Republicans would, and I believe it would pass. So that's what

I believe would happen.

Now, what I'm going to tell her when I see her, first of all, is that as a parent my heart goes out to her, and as President I'm going to do everything I can to see that it doesn't happen to other children. That's all I can do.

I can't -- do I know whether the Republicans will permit a bill to pass this year, or whether they will be willing to stand up the to NRA? No, I don't know that. But I think that if we could get a bill out of that committee that was a good bill, this year I think it would pass. And I think that may be what is going on now. That may be why there's so much pressure on Senator Hatch not to call a meeting.

But that is no way to do it. They ought to vote, vote up or down, declare themselves. If they don't want this bill to pass, they shouldn't be ashamed to tell America they don't want it to pass. And if they do, they ought to get together and pass it.

Q Mr. President, regarding your trip to India, there are now reports that you will make a brief stop in Pakistan. Are those reports true?

THE PRESIDENT: I should have an announcement on that probably within a day. I'm working that and we're about to finalize the arrangements, and as quickly as I know -- as I can do so, when I finish the calls I'm making, I'll be glad to release that.

Q Mr. President, aid to Colombia is facing problems in the Congress of the United States. There are some people who doubt -- they think it might be another Vietnam. Some people think that the military aid will end up in violation of human rights and talks of collusion between the military and paramilitary forces. What are you doing to try to get this aid passed that Colombia has been waiting for a long time and you've been pushing for a long time?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I still believe the package will pass. I think the questions which are being asked are legitimate questions, and should be asked. If I were a member of Congress and I just heard the administration were to give this amount of money to Colombia and it was generally going to be used to fight drugs and do some other things, I would ask the same questions.

But all I can tell you is that it's not like Vietnam in the sense that we are not making a commitment to train soldiers in a way that we will then be called upon to come in and replace them or fight with them or work with them. This is to deal with a guerrilla war, which is what happened in Vietnam.

In this case, we will be using some of the funds to train soldiers to support police officers who will be doing antinarcotics work. And the units that will be involved in this will have to be particularly vetted to make sure that they don't have the pattern of abuse that you referred to.

So we have worked as hard as we could to do this. Now, can I tell you that there will never be a dollar of this that would be spent in a way that I wouldn't want. Nobody can say that. But I can say this: I think that we're a lot better off trying to help stabilize Colombia and save democracy there, and help them fight narcotics there and keep more drugs out of this country, than if we walk away from it. I think the consequences, if we walk away, are pretty clear. And if we help them, we just might make it and turn the situation around. That's what I think we ought to try to do.

Mary.

Q Mr. President, the argument is made that the bill under consideration, all the other bills would not have prevented either Columbine or what happened in Flint. Have you ever considered advocating abolition of handguns, as advocated by the late Senator John Chafee, who spoke of the insanely easy access to guns in this country?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think, first of all, I'm not sure that's true. I just have a statement here by the young woman that bought the guns used at Columbine, and she said, "I wish it had been more difficult. I wouldn't have helped them buy the guns if I had faced a background check."

So, first of all, this works. And I also believe we should license handgun owners and when they buy guns, I think they ought to have to pass a Brady background check and show they've taken a safety course. I think we should do more than we're doing. But I believe that it is best for me as President to focus on what we can get done to save lives.

John Chafee, as you know, was a wonderful man and an aberration in the present Republican Senate Caucus. But I don't think there would be many votes for that in the Congress. And what I should be doing is trying to pass the strongest possible legislation I can pass to save the largest number of lives I can save.

I do believe, Mary, if we -- one of the things that we ought to do if we can get this legislation on the books is to be much more aggressive in these gun buy-back programs, as well, to try to reduce the total stock out there of the kind of loose guns that are running around. I mean, when you hear over 200 million guns are held in America, it's trembling -- it's a staggering figure. But a lot of them are held by collectors and hunters and others with big supplies who are responsible people. But if we had, I'm convinced if we had a more aggressive use of gun buy-back programs, we could draw down a lot of these guns that are used in crimes.

Q Page one of the usually reliable Washington Post reports this morning that you regularly --

THE PRESIDENT: Is that an editorial comment? (Laughter.)

Q -- you regularly advise the campaign of Vice President Gore. Did you advise Mr. Gore to allow no media questions for the past 17 days, particularly because of the Maria Shaw case, including Gore's appearance in Buffalo on Saturday, where I found that the gymnasium was one-third empty, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (Laughter.) No.

Q Don't you think he ought to answer media questions like you do?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, since I didn't advise him privately, I don't think I should advise him publicly. (Laughter.) It looks to me like he's doing a pretty good job with his campaign. But I did not -- I haven't talked to him about that at all.

Go ahead.

Q Mr. President, back on guns for just a moment. You said what we need to do is pass the strongest legislation we can pass. The leaders who came out were not all that specific, other than to say that the gun show loophole was the main thing hanging this up. In your view,

what has to be done to close that loophole? Is it three days? Is it 24 hours? Is it less than 24 hours? What in your view needs to be done to close it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, let's look at the facts here. The answer may be a combination of both. That is, if you have an Insta-check system -- today, when we do the background checks, over 90 percent of them are completed within a day. Over 70 percent of them are completed within an hour, I think.

But you have to have some provision for dealing with the leakage. That is, suppose you're meeting over the weekend, and the records are not in the national crime database; suppose you're dealing with mental health records, for example, that would have, under the Brady Bill, would disqualify someone from getting a handgun, but aren't available; suppose you're dealing with records that are in a local police department that might not be in the database, where you have to make a phone call.

So the answer is, if you had 24 hours, you'd get most people. But the thing is, the people you don't get -- the people you don't get in that last 5 percent -- listen to this -- are 20 times more likely to be turned down than the population as a whole.

So what you need -- I have no objection to some provision which would say, okay, everybody that clears, do the 24 hours and let it roll. But you have to have some other provision there to deal with the 5 percent you can't -- or however, whatever the percentage is; it's less than 10 -- whatever the percentage is you can't get done in 24 hours, because a significant percentage of the people that shouldn't be getting the guns are in that percentage.

So that's why I say, you guys would have -- it would be great for you if they would actually have this conference and start debating this, and instead of debating the Senate provision or the Dingell bill, or the Senate provision or nothing, you could hear this debate between Conyers and Hyde, and we could get down to the facts. And it would be -- you'd really have something to get your teeth into and talk about in terms of, what does it take to save lives?

My criteria is, does it work? You know, I don't mind being -- like I said, I've been to these country gun shows. I know what they're like, and I understand what some of the practical questions raised are. But I'm just telling you, with a minimum of effort, we can save lives, and we can take care of all these cases that the Brady Bill takes care of.

So I'm not giving you an evasive answer. I'm telling you, this is a fact question. But you don't want to just -- the problem with the 24-hour thing is, you do over 90 percent of the checks, but of the ones that leak, they're 20 times more likely to be turned down. So, therefore, I think we have to have some provision to deal with them.

Q Mr. President, when do you plan to act on a request by Taiwan for new weapons systems? Do you think that granting such a request could help you with your China trade legislation on the Hill? And do you think the Taiwanese, perhaps, deserve the weapons given recent Chinese saber-rattling in the area?

THE PRESIDENT: I think my answer to the first question will answer the next two. I don't know because I have not sat down and looked at the facts. Any decision I make has to be made consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and with our general policy in the area. And I will do what I think the right thing to do is. But I literally have not had a meeting on it. We haven't discussed timing or anything; I have

had no meetings.

Go ahead, April.

Q Mr. President, today is Super Tuesday, and it's the weeding-out process. What are your hopes for the candidates that are left standing? And since John McCain has been talking about George Bush's morals and ethics, have you been reminded of that cruel joke that he told about Chelsea a couple years ago, and what are your thoughts about that?

THE PRESIDENT: He asked me to forgive him, and I did.

Q Do you think that he makes an appropriate presidential candidate --

THE PRESIDENT: He asked me to forgive him, and I did. And since I have asked people to forgive me, I would be in a poor position if I refused the same thing. And I believe him to be a good man. And he asked me to forgive him, and I did.

And I think the -- you know, what I think -- I have a slightly different take on this than most people, I guess, but since I'm not a candidate maybe you will believe me when I tell you, since I'm not running. When people fight with each other over issues that they disagree with, and they advertise about it, I don't consider that necessarily negative campaigning. When people say to each other that they're somehow -- that their opponents are morally inferior, or that they're morally superior, that can be negative campaigning. It's also very hazardous.

You know, there are lots of verses in the Bible -- one of them says that you've got to be careful when you're standing not to brag about it; otherwise you might find yourself on your knees. I mean, you know -- but I think the fact that this has been a vigorous campaign fought over differences of opinion on campaign finance, the nature of a tax cut, what kind of education policy we should have in all these primaries, I think that's been good for the American people. And my only wish today is that there's a real big turnout. I just hope they all go out and vote, and I hope they'll continue to vote all the way to November.

MR. LOCKHART: Thanks. Thank you.

Q And your hope for those who remain standing?

THE PRESIDENT: What did you say?

Q The hopes for those who remain standing after this weeding-out process?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they ought to go before the American people and say this is the millennial election, and they ought to say what they say. You know who I'm for and what I hope happens in the election. But the main thing is, I want this election to be fought out over the issues. And if they fight over the issues and criticize each other over the issues, I don't consider that to be negative campaigning. That's debating. That's the way the system works.

I would like to see this election be given back to the American people. I'd like to see the fights over things that affect them and not over whether one candidate should have gotten more merit badges than another.

Q On gas prices, just one last quick question. There are

predictions that it could go to \$1.80.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Today I paid \$1.70 for a gallon of gas. Well, I can afford it; many Americans can't. (Laughter.) It's a serious thing for many people who are on tight budgets.

THE PRESIDENT: First of all, let me say -- I've told you this before, and as time goes on we'll have more to say about this. I've been working on this issue. I think what we want are stable oil prices that aren't too high, and I think that's the oil producing countries should want. Because what's going to happen is, there will be all kinds of reactions -- we have our options, others have theirs -- but some countries will just have their economic growth slowed if you have oil prices that are too high.

And then what's going to happen? One of two things, or both, will happen. You will either have a big drop in demand for oil prices, which will drive the price back down just because people won't be buying as much anymore, and it will cut the revenues of the oil-producing countries below where they would have been if they had maintained stable prices at a lower level. Or you will have a lot of non-OPEC members who aren't subject to their agreement start increasing their production, taking market share away from them, and that will also cut oil prices and lower their revenues, because they'll have less market share.

Now, one of those two things is going to happen unless there's more equilibrium in this market. And I think everybody recognizes that they're too high. There's a reason they're too high now -- because we're producing 73 million barrels a day and consuming 75 million. Therefore, the price is continuing to rise, because demand exceeds supply. And demand exceeds supply because of, in effect, artificial decisions made by the producers.

So this would be kind of like deregulation in America in telecom, and a lot of other areas. Once you get other producers, either that or supply will drop because -- I mean, excuse me -- demand will drop because they won't be able to sustain the price. So I think, sure, I want oil prices to go down some. But the producing countries should want them to go down some, too.

Now, on the other hand, Americans should not want them to drop to \$12 or \$10 a barrel again, because that puts you in this roller coaster environment which is very destabilizing to the producing countries and not particularly good for our economy, and takes our mind off our business, which should be alternative fuels, energy conservation, reducing the impact of all this on global warming.

But we need stable prices at a lower level, and that's what we're working for. And I hope that's what the producing countries will see is clearly in their best interests, because it is.

Thank you very much.

END

1:05 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Palo Alto, California)

For Immediate Release

March 4, 2000

RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATION

Novell Headquarters
San Jose, California

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. Today I want to speak with you about the senseless and heartbreaking gun violence that has shaken our nation once again.

Yesterday, the community of Mount Morris Township, Michigan, held memorial services for a beautiful little girl who was shot to death in her 1st grade classroom on Tuesday. Kayla Rolland was only six years old. When she walked to school with her older brother and sister, her backpack looked almost as big as she was -- but she loved to carry books and read. In the worlds of her grandmother, she was a bright light who lit up everything wherever she went.

The community of Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania was also devastated this week. On Wednesday, a gunman unloaded his fury and a .22 caliber revolver in a busy commercial center. Five men were killed or grievously wounded, including a young college student and a man who served his community as a priest for 23 years. These tragedies were not isolated events. From Littleton to Ft. Worth, Paducah to Pearl, gun violence has stolen the lives of young and old alike. It has desecrated churches and classrooms and day care centers. It's kept parents up at night and made school children afraid to get on the bus in the morning.

Every day, gun fire takes the lives of a dozen children in America. One University of New Hampshire survey showed that 60 percent of 15 year olds said they could get hold of an unlocked gun. If you look just at the accidental gun deaths among children under 15, the rate in the United States is nine times higher than in the other 25 industrial countries combined. This is intolerable and we must act -- because we can do something about it.

Last year, with a tie-breaking vote by Vice President Gore, the Senate passed a juvenile crime bill that would go a long way toward strengthening our gun laws, requiring child safety locks, banning large ammunition clips and closing the gun show background check loophole.

The House passed a much weaker bill. And for the past eight months, the leaders in Congress have simply failed to get together to complete a final bill for me to sign. I've called on congressional leaders to join me at the White House on Tuesday to break that logjam. In that meeting I'll insist that they get the job done. I want Congress to send me a final bill that closes the loophole that allows criminals to buy firearms at gun shows, bans the importation of high-capacity ammunition clips, holds adults accountable when they allow young people to get their hands on deadly guns, and requires child safety locks for all new handguns, the kind of locks that would have prevented a 1st grader from taking Kayla Rolland's life.

I've also asked for support on three other vital measures: to develop smart guns that can only be fired by the adults who own them; to require that new handgun buyers first get a photo license showing they

passed the Brady background check and a gun safety course; and to hire 1,000 new gun prosecutors. Gun crime prosecutions already are up 16 percent since I took office, but we should do more.

In a country of 270 million people, no law can stop every act of gun violence. But we can't just throw up our hands as if gun safety laws don't make a difference. We all have a responsibility to do our part -- parents, community leaders, members of the gun industry and, yes, members of Congress, too.

When we passed the Brady Bill, people argued it wouldn't make any difference because criminals don't buy guns at gun stores, they said. But it turned out a lot of them did. Brady background checks have now blocked gun purchases by 500,000 felons, fugitives and stalkers. And gun crime is down by more than 35 percent since 1993.

The only reason Congress hasn't already sent me a bill with comprehensive gun safety provisions is because of the pressure tactics and the threats of the NRA. In fact, the NRA now is launching a \$20 million campaign to target and to defeat members of Congress who support responsible gun safety laws. But when 1st graders shoot 1st graders, it's time for Congress to be guided by their hearts and their heads, not by a fear or the pressure tactics of the NRA.

It's time for all of us to make our voices heard in the halls of Congress. The very least we can do to honor the memory of little Kayla Rolland and all the other tragic victims of gun violence is to pass sensible gun safety legislation right now.

Thanks for listening.

END

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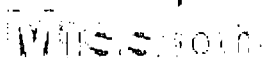
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Mission | [Legislation](#) | [Mission in Spanish](#)

MILLION MOM MARCH MOTHERS' DAY 2000 is dedicated to the mission of educating our children and our country about the life-threatening danger of guns.



Although simplistic and seemingly self-evident, this mission is in direct conflict with a powerful, heavily financed cultural and political juggernaut, which justifies misuse of guns with references to freedom, liberty and the American Dream.

We, the mothers, know that life is the first inalienable right promised by our Constitution. Our children's lives far outweigh the right for just anyone, especially juveniles, to carry a semi-automatic assault weapon or Saturday night Special.

While we acknowledge that guns may be necessary for hunting, law enforcement, and national security, the proliferation of firearms intended for one purpose only - killing another human being - has become untenable.

We, the mothers, are calling on Congress to enact common sense gun control legislation by Mothers' Day 2000. Come May 14th, we mothers will go to Washington, D.C. either to celebrate sensible legislation or to protest bipartisan ineptitude.

We, as mothers, endorse the following.

Sensible "Cooling Off" Periods and Background Checks

We believe that it is only common sense that sensible "cooling off" periods and extensive background checks be required of any individual who wants to purchase from any person or place weapons intended only for killing or injuring humans.

License Handgun Owners and Register All Handguns

We call on Congress to require all handgun owners to

be licensed and that they be required to register their weapons with the proper authorities. It makes sense.

Safety Locks for All Handguns

Guns, like every other consumer product sold in America, have to meet minimum safety standards. Gun manufacturers should have to design guns with locks built in, and with other common-sense devices like loaded-chamber indicators and child-proofing.

Limit Purchases to one-handgun-per-month

We believe that it is only common sense to end straw purchase transactions where individual who may legally purchase a firearm is hired to purchase firearms for Gun traffickers. These guns are sold on the illegal market and eventually wind up on our nation's streets, killing our kids.

No-Nonsense Enforcement of Gun Laws

We call on all officers of the law to assume a no-nonsense approach in enforcing existing gun laws and to join us in our mutual crusade for stronger legislation.

Enlistment of Help from Corporate America

We call on all child-friendly, nonviolent stores, companies, and corporations to sponsor us in these pursuits by advertising our message that guns -- in the wrong hands - is simply unacceptable. We call on the like minded to work with community law enforcement agencies to offer swaps of meaningful goods and services for guns. And that the guns be destroyed by the proper authorities. In turn, we, the mothers, will patronize all child-friendly, nonviolent sponsors who join us in this mission.

RECRUITMENT

Our aim is to recruit - from all walks of life - mothers, grandmothers, stepmothers, godmothers, foster mothers, future mothers, and all others willing to be "honorary mothers" in this crusade. Our goal is to educate and mobilize the mothers of America to this cause. Our commitment as voting citizens is to realize our goals by Mothers' Day, 2000.

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TIME OUT
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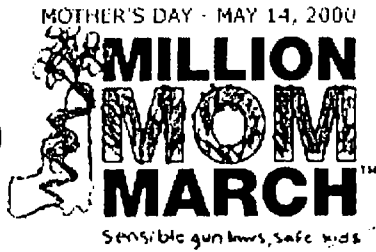
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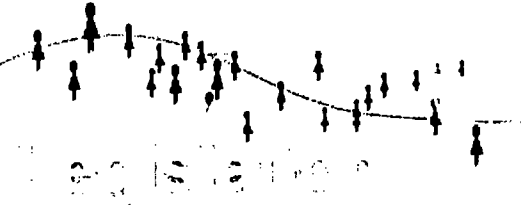
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Mission | Legislation

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Dear Mothers:

In the first weeks of our conception, many mothers, like myself, didn't know the Brady Bill from the Brady Bunch. The tragic shootings at Columbine High School, quickly followed by the attack on innocent nursery school kids in California made many us realize, we need to learn more -- fast. Yes, we are busy people, but please take few minutes to read our policy goals below.



POLICY GOAL #1 - CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY STANDARDS FOR GUNS

Current guns are not subject to any consumer safety standards. We must establish a Federal Authority to create consumer product safety standards. We must give a federal agency regulatory power over the design and manufacture of guns and ammunition. Proposals to create regulatory this authority within the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) or the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms (BATF) have arisen in recent years, but the gun lobby has succeeded in killing them.

If one of these agencies, or a new agency, had the authority to treat guns and ammunition like every other product sold in America, deaths and injuries caused by unregulated design and manufacturing could be substantially reduced.

Wherever such authority ultimately resides, all guns and ammunition should meet at least the following product safety standards:

- No military-style assault weapons should be allowed in civilian hands.
- Every semi-automatic pistol should have a prominent, unambiguous indicator that clearly identifies the presence of a round in the firing chamber.
- Every semi-automatic pistol should have a

magazine disconnect safety to prevent discharge of a chambered round when the magazine is removed.

- Every gun should have a grip safety or other similar device to prevent small children from pulling the trigger, even if the gun is unlocked. Locking devices should be integrated into the design of every new gun, so an unauthorized user cannot make it fire.
- The serial number on every gun should identify the manufacturer, date of manufacture, model, caliber, and type of gun (pistol, revolver, etc.)
- No gun should fire when dropped or bumped.
- Every gun made in this country should satisfy the standards for imported guns.
- Every gun manufactured or sold should withstand the forces generated by the ammunition it is designed to fire.
- No magazine should be manufactured, sold or possessed by civilians that has a capacity of more than 10 rounds of ammunition.
- The sale of ammunition and ammunition components, especially for handguns, should be subject to strict record-keeping requirements and purchase restrictions.

POLICY GOAL #2 - CONTROL DISTRIBUTION

We need much tighter rules covering the distribution system, and the means to enforce them. The following policies would help improve the regulation of distribution:

- Manufacturers should provide the BATF with a strict, prompt accounting of the disposition of each gun made, which should be linked to records of subsequent transactions.
- Manufacturers should ensure that their dealers do not sell their guns to prohibited purchasers. Dealers who are frequently identified as sources for guns used in crimes should be promptly and thoroughly investigated, and should promptly lose their licenses if there is evidence of wrongdoing.
- Manufacturers and dealers should be required to establish and maintain strict security procedures to prevent theft, and should be subject to liability if, in the absence of such procedures, guns stolen from them are used in

crimes.

- Dealers should be restricted to commercial, retail facilities in full compliance with state and local business and zoning requirements.
- Every gun store employee with access to guns should have to pass the same background check as the licensed dealer. Every private sale should be subject to the same background check as sales from licensed dealers.
- Gun shows should be strictly regulated to ensure adequate oversight of all sales and enforcement of all laws.
- The BATF should have adequate staff and funding, from fees and taxes assessed on the industry and its consumers, to allow appropriate supervision of the chain of distribution, including mandatory, annual inspections of every manufacturer, importer, distributor, and dealer. These and other improvements will help reduce the flow of guns into the illegal, underground market.

POLICY GOAL #3 - IMPLEMENT OTHER COMMON SENSE MEASURES

Stop the marketing of guns to children and criminals. We must stop the gun industry from promoting gun use among children and criminals. Strategies to accomplish this include the following:

- The Federal Trade Commission should investigate claims made by gun makers in their ads, and should enforce laws against false advertising.
- The gun industry should be prohibited from promoting features that serve primarily criminal purposes.
- The gun industry should be prohibited from marketing guns to children.
- The entertainment industry should stop promoting the gun industry through product placement in movies and television shows, and should stop glamorizing and trivializing gun trauma.

We believe as mothers that it is only common sense to that the gun industry be strictly regulated. And, that it is time for America to join every other developed nation in standing up to this dangerous enterprise.

MOMS
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TIME OUT
CHAIR



Majority Whip Tom
Delay (R-Texas)

12 Lives At stake

Every day, a dozen children die from gun-shot wounds. Some are crime victims, wrong-place, wrong-time victims; un-loaded-and-loaded-in-the-house victims; and suicides, made easy by access to a gun.

This is personal, not political. We are in this for one reason only: to keep our kids safe.

Each day there is no action on this issue, we lose 12 more children.

Enough is enough!



Who We Are

The Million Mom March is a movement of mothers from all over the country who have joined together to demand sensible gun laws that protect our children.

We are Moms and others who have lost children, husbands, siblings and friends to gun violence or gun accidents.

And, we are Moms who have lost no one...and never want to.



12 Million Mom March

On May 14, 2000 mothers, honorary mothers, fathers, grandparents and children will attend events in Washington, DC and in dozens of communities across the nation to send a strong message to Congress that they must take responsible action this session by passing sensible gun laws.

This Mothers Day we will tell Congress that we expect results and will hold our elected officials accountable if they don't deliver.

the goal

Moms are very practical by nature. We're not talking about banning guns. No matter how you feel about guns, there are certain principles everyone can support. We want reasonable, common sense, enforceable laws.

We're calling on Congress to pass a law requiring licensing with safety training and registration of guns.

People should be required to be as responsible with a deadly weapon as we are for our cars.

each day there is
No action
on this issue,
We Lose
12 more children.





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[Press Release](#) | [MMM Key Messages](#)
[Mothers Applaud President](#) | [Rosie Press Release](#) | [DC Press Release](#)



The Million Mom March
 Fact Sheet

MMM fact sheet

- Every day 12 children die from gun shot wounds
- The Million Mom March was created by Donna Dees-Thomases, a New Jersey mother of two, following the Grenada Hills Day Camp shooting
- The Million Mom March is a grassroots, not-for-profit organization
- Since the March's introduction on Labor Day, 1999 thousands of mothers across the country have joined together to help plan for this historic event
- The Million Mom March is an opportunity for mothers, fathers, grandparents, children, neighbors, family and friends to demand that Congress enact sensible gun legislation
- Sensible gun legislation should include licensing and registration for all handguns
- The Million Mom March supporters believe gun owners should be responsible for their weapons and know how to handle them safely
- Gun owners should be required to be as responsible with a deadly weapon, as with their cars
- The Million Mom March does NOT advocate banning guns
- Marches will be held in Washington D.C. on the National Mall, and in communities throughout the country
- The Million Mom March will occur on May 14, 2000-Mothers Day



- You can participate in the national Million Mom March in Washington D.C. or help to organize a march in your own community
- For more information visit www.millionmommarch.com or call 1-888-989-moms

Majority Whip
Tom Delay
(R-Texas)

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Million Mom March The Steering Committee

Donna Dees-Thomases, founder, Million Mom March

Donna Dees-Thomases took the first step of the Million Mom March last summer following a shooting at a daycare center in California. Within a week of the August 10th shooting, Thomases created a concept for a mother's march on Washington to urge Congress and other decision-makers to take common sense action to protect children from gun violence. A mother herself, she felt she could no longer sit back while kids were dying every day.

Thomases is a part-time public relations consultant to CBS Entertainment, assigned to the *Late Show with David Letterman* since November 1995. Before that, she worked as associate director of communications for CBS News assigned to the *CBS Evening News With Dan Rather* for seven years.

Thomases worked on Capitol Hill as assistant press secretary to U.S. Sen. Russell Long after receiving an undergraduate degree from Louisiana State University in 1979. She also holds a Master's degree from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism.

A native of Louisiana, Thomases resides in New Jersey with her family. She is the mother of two girls, Lili and Phoebe, and is the stepmother of David, Danny and Greg. This is her first foray into activism.

THE BELL CAMPAIGN

The Bell Campaign is a victim-led, grassroots organization committed to preventing gun death and injury and supporting victims of gun trauma. It was founded in 1999 to give a unified voice to the victims of gun trauma and concerned community members. Like most Americans, The Bell Campaign supports laws to hold the gun industry accountable and place responsible limits on the availability of

firearms, especially handguns.

The Bell Campaign is committed to providing compassionate support to gun victims from the time of their loss or injury through every step of the journey toward healing, and helps to channel grief into working for stronger gun laws. While the Bell Campaign extends this opportunity to everyone who needs victim resources, participation in advocacy is purely voluntary.

The founders of The Bell Campaign chose a symbol for this movement that could serve both as a memorial for lost loved ones and as a focal point for organizing and celebration. The bell will toll for all those killed and injured by guns and will peal to mark progress toward safer communities. The sound of the bell represents the unified voice of gun victims and the majority of Americans who support stronger gun laws.

The Bell Campaign's national office is located in San Francisco, CA.

PAX

"PAX (which means peace in Latin) was co-founded in 1997 by Talmage Cooley and Daniel Gross. The organization's mission is to create a powerful national movement to end gun violence, a movement that is positive, youthful and exciting. Through innovative media and communications initiatives, PAX intends to amplify the gun violence issue and empower every American to help create change. Applying an entrepreneurial organization model to its non-profit mission, PAX has quickly achieved success in bringing together many constituencies together which will be critical in rallying a successful national anti-gun violence movement, including many prominent individuals and organizations from the media, entertainment, policy, non-profit and corporate communities."

Talmage Cooley

In 1995, Talmage founded the Gun Violence Project, where he developed a comprehensive plan for using innovative media strategies to create an effective national anti-gun violence movement. His work has gained the support of a number of prominent individuals and organizations in the entertainment and media industries, as well as within the anti-gun violence movement. In 1997, Talmage co-founded PAX and the Gun Violence Project was merged into this new organization.

Previous to founding PAX, Talmage held positions for eight years in corporate finance and trading with Morgan Stanley and Dominion Bankshares, and then established a successful career in the creative arts as a writer, director and photographer. He received BA and MBA degrees from the University of Virginia.

Daniel Gross

Daniel was 30 and the youngest Partner at the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency when his younger brother, Matthew Gross, was critically wounded in the 1997 shooting

atop the Empire State Building. Shortly thereafter, Daniel left his advertising career to co-found PAX. Today, recognized as one of the leading national spokespersons on the gun violence issue, he has made numerous appearances both nationally and locally on television, radio and in print and has received public praise from several members of Congress as well as President Clinton. Daniel's numerous awards and honors include a fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation, which recognized him as one of the next generation of America's leaders.

Daniel received B.S. degree in psychology and economics with honors from Tulane University in 1989 and currently lives in New York City with his wife Maria.

HANDGUN CONTROL, INC.

Handgun Control, Inc. was founded by a survivor of gun violence in 1974. Dr. Mark Borinsky began Handgun Control with the idea of rationalizing gun laws in the United States. In 1975, N.T. "Pete" Shields joined HCI, having lost a son to a serial killer. Sarah Brady, the current chair, joined in 1985, after her husband, Jim, was shot in the assassination attempt on President Reagan in 1981. These people, along with thousands of others, have joined together to press for more rational, common-sense gun laws. Handgun Control is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization that lobbies in favor of reasonable gun regulations at local, state and national levels.

The Center to Prevent Handgun Violence was founded by Pete Shields as the educational and research affiliate of Handgun Control. Since 1983, the Center has worked closely to educate the general public about the issues surrounding gun violence in the United States.

The Center's Legal Action Project has been at the forefront of the recent movement to compel the gun industry to reform its sales and marketing practices. The Center's Education Department has developed several innovative programs that use health-care professionals, teachers and parents as mentors for at-risk youths. The Center continues to provide innovative educational and public health solutions to gun violence in our communities.

THE COALITION TO STOP GUN VIOLENCE

The Coalition to Stop Gun Violence (CSGV) was founded in 1974 to combat the growing gun violence problem in the United States. CSGV is a unique coalition of more than forty religious, professional, labor, medical, educational and civic organizations.

The goal of CSGV is the orderly elimination of the private sale of handguns and assault weapons in the United States. CSGV seeks to ban handguns and assault weapons from importation, manufacture, sale and transfer by the general American public, with reasonable exceptions made for police, military, security personnel, gun clubs where guns are secured on club premises, gun dealers trading in antique and collectable firearms kept and sold in inoperable condition. Hunting weapons, such as shotguns and rifles would be

unaffected by these bans, because they do not pose a large threat to the American public the way handguns and assault weapons do.

In addition to a ban, the Coalition supports intermediate steps to reducing gun violence. These steps include: limiting the availability of gun dealers licenses; increasing gun dealers license fees; restrictively licensing and registering gun owners; increasing the handgun and ammunition taxes to offset health care costs; imposing strict liability for gun manufacturers and dealers; regulating firearms as consumer products; banning Saturday Night Specials; and establishing a national one-handgun-a-month purchase limit.



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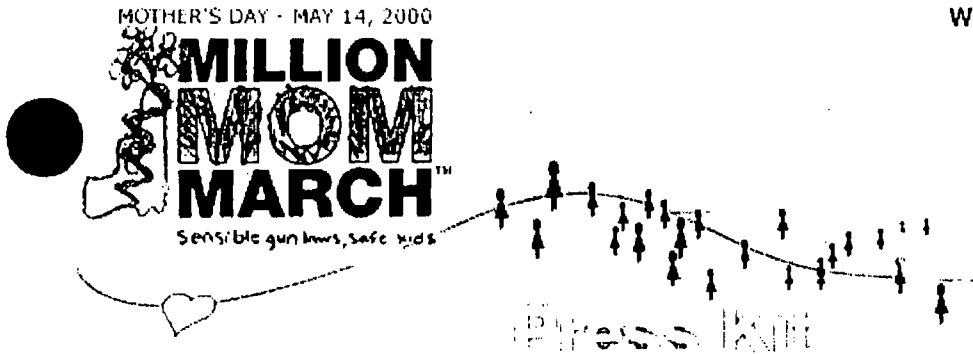


Majority Whip Tom Delay (R-Texas)

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Contact: Melissa Connor
 Phone Number: 202/783-7400

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Million Mom March Held in Washington, DC on Mother's Day, 2000

Mothers Across the Country Call for Gun Licensing and Registration

[Washington, DC] (March 1, 2000) - Outraged by gun violence that has killed or wounded children, thousands of mothers are organizing the Million Mom March aimed at pressuring Congress to enact tougher controls on guns.

On May 14, 2000 -Mother's Day - mothers and "honorary moms" from across the United States will march in Washington, DC and in their own communities to encourage Congress to pass sensible gun legislation.

The nine month campaign began in August, 1999. Following the Granada Hills, CA day-camp shooting, New Jersey resident and mother Donna Dees-Thomases applied for a permit to march in Washington DC. With Mother's Day as the backdrop for the March, mothers, families, and 'honorary moms' will join Donna on the National Mall to demand licensing and registration for handguns.

"We want Congress to create a meaningful gun policy in this country that treats guns like cars. We are asking Congress to enact sensible laws, or face a "time-out" in November," Thomases said. Million Mom March supporters intend to make gun policy an issue in the 2000 congressional races.

Mother's Day originated during the Civil War to remind women to take care of each other's wounded sons.

For more information, visit www.millionmommarch.com or call 1-888/989-MOMS.

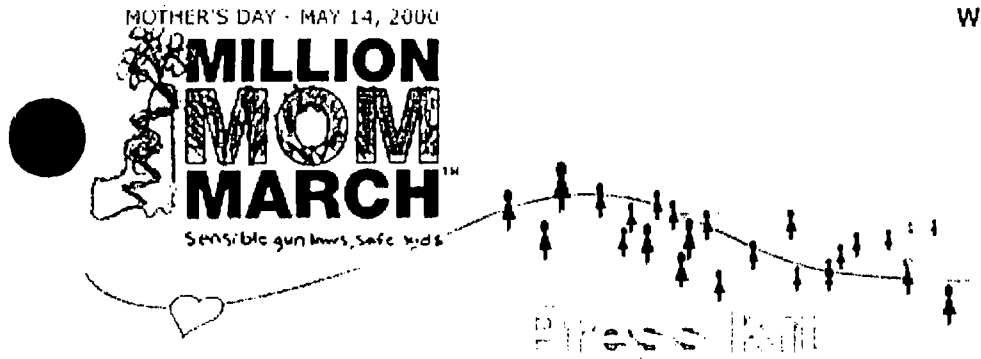
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Million Mom March Key Messages

Who We Are

We are Moms from all walks of life who are sick and tired of the gun violence directed at kids and often by kids. We are mothers and others who have lost kids, husbands, siblings and friends because of the easy access to guns in this country. And, we are Moms who have never lost anyone to a gun ... and we want to keep it that way.

Kids' Lives Are At Stake

Every day, a dozen children die from gun-shot wounds. They are crime victims; wrong-place, wrong-time victims; unlocked-and-loaded-in-the-house victims; and suicides, made easy by access to a gun.

This is personal, not political. We are in this for one reason only: to keep our kids safe.

Each day there is no action on this issue, we lose 12 more children. Enough is enough.

The Million Mom March

We are putting our elected officials on notice that we, the mothers, will not tolerate them putting the gun lobby before the safety of our children any longer. Our event in Washington, DC will send a strong message to Congress that they must take responsible action this session or else face a permanent time-out in November, 2000.

Building toward a Mother's Day event is focusing our energies and helping us to grow into a major force on gun control. We expect results, and will hold our elected officials accountable if they don't deliver.

The Goal

No matter how you feel about guns, there are certain enforceable laws that all reasonable people can support. But, sadly, getting some lawmakers to act reasonably is about as difficult as getting our kids to clean their rooms. If we've told them once, we've told them a hundred times. But still the majority of Congress doesn't pass laws to keep guns out of the wrong hands - even in the wake of

keep guns out of the wrong hands - even in the wake of Columbine.

Now we moms are mad. And we mean business. We want Congress to create a meaningful gun policy in this country that treats guns like cars. It's only common sense that gun owners be trained in gun safety and to be licensed. It's only common sense that a deadly weapon be registered so that its owner thinks twice before giving it to someone else who may want to cause harm. Licensing and registration - it's only common sense.

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Majority Whip Tom Delay (R-Texas)

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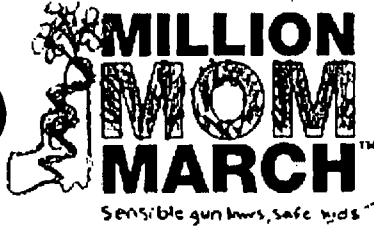
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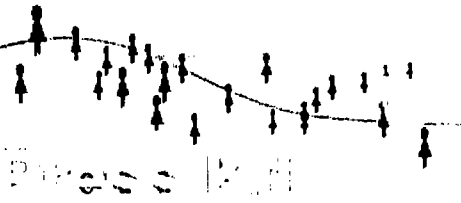


MOTHER'S DAY - MAY 14, 2000



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Contact: Melissa Connor
 Phone Number: 888/989-MOMS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 March 15, 2000

MOTHERS APPLAUD THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS FOR STANCE ON COMMON-SENSE GUN LEGISLATION

Today, local moms representing the Million Mom March attended a White House Ceremony where President Clinton stood with Congressional leaders calling for the immediate passage of gun control initiatives. The Million Mom March applauds this call for action and agrees that it will take a united stance by Americans across the country to make common-sense gun laws a reality.

Donna Dees-Thomases, founder of the Million Mom March, said, "We agree with the President; the stalling is over. And, it is time for congressional leaders to listen to the majority voice and give us common-sense gun laws."

Dees-Thomases founded the Million Mom March to help motivate a silent majority to speak out on this issue and show Congress that Americans support common-sense gun legislation.

Dees-Thomases urges anyone in support of common-sense gun legislation to join her on the National Mall this Mother's Day when she will march with thousands of mothers from across the country for the licensing and registration of guns. Dees-Thomases said, "Too many children are dying preventable deaths. It is time our voices are heard, and this Mother's Day we plan to show congressional leaders just how serious we are about protecting our children."

The Million Mom March is a grassroots organization that is linking thousands of mothers and others from across the United States to march on the National Mall in Washington, DC this Mother's Day - May 14, 2000, to



encourage Congress to enact tougher controls on guns. Outraged by the gun violence that is killing and wounding our children, thousands of mothers from across the country are working to organize the Million Mom March.

MMM organizers are available for interviews. Please contact Melissa Connor, 888/989-MOMS.

Majority Whip Tom Delay (R-Texas)



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Contact: Judy Slotnik, 202/783-7015
 Melissa Connor, 888/989-MOMS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 March 24, 2000

ROSIE O'DONNELL TO EMCEE MILLION MOM MARCH

Rosie O'Donnell, comedian and television talk show host, will show that she is "one of a million" this Mother's Day, when she emcees the Million Mom March on May 14, 2000 in Washington, DC. Rosie O'Donnell, a mother of three and common-sense gun law advocate, feels strongly about this issue and will lend her energy to the March.

Rosie O'Donnell agreed to emcee the March after Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) called and asked her to participate.

Rosie O'Donnell said, "The gun-control issue is of vital importance to me. These "Million Moms" are an inspiration, and as a mother this is a personal issue. I'm going to Washington for the future safety of all children."

Donna Dees-Thomases, founder of the Million Mom March, said, "We are thrilled that Rosie will emcee the March. Her commitment to this issue will energize the participants who are coming to Washington, DC and attending local marches around the country. We want to show Congress that we mean business."

The Million Mom March is planning a memorable and inspirational Mother's Day on the National Mall that will include compelling speakers, entertainment, an interfaith service and family activities.

The Million Mom March, a grassroots organization, is linking thousands of mothers and others from across the United States to march on the National Mall in Washington, DC and in cities across the country this Mother's Day - May 14, 2000 -- to encourage Congress to enact tougher controls on guns. Outraged by the gun

strict tougher controls on guns. Outraged by the gun violence that is killing and wounding children, thousands of mothers from across the country are working to organize the Million Mom March.

Million Mom March organizers are available for interviews. Please contact Judy Slotnik (202/783-7015) or Melissa Connor (888/989-MOMS.)

For more information, please visit www.millionmommarch.com and www.rosieo.warnerbros.com.

TIME OUT
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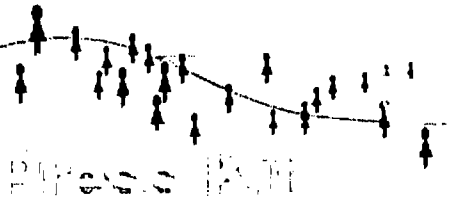
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Contact: Judy Slotnik, 202/783-7015
 Melissa Connor, 888/989-MOMS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 April 6, 2000

MILLION MOM MARCH GAINS

MOMENTUM *Moms Urge More Around the Country to Join Mother's Day Event to Demand Common Sense Gun Laws*

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The mothers are coming. Standing at the site of their upcoming Mother's Day event, mothers from California, Connecticut, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Virginia, and Washington, DC, reminded Congress that thousands of mothers and others from every part of the nation will gather on the National Mall this Mother's Day to demand the passage of common-sense gun laws.

The Million Mom March was conceived by New Jersey mother Donna Dees-Thomases after she saw the reports of the North Valley Jewish Community Center shooting in late August. The goal of the March is to pass federal licensing and registration laws. In seven short months, it has become a household word.

Dees-Thomases explained that the original permit she submitted to the Park Service in Washington, DC was for 10,000 people. That number grows by the hundreds daily, and is expected to be at least ten times that come Mother's Day.

Dees-Thomases said, "This has grown tremendously, but we need every person who cares about this issue to join us on Mother's Day. We are putting Congress on notice that we have had it with their inaction on this issue, and we are coming by the thousands to move them forward toward gun licensing and registration."

It is a message that is catching on across the country. Leading into Mother's Day...

- There are 44 state coordinators around the country
- Nearly 20 secondary rallies are scheduled in other cities

around the country on Mother's Day

- There is international support from the United Kingdom, Canada, Argentina, New Zealand, Australia, Scotland, Belgium and Japan
- There are hundreds of buses booked, and coming from as far as Texas and California, as well as from Minnesota, Michigan, and Maine
- Pennsylvania leads the pack with 100 buses headed for Washington, DC on Mother's Day
- Last week, the national office added another 75 phone lines to its original 9 in response to the large volume of calls to the 888/989-MOMS number
- Some days, more than 75,000 hits are registered on the www.millionmomsmarch.com website

Dees-Thomases said the March will take place in the middle of the Mall between 4th and 7th, and is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. with an interfaith service. The program will feature celebrity MC Rosie O'Donnell in addition to other celebrities, performers, Moms, victims and youth spokespersons. Activities for kids and families are being planned all over the Mall grounds and will include several area performance groups who have offered to support the March by performing at the event.

Dees-Thomases congratulated her fellow mothers for what they have accomplished to date and said that their hard work and effort has put this March on the map.

"This started in my family room and has grown to a mantra across the nation," said Dees-Thomases. "There is nothing more powerful than a mother's drive to protect her children. Mothers across the country are harnessing that energy, and it is their passion that will have the impact here."

Nancy Parris-Moskowitz, President of the Board for North Valley Jewish Community Center in Granada Hills, CA also participated in the announcement and shared details on the JCC's Million Mom March activities to date. "Our efforts have raised \$10,000 for our organizing group one t-shirt, one pin at a time. We will use those dollars to get people here on Mother's Day."

Arthur Busch, the prosecuting attorney in the Kayla Rolland case and an advocate for the licensing and registration of handguns was in town to meet Donna Dees-Thomases for the first time. Busch first reached out to the Million Mom March about a month ago when he called to get more information on the organization. Since then, he has been an ardent supporter of the Million Mom March, and has been distributing MMM materials in Flint, Michigan.

"My community has experienced the pain and hurt that gun violence brings all too often to communities across America," said Busch. "I commend these mothers for their efforts to bring awareness to the epidemic of gun violence in our country and for taking this action step to bring positive change."

Busch said that he plans to join the March with his wife, two daughters and son.

Also at the press conference, Tina Jackson, Washington, DC Area Coordinator said, "This Mother's Day, I will march for my son who was shot in 1998, and I will march to prevent these tragedies from affecting other families. Anyone and everyone who doesn't want to see one more child get hurt must be with us on the Mall."

TIME OUT
CHAIR



Majority Whip Tom
Delay (R-Texas)



To get information, or to sign up for the March, log on to the website at www.millionmommarch.com or call 888/989-MOMS.

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The New York Post May 10, 2000, Wednesday

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The New York Post

May 10, 2000, Wednesday

SECTION: All Editions; Pg. 026

LENGTH: 533 words

HEADLINE: MCCARTHY WON'T BACK DOWN FROM CAPITOL HILL GUNFIGHT

BYLINE: Vincent Morris Post Correspondent

BODY:

WASHINGTON - When women from across America rally here Sunday in favor of new gun-control laws, only one member of Congress will be standing before them - Rep. Carolyn McCarthy of Long Island.

Organizers of the first-ever **Million Mom March** say McCarthy - whose husband was killed and son was wounded in the 1993 Long Island Rail Road massacre - is uniquely qualified to speak out against pro-gun forces.

If she were in Hollywood, the story of her one-woman war against gun violence would have ended with Congress adopting tougher gun-control laws and McCarthy declaring victory.

But this isn't Hollywood.

McCarthy today is no closer to beating the mighty gun industry than she was in 1996, when the suburban homemaker and registered Republican became a Democratic congresswoman.

"She hasn't gotten anything through and I know it frustrates her," said Rep. Eliot Engel (D-Bronx), a good buddy who often chats with McCarthy over dinner at Tortilla Coast, a Mexican restaurant on Capitol Hill.

Even McCarthy's allies acknowledge gun control is dead.

"It's not surprising that she would be frustrated. There has been no movement on gun control," said Nancy Hwa, a spokeswoman for the public-interest group Handgun Control Inc.

McCarthy, 56, has struggled to avoid being written off as a "one-issue member" at the same time she copes with her unique role as an icon of the gun-control movement.

She knows that no matter where she goes, people she meets see her as a victim first and a member of Congress second.

"It's just something I have to bear," McCarthy said in an interview at her Longworth House Building office. "It's the reason I got here."

*From Domestic Affairs
CINOT
RASCONE
Gloria
RIBE
EXIM BARR*

Republicans list her as one of their top targets this fall.

Her GOP opponent, Greg Becker, is getting a boost from the national Republican Party and former presidential contender John McCain, who made a trip to help Becker and may do so again.

Becker, a former GOP state assemblyman, says, "People I talk to say she's a one-issue candidate and she hasn't even done much on that one issue."

McCarthy notes that she serves on the House's Education and Small Business committees. But she concedes she turns down involvement in some issues - like easing rules on small businesses and pressing for a patients bill of rights - to better focus on the ones to which she's already devoted.

"I have to restrain myself," she says.

Nevertheless Congressional Quarterly, a weekly magazine focusing on Congress, last year named McCarthy one of the 50 most effective legislators on the Hill.

But the payoff on many fights is mixed.

For example, during a committee battle last month on an education bill, McCarthy inflamed some of her colleagues by attaching two gun-control amendments to the bill. It's unclear whether they'll survive.

Friends say McCarthy is realistic about the future.

"I can't imagine that she thought if she arrived in Washington on a Tuesday that we'd have a gun-control bill by Wednesday," said Ellen Malcolm, the president of Emily's List, which works to get more women elected to Congress.

GRAPHIC: -CAROLYN McCARTHY Stonewalled in Congress.

-FLASHBACK: How The Post reported 1993 LIRR massacre.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service
San Jose Mercury News**May 10, 2000, Wednesday****SECTION: DOMESTIC NEWS****KR-ACC-NO:** K6898**LENGTH:** 1406 words**HEADLINE:** With '**Million Mom March**' organizer by her side, Feinstein introduces tough gun-control proposals**BYLINE:** By Jim Puzzanghera**BODY:**

WASHINGTON _ California's Sen. Dianne Feinstein on Tuesday fulfilled a promise made after a Los Angeles shooting spree last summer by introducing one of the toughest gun-control proposals ever, seeking to license owners of handguns or semiautomatic weapons and to register sales of all such firearms.

"We register cars and we license drivers. We register pesticides, and license exterminators but when it comes to guns and gun owners, no license, no registration, despite the loss of more than 32,000 lives a year from gun violence," said Feinstein.

The San Francisco Democrat is one of the staunchest gun-control advocates in Congress, having witnessed gun violence firsthand in 1978 when she discovered city Supervisor Harvey Milk's body after the shooting rampage of Supervisor Dan White, who also killed Mayor George Moscone.

Acknowledging that she and other supporters of the bill, including Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., don't expect it to pass this year, Feinstein said she hopes that the momentum from the "**Million Mom March**" here Sunday will help the legislation ultimately overcome strong opposition in Congress and from the National Rifle Association. About 150,000 mothers are expected to **march** in support of gun control in Washington, and thousands more in 67 cities, including Oakland and Watsonville, Calif.

Feinstein's bill and the **Million Mom March** had their genesis in the same incident _ the shooting of three children and two others at the North Valley Jewish Community Center in California's Granada Hills in August. The gunman also later fatally shot a Filipino American letter carrier in Los Angeles. Buford O'Neal Furrow Jr., a white supremacist, is awaiting trial for the shooting spree.

Speaking in Sacramento just hours after the community center shooting, Feinstein vowed to draft legislation to require that all newly purchased handguns and semiautomatics be licensed and registered. At the same time, Donna Dees-Thomases, a mother of two from New Jersey, was feeling ashamed that she had not done more to stop guns from falling into the hands of criminals, and a week later she applied for a permit for what has become this weekend's **march**.

With Dees-Thomases at her side, Feinstein introduced her legislation that would require a record of the sale or transfer of every handgun and semiautomatic weapon. In addition, all gun owners would need a special license that would require them to, among other things, submit to a background check, be photographed and thumbprinted and pass a written firearm safety test.

Gun registration and licensing is at the top of the agenda of organizers of the **Million Mom March** as well as other gun-control advocates.

Dees-Thomases said the mothers of America will show their strength this weekend, and show their support for Feinstein's legislation.

"We're going to go out as moms and we're going to push for licensing and registration because we realize it's just common sense to protect our families," she said.

The NRA has quite a different agenda. The NRA says gun owners believe that registration is the first step toward government confiscation of guns _ something that has happened in Australia and England. And such proposals don't work, said NRA spokesman Bill Powers.

"They're presenting, I suppose, that criminals buy their guns. Studies show they steal firearms or get them on the street. There's a total handgun ban in the District of Columbia, one of the most violent cities in America. Sen. Feinstein can walk off Capitol Hill, hold up 50 bucks and buy whatever gun she wants," he said.

Powers argued that registration and licensing will affect law-abiding gun owners _ not criminals.

"There's not a criminal anywhere who will stand in that (licensing) line. And they know it," the NRA official said of Feinstein and other supporters of her legislation. "It's all about politics and it's all about campaign rhetoric."

Gun control promises to be a major issue in the presidential and congressional contests in November.

Republicans and Democrats have been sparring since last year over legislation that would mandate background checks for firearms purchases at gun shows, require child safety locks for handguns, prohibit the possession of semiautomatic weapons by juveniles and ban the importation of high-capacity ammunition clips. The bill is stalled in a congressional conference committee, where it has been blocked by Republican leaders.

The two presumptive presidential nominees, Texas Gov. George W. Bush and Vice President Al Gore, stand at opposite ends of the issue. Just last week, for example, Gore vowed to veto any measure prohibiting cities from suing gunmakers, while Bush suggested that he might support such a bill. And Handgun Control Inc., has launched television ads in seven cities, including Sacramento, that try to portray Bush as a pawn of the NRA.

Supporters and opponents of gun control say they are looking forward to November, when each side believes its arguments will prevail. The issue also likely will surface in the California Senate race, where Feinstein is facing Rep. Tom Campbell, R-San Jose. Campbell said Tuesday that he supports background checks at gun shows _ an existing loophole in the Brady Bill, which mandated background checks for gun sales. But Campbell said he opposes gun registration for privacy reasons.

Feinstein's bill goes farther than a proposal by Gore. He wants buyers of new handguns to have a special photo license that they would only get after passing a background check and demonstrating a knowledge of gun safety. Feinstein's proposal affects all gun owners and buyers. Anyone owning a handgun or semiautomatic weapon would have to obtain a license within 10 years, according to Feinstein's bill.

The license would cost a one-time fee of \$25 and would be valid for five years and renewable for free.

People who fail to get a license would be subject to fines of \$500 for a first offense and \$5,000 for additional offenses. Firearms dealers who do not keep proper records would face fines and up to two years in prison. The legislation would also close the gun show loophole by requiring background checks for all gun sales.

The licensing requirement would help keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children, while the registration process would aid law enforcement officials in tracing guns used in crimes, Feinstein said. She countered arguments that the legislation would violate the U.S. Constitution's Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms by saying that women have other rights as well.

"We have the right to walk down the street and not get shot. We have the right to send our children to school and have them not get shot. . . . We're going to now begin to assert our rights," said Feinstein, whose daughter and granddaughter will join her in the Sunday **march**.

Feinstein's Firearm Licensing and Record of Sale Act is co-sponsored by some of the leading gun-control advocates in Congress _ Boxer, Frank Lautenberg, D-N.J., and Charles Schumer, D-N.Y. A companion bill will be introduced in the House of Representatives by Rep. Mary Meehan, D-Mass.

Even though more modest proposals such as requiring background checks at gun shows and trigger locks have not yet been approved by Congress, Boxer said it's important to press forward with the licensing and registration proposal.

"We cannot allow those people who are against what we are trying to do to paralyze us, to freeze us in place," she said.

Feinstein concedes battling the NRA will be difficult.

"When I came to Washington in 1992, people said, 'Oh, you've got to be aware of big lobbies like big business, big oil, big labor.' The biggest lobby back here in terms of the ability to defeat people who vote against them is the gun lobby," she said. "And it's my belief there is only one counter lobby that can stand up to them in America, and that is the women of America."

Feinstein said she decided to introduce her legislation now in hopes that the **Million Mom March** will propel it forward.

"This weekend is really the first effort to begin to mobilize women nationally to stand up and say we want common-sense, targeted gun measures to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and youngsters," Feinstein said.

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USA TODAY, May 10, 2000

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USA TODAY

May 10, 2000, Wednesday, FIRST EDITION

SECTION: EDIT; Pg. 27A**LENGTH:** 911 words**HEADLINE:** When will USA end its support of gun violence?**BYLINE:** Camille O. Cosby**BODY:**

Like many young male children in the 1950s and 1960s, my brothers played with toy cowboys. I can still hear them simulating the sounds of gun battle: Bang! Bang! The bad cowboys were always killed in this imaginary battle.

Like many young boys in the 1970s and '80s, our only male child wanted to play with war toys. His father and I were disinclined to purchase such images of hostility and hatred but, like other parents, we bought a few of those toys.

As mothers prepare to **march** against gun violence this Sunday, I reflect on those 30 years. I clearly remember the scarcity of unwarlike toys for boys. With the exception of bicycles, trains and wagons, there were not a lot of choices for male children. Is this true today? I think so.

Dr. Alvin F. Poussaint, professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, says that America socializes male children to be violent, so that boys are thinking about killing in case they are called to war.

Gavin De Becker, author of *Protecting the Gift: Keeping Children and Teenagers Safe*, says that every society in history has young men do its killing.

Both statements make piercing sounds of truth. Think about it.

Americans are preoccupied with violence, and there are many businesses whose business it is to feed that national obsession. Just mull over the numerous gun manufacturers, gun shows, war toys and video games. Add the entertainment industry's omnipotent, omnipresent violent cartoons, westerns, mysteries, dramas and movies, the Internet sites and news programs.

Even the tabloids recently have shifted from celebrity-based stories to features about violence. The JonBenet Ramsey case is a good example. The tabloids must have made big bucks from their insensitive, sensationalistic versions of the child's murder.

Obviously, we, the public, support the tabloids, because they have highlighted that story since December 1996. Further, check out your local news; what topic do you see and hear first? Crime.

Despite Americans' preoccupation with violence, I think most people are unwilling to learn or

acknowledge the truth about our nation's history of violence. It is vitally important to know the accuracy of this country's history, no matter how inglorious it is.

Violence in America is not new. Indeed, America's roots are soaked in it. Just examine the genocidal wars and subsequent displacement of the first Americans (Native Americans) who survived the government's atrocities; the millions of Africans who were enslaved to enrich the coffers of America's government and businessmen; the thousands of Chinese immigrants who were brutally mistreated and paid paltry wages while they built many of our nation's railroads, particularly in California; and the oppressive conditions under which poor white men worked in health-threatening coal mines.

Research America's history of lynchings of black men and women. Look closely at the reasons behind deadly race riots, started by men who were threatened by the economic and educational progress of people of color.

Other riots were ignited by people who were angry about America's legal discrimination. Additionally, there was abusive child labor in factories, and men, women and children of many cultures were forced to endure employers' violence while they worked on post-Civil War farms.

Now, I'll fast-forward to the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. Recently, you have read or heard news reports about hate crimes. Hate crimes are manifestations of sexual violence (including homophobia) and racial and religious violence.

What's more, there is another potential catalyst for violence among us -- corporate colonialism. Monopolies over people's lives, minds and livelihoods equal oppression that can hatch social unrest. Are worldwide corporate employees considered nothing more than lowly human rentals who make goods? Are we also victims of corporate media that communicate controlled, edited information for all of us to buy and believe?

Becker says that gun makers knowingly and enthusiastically build products that kill hundreds of Americans each week.

Our son, Ennis William Cosby, was fatally shot by an 18-year-old gunman on the morning of Jan. 16, 1997. I cannot completely express the trauma that my family and I suffered and are living through. As far as I know, very little attention is paid to the immediate or generational after-effects of crime.

Our four daughters have these thoughts:

- * "Murder changes your life -- forever."
- * "Violence is an unnecessary, senseless and lethal reaction to differences."
- * "Any victim of violence should know not a drop of it is desirable, exciting, sexy or fun."
- * "To the people who hate, stop killing the people who love."

So, when are we, the people of the USA, going to end our support of violence? There is one clear sign of activism.

Hundreds of thousands of women participating Sunday in the **Million Mom March** will converge on some intractable members of Congress who should quickly institute common-sense laws about access to guns and gun safety.

During the 1950s, when South African women protested against the apartheid government, they chanted, "You have tampered with the women; you have struck a rock."

Go women.

*Camille O. Cosby is co-executive producer of the television film Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters' First 100 Years, which in **March** received a Peabody Award.*

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The Washington Post◆ [View Related Topics](#)**May 10, 2000, Wednesday, Final Edition****SECTION:** A SECTION; Pg. A01**LENGTH:** 1298 words**HEADLINE:** Marching Moms Hope To Recast Gun Debate; Wide Support Could Bolster Controls**BYLINE:** Susan Levine , Washington Post Staff Writer**BODY:**

Supporters of the **Million Mom March**, which is expected to draw tens of thousands to the Mall on Sunday, say their rally will mark a new phase in the nation's gun-control debate and shift the issue squarely to the center of American society.

The participants, who will arrive from virtually every state, represent a much broader base of gun-control supporters, many of whom have never been politically active before. And what historically has been a polarized standoff--pitting the National Rifle Association against those who want to ban handguns altogether--has moved into the mainstream.

"What this **march** is going to be about is mainstream America really locking onto this issue as it hasn't done before," said Andrea Camp, senior fellow at the Institute for Civil Society, a Massachusetts-based foundation.

The NRA is responding this week by emphasizing gun safety and children, urging marchers to match the new \$ 1 million contribution it will make to its "Eddie Eagle" program for youngsters.

"This is one week to put politics aside and put kids first," the group's leaders declared in ads that began running Sunday. "Because whatever our disagreements over gun politics, we all want gun safety. We all want safe kids."

March founder Donna Dees-Thomases ignored the overture, instead calling on the NRA, "if truly serious about protecting our children," to endorse the event's main goal of handgun licensing and registration. In turn, that drew an angry dismissal by association spokesman Bill Powers. He accused organizers of jumping "on the Al Gore bandwagon" and engaging in the "same old political theater that occurs week in, week out here."

Teaching little kids to avoid accidents, who could disagree with that?" he asked.

Organizers are expecting at least 150,000 people at the event, which will stretch along the Mall

between Fourth and 12th streets NW. They are betting that in Washington, a city where political imagery reigns, a mass rally of mothers devoting their Mother's Day to lobby for federal gun legislation will be a transformative moment in the debate, particularly in a presidential election year.

Across the country, similar rallies are scheduled in more than 60 cities, all urging that Congress require licensing and registration, as well as safety locks, gun purchase limits of one a month and stricter enforcement of existing laws.

"This could not have happened two years ago," said Michael Beard, president and founder of the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence. "No one would have conceived of it."

What is unclear is whether their collective demands will begin to dent the extraordinary political potency of the NRA, which has gained 700,000 members in the last 15 months and projects a record 4 million members by November.

"The test will be are these voting moms, and are they willing to vote as they've never done before?" Beard asked.

Even in the wake of the massacre last year at Colorado's Columbine High School, lawmakers could not push a relatively modest package of gun-control initiatives through Congress. A year later, the issue remains just as polarized.

Yesterday, Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) introduced a licensing and registration bill. It will not win the vote of gun-rights legislators such as Rep. Tom DeLay (R-Tex.), who have long argued that requiring a gun owner to become licensed directly violates the Second Amendment.

"Mr. DeLay and supporters of gun control have a fundamental disagreement over deeply held principles," DeLay spokesman Johnathan Baron said yesterday.

Gun-rights principles will be the rallying cry for a second Mall **march** Sunday, at 17th Street and Constitution Avenue NW. The women who will be there call themselves the Second Amendment Sisters, and they contend that gun restrictions help only criminals and leave law-abiding people defenseless.

The **Million Mom March** was conceived last August in a suburban New Jersey mother's living room. As horrific as was the bloodshed at Columbine, where a teacher and 12 students were slain before the two student gunmen killed themselves, it took a shooting at a Granada Hills, Calif., child-care center to move Dees-Thomases to action. She watched on television as police led a daisy chain of little campers to safety and realized those could have been her own two young daughters.

Dees-Thomases called a few friends, and they called a few friends, and within a week they had an idea and the first stirrings of a plan. Within a month, they had a mission statement and a Web site and a National Park Service permit to **march**.

Their most hopeful guess of how many might show up at such an event: 10,000.

Even the founding mother admits she never envisioned how her idea would take hold. The **march** has bridged many differences and suspicions already, uniting women across demographic lines--inner-city mothers and suburban mothers, white mothers and mothers of color, affluent and poor, Democratic and Republican.

"It's so diverse, so inclusive," said Wendi Kaplan, an Alexandria social worker who is her state's **march** coordinator. Until now, she believes, many women have not known what to do to make their voices heard.

"The Vietnam War stopped when a mom said we're not going to send our sons anymore, and I think we're . . . at that point," she said.

Many women--not all of them mothers--are coming in multi-generational caravans. Tonia Day, of Hampstead, Md., is flying her mother from Southern California, and together they will go to the Mall with Day's 8-year-old daughter. They will remember the teenage boy--Day's younger brother--who died more than a decade ago when a friend playing with a gun he thought was unloaded pulled the trigger.

"Even thinking about it gives me chills," Day said.

Joining these "mothers and others"--as **march** organizers say in a nod to the many men expected to attend--will be Veronica McQueen, whose 6-year-old daughter, Kayla Rolland, was killed by another first-grader in a Michigan elementary school in February. Fran Block, the mother of Aaron David Goodrich, one of the victims of the 1997 triple homicide at a Starbucks in the District, will be there, too. So will Laura Wallace, the mother of Andre Wallace, one of the two Wilson High School students gunned down in the District this year.

For more than six hours Sunday, the rally will offer speeches, songs and testimonials. Participants will hear how every day in America, 12 children die from gun violence.

It is a number that provokes bitter disagreement from the other side, which says many of those deaths are young adults caught up in gang- and drug-related shootings. They offer up their own number: that an American gun owner uses a firearm in defense against a criminal every 13 seconds.

"The whole debate would be different if some of the cases where people used guns to stop attacks got as much press," said John Lott, a legal scholar at Yale University and an authority on laws on concealed handguns.

The emotional complexity of the issue is reflected in a poll released last month by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press.

The survey, released in conjunction with the first anniversary of the Columbine slayings, found that nearly two-thirds of Americans say gun restrictions are more important than the rights of gun owners.

But just 6 percent said they think such laws would prevent future Columbines, and 59 percent would support stricter enforcement of existing laws, compared with the 37 percent who want new legislation.

"There are good arguments on both sides of the issue," said Beard, who has fought for tougher gun laws for more than three decades. "For me, that's the hardest part of the whole thing."

A **MILLION MOMS** (This graphic was not available)

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Los Angeles Times♦ [View Related Topics](#)**May 10, 2000, Wednesday, Home Edition****SECTION:** Southern California Living; Part E; Page 1; View Desk**LENGTH:** 3125 words**HEADLINE:** WOMEN TAKE A STAND ON GUNS;
GUNS HAVE BECOME A FACT OF LIFE FOR THESE THREE MOTHERS--BUT FOR DIFFERENT REASONS THAT SHAPE THEIR STRONG POSITIONS, PRO AND CON, ON THE HOT-BUTTON ISSUE OF REGULATION.**BYLINE:** LYNN SMITH**BODY:**

Million Mom March organizers expect 100,000 to 300,000 mothers and "honorary mothers" to join Sunday in a landmark demonstration in Washington, D.C., calling for more effective gun regulation. Support **marches** will be held in Los Angeles and other major cities.

Supporters hope this newly organized coalition of a broad spectrum of women will push gun control into the forefront of campaign issues in November. Surveys consistently show more women than men, by a margin of 20%, support gun regulation, said Tom W. Smith, a social scientist at the Chicago-based National Opinion Research Center.

Since the massacre at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., surveys have shown a 10% increase among Republican women who favor gun control, said Andrew McGuire, executive director of the San Francisco-based Bell Campaign, a victim-led gun control organization.

"The power of the gun lobby is evaporating slowly as more and more women get involved," McGuire said. "The argument gets boiled down to its essence. It's more an argument about what's right."

Not all women, however, view guns as instruments of carnage--guns and gun regulation are by no means a universal "mommy issue." Some feminists contend guns can level the playing field in instances of domestic violence, for instance, and the National Organization for Women has not taken a stand on gun control.

An estimated 11% of all American women own a firearm of some sort, compared with 38% of men, according to a 1998 survey, Smith said. Until recently, estimates on female gun ownership varied widely and were not considered reliable. Most female gun owners are rural residents who use them more for hunting than protection, Smith said. Many hold beliefs as strong as their anti-gun sisters. A new group, Second Amendment Sisters, will hold counterdemonstrations on Sunday.

Shirley Andrews, Charlotte Austin-Jordan and Dr. Carolyn Sachs, three Southern California mothers, represent the diversity of women's opinions on guns. Each has taken a stand she believes will help reduce violence. For two of the women, this means restricting guns; for the third, guns are an important element of personal safety.

*

Shirley Andrews of Chino Hills used to shock the other mothers in the PTA when they learned what she did for a living. Soft-spoken, friendly and feminine, Andrews owns and runs Turner's Outdoorsman, a hunting and fishing equipment chain that is also the largest independent gun dealer in California.

What's more, she keeps about 20 guns at home, including semiautomatic weapons, rifles, shotguns and pistols.

She is a card-carrying NRA member and its third top seller of memberships.

And she taught her daughter and two sons to shoot. Her children, a teacher, an orthodontist and a land sales agent, own guns too.

"People have a total misconception of gun owners," she said. "If you looked at our customers, you'd find all kinds of people, doctors, attorneys, engineers. Mostly the backbone of this country."

Almost one in two American adults owns one or more guns for a total of about 200 million guns.

Andrews, 55, grew up in an isolated area in the Missouri Ozarks, where, she recalled, every home had a gun.

"That was the way we ate," she said. "Rabbits, squirrels, deer, turkeys, frogs. We ate frog legs a lot."

Andrews sees guns as serving the same purpose of self-reliance in urban and suburban neighborhoods as they did in the country. You can't count on police, she said. They can never respond fast enough to stop an attack.

She has had a loaded gun pointed at her head twice. Once, a young man stole the car she was driving with her husband on vacation in Needles. He fled with the car when her husband brandished his pistol. Later, three armed, masked gunmen held up her Chino warehouse. They eventually fled, she said, presumably mistaking the shucking noise of a clock for a long gun.

Andrews was 19 and single when she moved to California with her 3-year-old boy and her boyfriend in 1965. Two years later, after they had parted, she married Bill Andrews, a Bellflower used-car salesman with whom she started the sporting goods chain. When they divorced in 1981, their five stores were sold to Jesse Turner. But Andrews said he never shared their profit-making ability, and she took back the business in 1983.

Now, she does eight figures in annual gross sales from 13 locations, but business is unpredictable. Sales flourished from 1989 to 1994, when people bought guns to protect themselves after earthquakes and riots and to stock up before anticipated restrictions from gun laws. Now, she said, the tide has turned.

California, already known for its relatively tough gun laws, passed new restrictions last year. Now there is a 10-day waiting period to purchase guns, bans on assault weapons and Saturday Night Specials, and a one-a-month limit on handguns. Dealers are required to screen for criminals with background checks.

Andrews believes the laws hurt some customers, such as women with restraining orders who want to buy a cheap gun immediately to protect themselves from violent ex-husbands or boyfriends.

Salesmen said they have been forced to reduce their stock of semiautomatic weapons, which affects hunters and even Olympic hopefuls in certain shooting events.

About 10% of Turners' customers are women, who, more than men, are interested in training and practice, she said. Andrews' stores offer safety classes, and they promote state-of-the-art lock boxes.

"You don't want anybody to be hurt."

If people are killed or injured by guns sold in her store, Andrews said, she does not feel responsible. If the guns are used in accidental shootings of or by children, she said, it is a matter of irresponsible parents.

The crime guns that officials have traced to her store, she said, have almost always been stolen from the original owners.

"We don't sell to criminals," she said. Also, her staff is trained to spot "straw purchasers," people who buy guns for someone else.

When guns become instruments of death, she believes it is a social, not a firearms, problem.

"A gun is a tool, and it has a good purpose," she said.

If she hadn't made previous plans to spend Mother's Day with her family, Andrews said she would be marching with the Second Amendment Sisters.

Charlotte Austin-Jordan Acted After Losses

Charlotte Austin-Jordan avoids three intersections in South Los Angeles: Vernon and Arlington avenues, where her 13-year-old daughter, Ja'mee, was shot and killed; 54th Street and 5th Avenue, where her 25-year-old son, Corey, was shot and killed; and 52nd Street and 7th Avenue, where her 21-year-old nephew, Terrance, was shot and killed.

Even in a neighborhood so numbed by gunfire that children no longer flinch at the sound, Austin-Jordan's loss is staggering. Altogether, seven family members, including her brother, have died from gun violence since the late 1970s.

Austin-Jordan, 46, who responded by founding an anti-crime program, said the neighborhood wasn't always so dangerous.

The daughter of a nightclub owner and a homemaker, she grew up in the Crenshaw area at the foot of Baldwin Hills in a safe, working-class neighborhood frequented by entertainers such as Marvin Gaye and Tina Turner. As she came of age, her own dreams dissolved as the community succumbed to a downward spiral of crack cocaine addiction, gangs and guns. After high school, she married, had a child, divorced and had two more children. She wound up working two jobs to support them and the two nephews for whom she had assumed legal responsibility.

Handguns became popular in the '70s, she recalled, and by the mid-'80s, it seemed the majority of young men in her neighborhood carried a gun.

"You could be standing with a group of five, and three would have a gun, either in their waistband or the car," she said. Despite stiffer gun laws enacted in California in the 1990s, she said anyone can get a gun within minutes or days.

Austin-Jordan became a public figure in 1988, the year her daughter and a girlfriend became victims of mistaken identity. The day after Mother's Day, four gang members, seeking revenge for a drug

deal gone awry, had gone gunning for the dealer's sister, who drove a red Hyundai. When they saw Ja'mee and her girlfriend stopped at an intersection in the friend's red Pontiac, they opened fire with a machine gun and a shotgun, bought over the counter. Her daughter's body had 11 bullet wounds.

The killers were sentenced to life without possibility of parole.

Her emotions in turmoil, Austin-Jordan began a program to teach California Youth Authority inmates about the consequences of their actions to families like hers. Austin-Jordan told "60 Minutes" at the time that she couldn't bear losing another child.

Four years later, her nephew Terrance was killed outside a friend's house, waiting to go to dinner. It was cold, and he had put on a girl's red jacket. Gang members passing by took the color to be that of a rival gang and shot him.

Then, in 1996, her son Corey was killed. He had gone with a friend to a convenience store where, she said, a 41-year-old gang member just released from prison asked him which gang he associated with. When he said none, the man apparently became enraged and shot him with a .22-caliber pistol using a modified bullet called a "tumbler." Austin-Jordan said the bullet entered his body under his breastplate, struck his heart, traveled to his groin and back up to the base of his neck where it rested in his shoulder.

This time, Austin-Jordan decided to focus on ex-offenders, released from prison and returning to the community without jobs or skills. With her new husband, Kenneth Jordan, the son of First African Methodist Episcopal Church pastor Cecil Murray, she revived Save Our Future, the flagging nonprofit organization she had founded in 1992.

"It was like, 'OK God, I guess I'm supposed to do this. Lord, please just make it happen.' "

In four buildings on West Vernon Avenue, they operate a variety of programs--a job training and placement program for parolees 18 to 30 years old; a day-care center; and after-school, mentoring and food programs for children. They are seeking corporate support in finding the men jobs, up-to-date computers, a van, preschool materials and more volunteers.

Fiery and determined, Austin-Jordan said she has had trouble seeing herself as a victim.

In a twist that illustrates the complexities of gun issues, she said she once fired a gun in self-defense.

After her daughter died, she said, she fell into an abusive relationship. When her boyfriend began to slap and stalk her, she said, she began to fear for her safety and that of her children. Because of her high profile as a crime fighter, she was embarrassed and often went to media interviews with heavy makeup over her bruises.

The last time her boyfriend threatened her, she asked her grandmother for a .22-caliber pistol that had belonged to a deceased uncle. She kept it in a drawer beside her bed. With her boyfriend in pursuit, she raced for the pistol, whirled around and pointed it at his head. At the last minute, she said, she turned the gun aside and fired into a wall beside him. She turned herself in to police, who took the gun but declined to file charges against her.

She never retrieved the gun and has banned guns from her home ever since.

Austin-Jordan believes the root cause of gun violence is neither guns alone nor people alone, but a deadly combination of the two.

"Guns give you false courage," she said. "It's an easy solution when you could have thought it out better."

She supports the manufacture of so-called "smart guns," which can be fired only by their owners, and

she supports bans on assault weapons and cheap Saturday Night Specials.

Austin-Jordan plans to join the **Million Mom March** either in Washington, D.C., or in Los Angeles.

After her son Corey was killed, Austin-Jordan said, her son Derris began failing school and fell into a depression. He asked if he would die that way too. She promised him, "I'll do what I can to make the streets safe for you."

A month later, she moved to Woodland Hills, although she returns nearly every day to run her program.

So far, she said, her efforts are paying off: Derris, now 15, has made the honor roll for two years at Chatsworth High School. Helping others makes her feel alive again. And about 80 ex-offenders have found work through her program.

"To me, that's 80 men not selling drugs, doing rapes or committing homicides," she said.

Carolyn Sachs Sees How Guns Harm

Dr. Carolyn Sachs thought the 16-year-old boy in her emergency room was a suicide. As her job required, she tried to resuscitate him, though he was clearly dead. His arm had already stiffened in its last gesture, bent upward, the empty hand pointing to his temple.

Another tragic gun-related waste, she thought. A few days later, however, she felt an unexpected chill when she learned the boy had shot himself accidentally. He had been fooling around in front of friends with his stepmother's handgun. After a few trial clicks of the trigger, he had mistakenly assumed the entire chamber was empty.

The shock of that 1996 incident made her more determined than ever to do what she could to end gun violence.

Now an assistant professor at the UCLA School of Medicine, Sachs, 33, is one of a new breed of physicians who regard gun violence as a public health as well as criminal justice issue.

"Some things like cancer we can't prevent. It seemed to me, here's something we can prevent and we're not," she said.

In 1999, nearly 30,000 people in the United States died from gun injuries, more than half a result of suicide, according to the Bell Campaign.

In 1998, there were 962 firearm homicides in Los Angeles County, a rate more than 12 times that of the next highest six industrialized nations, according to information provided by Women Against Gun Violence.

While pro-gun activists argue guns provide protection, a growing body of literature connects firearms with increased risks of suicide and homicide, according to the New England Journal of Medicine. This year, a Rand study found that firearms are kept unlocked and without trigger locks in almost half of all U.S. homes with children and guns. Nine percent of those surveyed said they keep their guns unlocked and loaded.

In addition to working her shifts in the emergency department at UCLA Medical Center, Sachs also researches domestic violence, advises forensic nurse specialists and has co-chaired the health committee for the Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles. In the past three years, she has lectured 300 physicians on how to counsel patients about firearm safety.

Several organizations including the American Academy of Pediatrics and Physicians for Social Responsibility have programs to guide physicians in counseling patients about gun violence.

"Most of the research now focuses on educating physicians to inquire about firearms in the home. If so, to encourage them to have them locked and unloaded. If they don't have one to begin with, to encourage them not to get one."

When she began her residency in 1991, Sachs recalled seeing two or three gunshot victims a week--many involving gang members in the Venice area. Now, she said she hasn't seen one in a month or two.

On a recent Friday night, the most serious wound Sachs attended was a man who had apparently fallen off a bicycle and knocked himself out.

Her colleagues recalled images of previous gun violence that have shaken them: a failed suicide who shot off the front of her face; bystander victims of gang members spraying automatic gunfire; jealous lovers; a man shot 40 times by police; more children playing with guns than they ever imagined.

"People in nice middle-class neighborhoods have no concept of the carnage," said Dr. William Mower, along with Sachs an attending physician in the emergency room. The average gunshot wound costs tens of thousands of dollars to treat, he said. Many victims are paralyzed and need ongoing treatment. The most frustrating, emergency room workers said, are young victims who have been shot before and whom they expect to see again.

"Even if they're a criminal, they are human beings with real fears. They wanted a real life, and they don't have much to return to."

In another context, Sachs knows her patients might be people she would fear. But lying wounded and perhaps facing death in the emergency room, they are the ones who are sometimes afraid. Of the 30 or 40 victims she has treated, she recalls a teenage gang member who asked her point-blank if he was going to die. "I said no," she said. But the bullet ended up piercing his aorta, and he did die. For while, she said she felt guilty.

"If you're ever going to tell a white lie, I guess that's the time to tell it," she said.

She felt sorry for him, as she does for all her patients. Sometimes she thinks it could just as easily be her on the gurney. It was luck that she grew up in a nonviolent neighborhood, she believes.

Sachs, a mother of three, also sometimes imagines it could be her own child hurt by guns. She worried when her oldest boy, now 4, began last year to pick up sticks and shout, "Bang! Bang! You're dead!" to strangers and other people.

She said she tried to explain to him why guns are bad. She doesn't know if he understood, but now he tells her that guns are bad.

On Sunday, Sachs will be marching with her mother and younger son in the **Million Mom March** on Olvera Street.

Whatever the ultimate solution to gun violence, she said, "it's naive to say it's not our problem."

*

Lynn Smith can be reached at lynn.smith@latimes.com.

(BEGIN TEXT OF INFOBOX / INFOGRAPHIC)

March Is Expected to Draw About 5,000 in the Southland

About 5,000 people are expected to participate in the Southern California Regional **Million Mom**

March that starts at 1 p.m. Sunday at 1700 N. Alameda in Los Angeles. Marchers will meet at 12:30 p.m. across from Union Station at the entrance to Olvera Street. For more information, call (800) 346-2536, or contact Victoria Ballesteros at ballesteros@cs.com.

A rally in support of the **march** will be held at 10 a.m. at the Wilshire Federal Building. Participants will gather at 9:30 a.m. at the corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Westwood in West Los Angeles. For more information, call Women Against Gun Violence at (310) 204-2348 or e-mail rqs@wagv.org.

The national **march** will begin at 10 a.m. on the National Mall between 3rd and 7th streets in Washington, D.C. More information may be obtained at <http://www.millionmommarch.com> or (888) 989-MOMS.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO: Shirley Andrews of Turner's Outdoorsman says the state's restrictive laws hurt customers such as women with restraining orders. PHOTOGRAPHER: GINA FERAZZI / Los Angeles Times PHOTO: (2 photos) Charlotte Austin-Jordan, above, with portraits of family members killed by guns. Below, Dr. Carolyn Sachs helps intubate a patient. PHOTOGRAPHER: GENARO MOLINA / Los Angeles Times PHOTO: (2 photos) Charlotte Austin-Jordan, above, with portraits of family members killed by guns. Below, Dr. Carolyn Sachs helps intubate a patient. PHOTOGRAPHER: ROBERT GAUTHIER / Los Angeles Times PHOTO: (no caption) PHOTO: (no caption)

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The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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May 9, 2000, Tuesday, PM cycle**SECTION:** State and Regional**LENGTH:** 655 words**HEADLINE:** Virginia mothers and others rally for stiffer gun control laws**BYLINE:** By KIA SHANT'E BREAU, Associated Press Writer**DATELINE:** ROANOKE, Va.**BODY:**

Bill and Elise Jenkins believe their son might still be alive today if the nation's gun laws were better enforced.

A man who illegally obtained a gun shot and killed 16-year-old William during a holdup at a suburban Richmond fast-food restaurant in August of 1997.

"The sad part about it is that this should have never happened," said Bill Jenkins, who's among thousands of Virginians gearing up for the **Million Mom March** - a group of mothers and others nationwide who on Mother's Day will rally in Washington, D.C., to press Congress for stricter gun control.

The group proposes requiring all handgun owners to be licensed and registered, built-in child safety locks, and background checks and a waiting period for gun purchases.

Wendi Kaplan of Alexandria, the Virginia state coordinator for the march, said the May 14 event is not limited to mothers but open to anyone who supports common-sense gun laws.

"This is an issue that affects everyone, and as mothers we better start taking responsibility for what our children are doing with guns," Kaplan said.

For more than a year, Congress has wrestled with gun control legislation partly prompted by a series of school shootings, including one in February in which a first-grader shot a classmate in Michigan.

"This has got to change, not only for the future of my child, but for everyone's children," said Teresa Bayrit, area coordinator for Richmond. "It's terrible to worry about sending a first-grader to school out of fear that they might be hurt by another child with a gun."

Kaplan said stiff gun regulations simply make sense.

"If you can have strict requirements for obtaining a driver's license and can put safety mechanisms in vehicles, why in the world can you not have safety mechanisms for weapons of destruction, which is a gun?" she asked.

Several dozen women from the Roanoke area also are planning to attend.

"I was devastated after the Columbine shooting and the shooting in Michigan and was looking for a way to make a difference," said Code Sizemore, the Roanoke area coordinator.

"My daughter in kindergarten started coming home from school saying 'so and so got into a fight on the playground,' and I started thinking 'oh my God, that could be her.'"

Sizemore said she has gotten a few harassing phone calls from women who think she and other march organizers are trying to ban guns altogether.

"We are not trying to do away with guns or the Second Amendment," Sizemore said. "We just want Congress to do a better job trying to keep guns out of the hands of children."

At least two other groups - The Second Amendment Sisters and self-proclaimed "pistol packin' mamas," supported by Women Against Gun Control - plan to rally in Washington to oppose the **Million Mom March**. They say existing gun rights are more than enough.

"The measures proposed by the **Million Mom March** are actually an attack on the Second Amendment," said Kimberly Watson, a spokeswoman for the Second Amendment Sisters, based in Dallas. "We want education and parental involvement without the erosion of personal freedoms."

Bill Jenkins said the group's goal is not to infringe on anyone's rights.

"This is not about hidden agendas," he said. "It's a matter of limiting access to these tools and at the same time protecting legitimate users and their rights."

Kaplan said the march is not just an event, but a movement.

"We're not disappearing after the march," she said. "We're going to make it a key issue in the presidential campaign and the Virginia Senate campaign."

Susan Young, area coordinator for Stuarts Draft, said the march is a step in the right direction toward protecting children.

"You can feel so powerless sometimes," said Young. "But if each one of us commits to this and acts on it, our voices will be heard."

On the Net: <http://www.millionmommarch.org>

<http://www.SAS-AIM.org>

<http://www.willsworld.com>

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*Sacramento Bee May 9, 2000, Tuesday*Copyright 2000 McClatchy Newspapers, Inc.
Sacramento Bee**May 9, 2000, Tuesday METRO FINAL EDITION****SECTION:** SCENE; Pg. E1; **Million Mom March** Starts at 2 p.m. Sunday at Tower Bridge and ends with a rally at the Capitol. For information: (916) 491-4421; Web site: www.millionmommarch.com.**LENGTH:** 1502 words**HEADLINE:** MOMS WITH A MESSAGE AS GUN-CONTROL ACTIVISTS CONVERGE ON WASHINGTON, D.C., FOR THE **MILLION MOM MARCH**, THEIR SACRAMENTO COUNTERPARTS TAKE STEPS OF THEIR OWN**BYLINE:** Alison apRoberts Bee Staff Writer**BODY:**

Rebecca Gonzales usually starts out Mother's Day in bed, waiting for her husband and young daughters to bring her fresh almond croissants, buttered with plenty of hugs and kisses.

This year, Gonzales, who is 36, will be up and out of the house before the rest of her family wakes up. She and many thousands of mothers are forgoing breakfasts in bed to spend the day on one of the 50 (and counting) **Million Mom marches** that will take place across the country. Their purpose: to push lawmakers to enact stricter gun-control legislation, including requirements of child-safety locks, and licensing and registration of all handguns.

"It will be a working Mother's Day," Gonzales says as she watches her daughters, Hannah, 6, and Madeline, 3, weave crepe paper through the slats of a little red wagon in the front yard of their home in Curtis Park. Their father will pull the wagon in the march while his wife works on making it all happen.

Gonzales is a member of the steering committee for the local **Million Mom March**, one of the many offspring of the national event taking place the same day in Washington, D.C.

In all-American fashion, right alongside the local marchers will be a counterdemonstration, also starting at Tower Bridge but ending on another side of the Capitol (the south side) for a rally led by gun-ownership advocates on the other side of the issue.

But all indications are that the million moms will win the day in turnout. Call it PTA power if you want; the march is turning into a well-organized stampede.

"When I signed on, we were talking maybe 10,000 people in Washington, and we weren't even talking about local marches yet. The whole thing has exploded," says Teresa Stark, who lives in Citrus Heights and is the march's Northern California organizer. She'll be marching in Washington, although she has been active in setting up the local march.

It looks like many a school or church carnival organizing committee as 20 volunteers gather on the

damp grass in front of the Crocker Art Museum last Saturday. They have come from Rancho Cordova and Gold River and West Sacramento and Elk Grove and many points in between.

But they aren't talking game booths or bingo. They are talking life and death and gearing up to wage a war against gun violence.

Among those here is the Sacramento march's keynote speaker, Rita Edmonds-Norris of Fairfield. She is armed with the kind of resolve that comes of unspeakable loss.

She holds a folder to her heart. Inside is a laminated photo of her son, Chad Norris, who was born on Mother's Day and buried on Father's Day. He looks like a Robert Redford hero, a vision of blond, blue-eyed handsomeness wearing a white cowboy hat.

Edmonds-Norris, who is 53, will speak on the very day Chad should have turned 27. He had just turned 20 in 1993 when he was shot by a stranger outside a neighborhood video store.

"I had to do this," Edmonds-Norris says. "On Mother's Day, I usually just go hide. I'm doing this in his memory. I know he'd be saying, 'Go Mom.'" She has been to Sacramento many times, testifying about her loss before legislative committees.

"You have to use your life," she says of her activism.

The volunteers don't know how many people to expect at the Sacramento march, but hundreds have been calling and e-mailing for information. Buses are coming from Reno and Contra Costa County. They have also heard of last-minute marches coming together in Napa and Healdsburg.

Besides Edmonds-Norris, speakers at the Sacramento event will include Police Chief Arturo Venegas Jr. and former mayor Anne Rudin.

Local organizers have ordered 2,000 daisies to hand out, and they aren't worried about a surplus. The flower has become a symbol for the march, inspired by the TV and newspaper images of a daisy chain of kids holding hands as they fled a Jewish community center after a gunman's attack last summer. That incident was the point of inspiration for Donna Dees-Thomases of New Jersey, who came up with the **Million Mom March** idea. Her professional experience in handling publicity for lawmakers and CBS News has helped push the march into the spotlight.

It has become a cause celebre -- Oprah Winfrey spent more than half an hour plugging it on a recent show -- with high-tech support. The march's Web site, when it hasn't crashed in an avalanche of hits following some big-name endorsement, is impressive and professional, with PR materials, lodging information and endless testimonials from women. It even has humor -- with "Mom's Apple Pie awards" for those who do good and a "time out chair" for those who don't.

At the mother of all the marches in Washington, D.C., more than 150,000 people are expected -- strollers and all. The national event promises to be a sort of kiddie-carnival-meets-somber-cause event -- with balloons and face painting alongside tears and testimonials. TV talk-show star Rosie O'Donnell will be master of ceremonies. Celebrity guests will include Emmylou Harris, Susan Sarandon, Reese Witherspoon, Roseanne Cash and Patty Smythe. Hillary Rodham Clinton will join the marchers as well.

Opponents have geared up, too, although their efforts have been comparatively low-key. There is a counterdemonstration in the works for Washington, called the Armed Informed Mothers' March set up by the Second Amendment Sisters, a self-defense advocacy organization established in 1998. (Their e-mail addresses contain the catchy e-phrase "moms4guns.")

De Laria, California state coordinator for SAS, says three counter-rallies are planned in the state -- in San Diego and Los Angeles as well as in Sacramento.

"We call it the Misinformed Mothers March," Laria says of the **Million Mom March**. "Actually, we

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Chicago Tribune♦ [View Related Topics](#)**May 9, 2000** Tuesday, CHICAGO SPORTS FINAL EDITION**SECTION:** News; Pg. 1; ZONE: N**LENGTH:** 1238 words**HEADLINE:** MOMS READY FOR GUN FIGHT IN D.C.;
GRASS-ROOTS MARCH HAS HIGH-CALIBER GOAL: A POLITICAL MOVEMENT**BYLINE:** By Michael Tackett, Tribune Political Editor.**DATELINE:** WASHINGTON**BODY:**

They have a compelling narrative and an emotional cause. They have the rapt attention of the media and possess one of the most enduring, positive images in American life: They are moms.

Yet, despite this potent mix of cause and constituency, the greater challenge for organizers of the **Million Mom March** on Mother's Day is clear: turning the energy generated by a single, high-profile day of activism on gun control into a political organization that accomplishes much more.

Like black men before them (the Million Man March) and Promise Keepers (A Million Men on the Mall), the moms' crusade offers great potential to succeed. And, like their predecessors, a great potential to fall far short.

Their goal is to persuade Congress to require licensing and background checks for gun owners, national registration of handguns, and minimum safety standards for guns, along with safety locks and childproofing technology.

Because the march, and whatever follow-up is generated, is taking place during a presidential election year, with the White House and control of Congress at stake, it is possible it will have an impact where others have failed.

President Clinton, saying he is frustrated by Congress' refusal to pass tougher gun laws, on Monday heartily endorsed the march. "I think what they're doing is a very noble and good thing," he said after meeting with organizers.

Also, given that suburban women with children are a coveted voting bloc, most candidates will be chary of turning away them or their promised barrage of e-mails.

The story behind the **Million Mom March** is anecdotally rich.

Donna Dees-Thomases, a self-described mom with "oven mitts" who knew more about "The Brady Bunch" than the Brady gun law, said she became so saddened and angered about the shootings at a California day-care center last August that she was moved to act.

"I have children the exact same ages as those little kids crossing the street in a daisy chain, and for a mother that was very, very tough to watch, particularly knowing what we didn't see," Dees-Thomases said from her basement home office in New Jersey, ground zero for the **Million Mom March**.

"That's when the light went on. I did a Web search of the gun debate and watched a 'Nightline' discussion about the different laws," said Dees-Thomases, who works part-time on the staff of the "Late Show with David Letterman."

Six days after the California shooting, she registered the Web site-- millionmommarch.com--then applied for a permit to march in Washington on Mother's Day, which is Sunday. She said the Web site gets about 70,000 hits a day.

"My reason for the march is that it's a way to mobilize people," she said.

She would like the effort to blossom into much more. But given other high-minded causes with low-yield results, there are substantial obstacles ahead.

It's one thing to pull off the march; it's quite another to transform that movement into an ongoing political force.

"I think the gun lobby is successful at intimidation and harassment," she said. "We think we really are a majority. The other side is more vocal and active. Shame on us."

Anita Dunn, a Democratic political consultant, said the **Million Mom March** organizers have built an impressive grass-roots organization, noting that she has been handed several leaflets in her Washington, D.C., neighborhood.

Because the march is pegged to specific legislation, Dunn said, it might have a better chance of becoming something more than a photo opportunity.

The fervor generated by the march must be translated into an equally aggressive lobbying effort, Dunn said.

"There is not an effective network in this country around these [gun-control] issues," she said. "In order for people to look back to say that this was the beginning of something, they need to become as much a lobbying presence as groups like MADD [Mothers Against Drunk Driving]."

In recent elections, gun-control opponents have been more successful at defeating candidates who stood against their views. Many analysts believe the gun lobby played an important role in galvanizing support for Republican candidates, leading to their takeover of Congress in 1994.

There is a gender gap on the issue, with women heavily favoring gun control over gun-owner rights and men only modestly so.

"I think the question becomes whether this event looks like extremists pushing a Democrat agenda or whether it represents women who are part of the Republican coalition and can make a statement that Republicans should be more focused on issues such as school safety and juvenile justice," said Republican pollster Linda DiVall.

Another Republican consultant, Dan Schnur, said that while the march might be well-intentioned, nothing focuses voters' minds as clearly as real-life events.

"Made-for-TV events" don't change voters' opinions, said Schnur, who served as a spokesman for the presidential campaign of Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.).

"You can go all the way back to the March on Washington [in 1963]. I would make the case that American public opinion was changed a lot more because of Rosa Parks and Selma and Birmingham than the march on the capital. A march tends to reinforce existing opinions, [but] it takes real-life events to change opinions," Schnur said.

Dees-Thomases and her organization are attempting a wider appeal. They use the Internet as a distribution channel for information, along with more traditional grass-roots efforts like leafleting.

With the financial backing of another gun-control advocacy group, they are using celebrities such as Rosie O'Donnell, Susan Sarandon and Whoopi Goldberg, to encourage mothers to attend the Mother's Day marches.

The ads, running primarily in East Coast markets, highlight the shootings of specific children.

Organizers hope to have more than 100,000 moms on the National Mall on Mother's Day, with thousands more at rallies in 60 cities nationwide, including Chicago.

It is clear that there is public sentiment for much of what they want Congress to do, especially among women, though the American people also seem in agreement that more than a change in gun laws is needed to stem violence.

A recent opinion poll by the non-partisan Pew Research Center found that nearly two-thirds of Americans who responded said gun control was more important than the rights of gun owners, though they did not regard gun control as a "panacea."

Those surveyed were evenly split on whether to ban handguns.

More than any single event, the shootings at Columbine High School, the poll found, continue to shape the way parents and non-parents alike viewed the issue of school violence."

"It is clear that for many Americans gun control is but one remedy--and perhaps not even the most effective remedy--for preventing violence," the poll's authors wrote.

"While 41 percent believe that stricter guns laws would reduce violent crime by a great deal, 63 percent say that more jobs and community programs for young people would accomplish that objective.

"And a majority of the public [59 percent] say it is more important to enforce existing guns laws than to enact new statutes aimed at restricting weapons sales and improving gun safety," they said.

Several recent polls on gun control also indicate a persistent gender gap, with women favoring gun control over ownership rights by 73 percent to 22 percent. Men favor it 59 percent to 36 percent.

GRAPHIC: PHOTOPHOTO (color): Organizer Donna Dees-Thomases also is using a Web site to organize gun-control advocates. AP file photo by Mike Derer.

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Chicago Sun-Times**May 08, 2000, MONDAY, Late Sports Final Edition****SECTION:** EDT; Pg. 31**LENGTH:** 788 words**HEADLINE:** 'Million Mom March' is taking the wrong path**BYLINE:** Betsy Hart**BODY:**

Washington, D.C., never has seen a stroller traffic jam before, but that could all change this Mother's Day, May 14. That's when women from around the country will descend on our nation's capital in a "**Million Mom March**" to protest gun violence, particularly violence against children.

The march is the brainstorm of an "angry" New Jersey mom who decided after a shooting at a day camp last summer to "do something" about guns. She has gotten a huge response from moms, impressive corporate sponsors, the press, sports stars and even entertainers such as Rosie O'Donnell, who will emcee the event.

Well, I'm a mom of three little ones, I want to do something to end gun violence -- and I won't be anywhere near the **Million Mom March** on Washington.

If these mothers really think that first-graders from crime- and drug-infested broken "homes" kill each other only because there are not enough mandatory trigger locks lying around, if they believe a solution to juvenile gun violence is more gun laws in addition to the thousands already on the books -- which are broken by criminals or just not enforced to begin with -- then they don't know the first thing about helping our kids. And the march will be nothing but a feel-good rally that diverts attention from the real problems facing our children.

What a waste. Instead, these moms could have a profound influence if they sent a strong message to our culture about something that really could protect kids. That is, if they changed their message to the "**Million Mom March** for Marriage."

As Dr. Wade Horn, the former U.S. commissioner for children, youth and families and now president of the National Fatherhood Initiative, told me, "If I had a choice of taking away every gun in America or putting every child in a home with a loving, committed, married mom and dad -- there's no doubt the kids would be safer and better off with the latter."

That's because today, 60 percent of American children will grow to age 18 having spent part or all of their childhood in a single-parent home (typically read: fatherless). In 1950, that number was 12 percent. And that's where they are really at risk.

To begin with, it's in such homes where children are most likely to experience physical or sexual

abuse, according to Patrick Fagan, a child therapist and scholar at the Heritage Foundation. And, according to Father Facts, a publication of the National Fatherhood Initiative, the likelihood of juvenile delinquency for these kids, and later serious criminal activity, is dramatically higher than for their peers from intact families.

In fact, the best predictor of crime levels in any neighborhood is the level of single-parent households in the community. It's even true that children who don't live with their dads are more likely to carry guns than their peers who live with both parents. When you mix this brew with the fact that kids from broken homes are at much greater risk of having serious emotional and other personal problems than their peers from intact homes, it becomes a pretty dangerous concoction.

Now of course it's true that many kids from single-parent homes do great and many kids from intact families don't -- witness the Columbine killers. It's also true that many people who smoke two packs of cigarettes a day never get lung cancer, and there are folks who never smoke who do get it. But the risk factor for lung cancer is overwhelmingly with the former group.

The more our culture embraces easy divorce and single parenthood, the fewer intact families there are to stabilize a neighborhood and the more easily the tide turns so that eventually every kid in every home has the potential to be affected for the worse by the inherent risks that go with these conditions.

Or as Fagan sees it, because of so many broken relationships between moms and dads permeating our communities, "we are now a culture of alienation and rejection."

I'm sure that many or most of the moms at the march this Mother's Day are all for marriage. Even many of those who are single or divorced -- and 70 percent of the time it's the woman who moves to end the marriage -- would probably say it's best for kids to be raised in intact families.

It's just too bad that these marching moms are going to be spending their time on trigger locks and waiting periods that will do nothing to save our kids. Instead, they should be igniting the public's awareness to what is perhaps the most serious risk our children face -- fatherless families.

Betsy Hart, a University of Illinois graduate who grew up in Arlington Heights, is a commentator on CNN and the Fox News Channel. E-mail: mailtohart@aol.com. Distributed by Scripps Howard News Service.

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*The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, May 07, 2000, Sunday*Copyright 2000 Little Rock Newspapers, Inc.
The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette**May 07, 2000, Sunday****SECTION:** NwaneWS; Pg. B7**LENGTH:** 538 words**HEADLINE:** Mothers called on to support **Million Mom March** at local level in LR**BYLINE:** SHAREESE KONDO, ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE**BODY:**

NW EDITION

Arkansas mothers who can't travel to Washington, D.C., on Mother's Day to attend the national **Million Mom March** can rally in Little Rock's Riverfront Park to show their support for stricter gun laws.

Sponsors of the **Million Mom March** expect thousands of mothers to either march on the Capitol Mall or attend local rallies to call attention to the message behind the national march.

"We expect a really good turnout," said Rebekah Hearne, of Little Rock who's coordinating the Arkansas rally. "I've been in charge for three weeks, and we've gotten quite a bit done in the short amount of time we've been working."

Among the speakers scheduled to attend the Arkansas rally are Suzanne Wilson of Jonesboro, whose daughter, Britthney Varner, was killed in the Westside Middle School shootings; Dr. Robert Beaton, emergency room director of medicine at St. Bernard's Hospital in Jonesboro, who was on duty at the time of the shootings; and Little Rock City Director Paul Kelly of Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families/Kids Count Coalition.

"The reason for the rally is to show our support for what's happening in Washington," said Hearne, who invited the state's congressional representatives and several legislators to the Arkansas rally. The idea for the Washington march began with Donna Dees-Thomase, a New Jersey woman who joined the gun-control debate after watching television news coverage of children at a Jewish Community Center in California last year scramble to escape a white supremacist gunman. She and her supporters want Congress to enact gun-control laws that would include licensing and registration for handgun owners, require built-in child safety locks on firearms and impose a one-handgun-a-month purchase limit. The group is also calling for "no-nonsense enforcement of gun laws."

Public service announcements about the Arkansas rally will begin next week, and Hearne urges those attending to bring picnic baskets and blankets. The rally will take place 1-3 p.m. near the Belvedere Pavilion inside Riverfront Park.

Although the national organization has heard that opposing groups plan anti-gun control rallies in other cities on the same day, Hearne said she knows of no similar groups that may try to upstage the Little Rock rally.

"We haven't heard from the Second Amendment Sisters surfacing here," she said. "They're having a **Million Mom March** in Dallas, and if they want to rain on someone's parade, we hope they do it in Dallas."

The Dallas-based Second Amendment Sisters was formed by five women in response to the **Million**

Mom March. They believe gun laws should target violent criminals, not law-abiding firearms owners.

On the day of the rally, Arkansas **Million Mom March** supporters plan to set up a memorial wall to be signed by family members who have lost a loved one to gun violence.

They'll also have a silent march to place used shoes near the wall to symbolize the empty space left behind by those who are no longer here to walk, Hearne said.

More information about the Arkansas rally is available by calling Hearne at (501) 661-0645 or by checking out the organization's World Wide Web site at:

<http://arkansasmmm.homestead.com/index.html>

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The New York Post**May 7, 2000, Sunday****SECTION:** Metro; Pg. 026**LENGTH:** 1090 words**HEADLINE:** B'KLYN MOM IS A FORCE AGAINST GUNS**BYLINE:** ALLEN SALKIN**BODY:**

In the sea of shining female faces that will fill the Mall in Washington on Mother's Day, look for one very special lady.

She is Brooklynite Johnnymae Robinson, and she won't let anything stop her from making it to the storic **Million Mom March** next Sunday to add her voice to the cry for "sensible gun laws."

She will have brought more than 100 friends with her, 100 human beings who might have been satisfied to spend Mother's Day relaxing with the usual pleasures - food and family.

Might have been, if it weren't for Robinson, 40, who decided that there was no way mothers were going to march in Washington without representation from Brownsville, where residents know all too well the horrors handguns can bring.

"I hear gunshots every night and I see the gun violence here, people getting their hands on guns and getting into trouble," she said.

From the moment Robinson saw a flyer announcing the march in a Brooklyn thrift shop, it took her three weeks to charter and fill two buses, 116 seats, for the weekend.

Her story sounds like something from the movie, "It's a Wonderful Life," with family, friends, school crossing guards, laundromat managers and kind strangers emptying their wallets and filling their hearts to make Robinson's dream possible.

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Johnnymae was shopping in Park Slope when she saw the flyer for the march and asked the shopkeeper about it.

She went to a meeting for prospective participants and realized Brownsville was not represented.

An organizer told her they had tried to do some outreach in the area, but hadn't known how to go about it.

"I said, 'You know what? I'm going to have to get a bus to leave from my neighborhood,'" Robinson said.

But then she thought, "I've got no money and I know people already have plans for Mother's Day."

But she was determined.

She went home and told her youngest son, Gus, 10, "This is going to be the campaign headquarters for the **Million Mom March**, and we have got to get this going."

She called bus companies. Most had nothing available, but finally a local church had one: \$1,200.

She told them she'd take it.

Soon, the father of her first child was visiting and she told him she didn't know how she was going to pay for the bus.

"He said 'How much do you need?'

"I said, 'People who love me, they should give \$300.'

"He said, 'OK.'

"I said, 'I only have \$900 to go!'

"My next sponsor was my 10-year-old. He got some money for his birthday. He gave me \$50 and said, 'You can now bring two mothers.'

"My next one was my 16-year-old. He's tighter with his money. He gave me \$25."

She called friends. She passed out flyers, saying that anyone who needed a seat could have one for just \$20.

"On my way to work, if I saw school crossing guards, I'd pass out some flyers, saying 'Give them to mothers.'"

She began getting e-mails, calls at home.

"And before you knew it, the first bus was full."

But she was \$400 short. She went to a meeting in Park Slope and told them that many people in her neighborhood couldn't afford the \$20.

"What's happening to me," she told them, "is people say they want to go, but they don't have the money."

A woman at the meeting was moved by her story and spoke up, saying, "I got you. My store will sponsor the other \$400."

"I said, 'You're going to make me cry.'"

So, two weeks after starting, her first bus was full.

"I got so excited, I said 'Why can't I do another bus?'"

Driving through Red Hook, she saw a nice, big white bus.

The calls kept coming. From people at her church and her younger son's school came donations of

money, shoes, bottles of water, a banner.

Two weeks before the march, all seats on the two buses were spoken for.

"I did the right thing by stepping out and not thinking, not doubting it, not being too fretful or weary - and it's being done. It's being done," Robinson said.

Johnnymae's buses are scheduled to leave from the parking lot in front of her apartment building, Atlantic Plaza Towers.

"If we make this statement on a day when we're supposed to be laying back and having people take care of us, it's going to mean something to people on the inside," Robinson said.

A

Robinson works for the New York City Housing Authority, helping people find jobs and training them for work.

She said the march won't be the end of her activism. The 116 people she's bringing are going to be handed voter registration forms.

She plans to conduct regular meetings after the march, to shape this group of individuals into a force that lawmakers will have to notice.

"If we count as a block of people, instead of one person, they're going to be in trouble if they don't listen to us," she said.

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The **Million Mom March** was the idea of a New Jersey woman, Donna Dees-Thomases, who watched the news coverage of the 1999 shootings at a Southern California day camp and decided something needed to be done.

The marchers' goal is not to ban guns, but to push Congress to pass a law requiring gun registration and licensing accompanied by safety training.

A Web site, www.millionmomsmarch.com, has information about groups from all five boroughs, Long Island and Westchester County that are organizing buses from New York going to the march.

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One of Robinson's sons won't be in Washington with her.

His name was Karon.

He was 21 when he tried to rob a real-estate office in April 1999.

Twenty-one when he ran from police that day.

Twenty-one when he slipped and the gun he was carrying went off.

Twenty-one when the bullet entered him and stopped his heart forever.

Karon was no saint.

His mother knows that.

She also knows that she misses her son, her eldest child, and believes no one else should have to

feel what she has felt.

One of the **Million Mom March** meetings she attended at Ozzie's Coffee Shop in Park Slope was on April 12, a year to the day she came home from work and was told her son was dead.

She told the group, "This is the day my son got shot."

Two weeks later she was sitting in her two-bedroom apartment with her mother, Willyiemae, surrounded by flyers and notebook paper containing the names of those who will join her on the bus.

"I wanted to mourn and cry and do that stuff," she said, "but I haven't had time."

GRAPHIC: ON THE MARCH:Johnnymae Robinson, whose son Karon was killed when he dropped his gun and it went off, is marching in Washington next Sunday in a call for "sensible gun laws." Yechiam Gal

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The Boston Globe♦ [View Related Topics](#)**May 6, 2000, Saturday ,THIRD EDITION****SECTION:** METRO/REGION; Pg. B5**LENGTH:** 449 words**HEADLINE:** MOTHERS TO MARCH FOR GUN CONTROL**BYLINE:** By Jamal E. Watson, Globe Staff**BODY:**

After her 12-year-old son James was accidentally shot and killed by one of his friends 11 years ago, Cathie Kelley retreated into her quiet Lowell neighborhood to mourn the loss.

But after years of hearing reports of similiar accidental shootings nationwide, as well as news of gun violence in schools, Kelley decided to join a national crusade aimed at helping to curtail handgun violence. Along with about 5,000 other Massachusetts mothers, Kelley is heading to Washington, D.C., on May 14 for the **Million Mom March**, an event intended to persuade congressional leaders to implement stricter gun-control laws.

"I think we need new laws, and I think we have to enforce the laws that are already on the books," said Kelley, who was at a press conference yesterday at the Children's Museum to help promote the march. "How many more children do we have to lose? There are too many guns out there."

Elizabeth Miles, state coordinator for the march, said 11 buses from Massachusetts will travel to Washington.

"Schools and zoos should be safe places for children, but they're not because of the proliferation of guns," said Miles, who has been involved in the gun-control movement for the last two years. "Mothers feel deeply about this issue. It really hits home."

The march was conceived by a New Jersey mother, Donna Dees-Thomases, who was frustrated by the rash of school shootings, and it has been gaining support, organizers say.

"Moms are more powerful than any million-dollar lobbyist that represents the special-interest groups," Mayor Thomas M. Menino said at yesterday's press conference. "There's nothing like a mother to protect her child."

Boston Police Commissioner Paul Evans said local gun-control efforts and changes in policing have helped reduce juvenile crime in Boston by 70 percent since 1990.

"Massachusetts is the leader when it comes to common-sense gun laws," Dees-Thomases said at the

Children's Museum. "We need you to join us. It's a national disgrace that we have to march on Washington for the licensing and registration of handguns. We should treat handguns like automobiles; they should be registered."

When she filed for the permit to hold the march on the National Mall, Dees-Thomases thought her efforts would attract a few thousand people, she said. That was nine months ago. Now she thinks 1 million is possible.

Lyn St. Jacques of Wareham, whose 18-year-old son Kyle was killed two years ago in an accidental shooting, says the **Million Mom March** is a powerful way to help focus attention on the growing epidemic of violence.

"It's a problem everywhere," St. Jacques said. "It doesn't matter if you're black or white or rich or poor."

GRAPHIC: PHOTO, 1. Cathie Kelley, who lost her son in an accidental shooting 11 years ago, will participate in the **Million Mom March** May 14. / GLOBE STAFF PHOTO / JANET KNOTT 2. MARCHING ORDERS - Five-year-old Ana Goldberg of Cambridge smiling at her mother during yesterday's press conference at the Children's Museum for the **Million Mom March**. / GLOBE STAFF PHOTO/JANET KNOTT (First edition photo, page B1)

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The Washington Post♦ [View Related Topics](#)**May 5, 2000, Friday, Final Edition****SECTION:** A SECTION; Pg. A18**LENGTH:** 1032 words**HEADLINE:** Tough Cause for Carroll Moms; Organizers Work to Uncover Support for Gun-Control March**BYLINE:** Susan Levine , Washington Post Staff Writer**DATELINE:** WESTMINSTER, Md.**BODY:**

The first time Laura Rhodes spoke out publicly on gun control, she was standing by the side of Route 140 with a small and silent band of protesters who held photographs of dead children.

Passing drivers had plenty of reaction that raw February morning, especially the ones who had just attended the Carroll County Republican Party's first-ever gun raffle, which made national news. "Communists," some drivers yelled, saluting with a middle finger. "Get the hell out of here."

Two months later, the mother from Mount Airy was again speaking out, although now she was standing with buttons, water bottles and a practiced pitch for the cause. In the gymnasium-cum-exhibit hall of Westminster High School, she drew reaction. But this time passersby offered "good luck" instead of curses and thumbs up, not fingers.

For the women behind the **Million Mom March**, few areas of Maryland are a tougher sell for the May 14 Washington rally than this rolling, rural county less than 40 miles to the north. Up here, hard against the Pennsylvania border, the march's mission collides with both conservative politics and culture, as the GOP's controversial lottery for a black Baretta showed.

Still, as the contrasting scene several days ago at a women's fair revealed, this place is a lot more complicated, a lot more varied, than the sentiments of several hundred local raffle-ticket buyers suggested. Carroll has other voices, too, and more than a few of them agree with handgun registration and licensing, safety training and trigger locks--measures that will be cheered during the Mother's Day rally on the Mall.

Some of the voices will even join a bus convoy to Washington to lend support, though not all have yet told their husbands. And the ones who aren't in agreement? The dissenters at a ladies' expo would please even Miss Manners.

"I'll pass," one woman with a polite smile said as she went past the **Million Mom March** table.

Carroll County will also send a second bus May 14, filled with passengers who will congregate on the Mall to support a group named the Second Amendment Sisters. State Del. Carmen Amedori (R), a staunch gun-rights supporter in the county, will speak there. "I know a majority of my constituents are glad I'm out there representing them on this," she said.

Yet these days the size of that majority is unclear. While just this week, a letter in the Carroll County Times accused the **Million Mom March** of "digging their own graves along with 270 million Americans' graves to license and register all firearms and their owners," finding dissenting opinion isn't difficult in downtown Westminster.

"It's something I feel very strongly about because I have sons," said Becky Fisher, who works in the Locust Books store, one of the few Main Street businesses displaying information about the march. "I do believe in people's right to bear arms. But I don't think our forefathers envisioned handguns or Uzis."

A block down, at the Main Street Early Learning Center, director Barbara Weber said she knows parents at her day care have discussed the march. Weber is a like-minded soul trying to provoke thinking about children and violence. She's soliciting toy guns, knives and weapons for a sculpture to be called the "Peace Piece." So far, donations are few. "Parents don't equate violent toys with violent activity. They say boys will be boys," Weber said.

At the women's expo, Rhodes always opened with a friendly pitch. "Have you heard about the march?" she asked over and over. "We have quite a group going from Carroll County. We have buses going. . . . You can have breakfast, make the bus, go down to Washington and still come home in time for a nice Mother's Day dinner."

Volunteer Trish Holmes, who lives in nearby Eldersburg, pushed the message further: "We're trying to show responsible gun control. We're tired of seeing the headlines," she explained to one woman. "You'll never remember where you had brunch, but maybe another mother will never bury her child."

Helen Francis, from just down the road, picked up a bus trip form with the particulars of time and cost. "We've got a lot of things going on Mother's Day," she said, "but this sounds like something we'd like to go to."

And Pat Holbert, of Westminster, bought two youth-size T-shirts for herself and her 4-foot-11 mother. Until this year, Holbert was a committed Republican. But she was so appalled over the gun raffle that she left the party. "They waved goodbye, good riddance," she said.

She explained where she is today: "I don't have a problem with people hunting and wanting to protect their homes, but you've got to have rules."

Sandwiched between the League of Women Voters and Natural Health Solutions, the **Million Mom March** table at the expo attracted attention in part for a large hot-pink poster of stories and headlines, the largest of which came straight from Carroll County. "Girl Dies After Gunshot to Head," it read. The terrible accident, involving an 18-year-old and her parents' handgun, occurred two days after the Republicans' raffle and one day after a prominent party lawmaker said that this kind of thing didn't happen in Carroll.

Rhodes knows not to discuss the issue with some people. "My friends who don't agree with me are very calm and cool. They say, 'Laura, don't go there with me.' "

Until May 15, though, it is a big chunk of her life. With a few other mothers, Rhodes has taken or mailed fliers about the march to the office of every pediatrician, obstetrician and gynecologist listed in the telephone book, to every local day care and every church, to many businesses. Numerous churches and businesses refused to accept the information, much less promote the march. Several

PTAs backed away from mentioning it in their newsletters.

"They said it may be offensive," recounted Carole Price, who joined Rhodes at the table mid-morning. Price is the most well-known Maryland march mother; her son was accidentally shot to death by a youth in their neighborhood in 1998. Her own elementary school declined to spread the word.

"I told them that this is not offensive," Price said. "What's offensive is burying a child at 13."

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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The Post and Courier (Charleston, SC)**May 2, 2000, Tuesday, POST AND COURIER EDITION****SECTION:** A, Pg. 1**LENGTH:** 1577 words**HEADLINE:** Fear and the gun: 2 paths to safety**BODY:**

PH:Box entitled 'Gun Rights Debate' BY: OVETTA SAMPSON The Gazette

Spring Nelson doesn't want to be scared anymore. Last year, she sat in her Denver-area home crying uncontrollably as she watched Columbine High School, her alma mater, dissolve into a barrage of gun violence and murder. She winced when her 7-year-old son asked if the same thing could happen at his school.

Children must be protected, she thought. Children must be safe.

Sue Paradis doesn't get scared anymore. A few years ago, just after she moved to Colorado Springs from California, she and her daughter encountered "the stalker." The stranger followed them to the supermarket. He drove by their house. One day her daughter - 8 years old at the time - refused to go to school. She was afraid to leave her mother alone, fearing harm at the hands of the stranger.

My child must be protected, she thought. My child must be safe.

Both these women - and mothers like them - share a universal instinct to protect. Both these women are reacting to the same fountain of fear - fear that the country's violence is out of hand.

But these mothers chose different paths to protect their children.

Spring Nelson has turned gun-control activist. She will join thousands of moms and others who plan to march on Washington, D.C., on May 14 - Mother's Day - for stricter gun-control laws at the **Million Mom March**.

Sue Paradis became a gun owner. Paradis, who runs a gun shop with her husband, Paul, supports hundreds of moms who will rally in Denver on Mother's Day to support the rights of gun owners.

The feelings of mothers who choose to protect their children by owning or fighting guns mirrors a fundamental issue in the gun debate: Should the right to protect oneself with a gun be curbed for what some call the betterment of society?

"It's a bedeviling argument," said Brendan Furnish, a professor of sociology at Westmont College in

Santa Barbara, Calif.

"There are people who sense fear and sense there are bad people out there and think, 'I have to be able to defend myself from the bad people.' (Then there are) the people who want to get rid of the tools so bad people won't have opportunities to commit bad acts."

Things changed for Colorado Springs mom Brenda Dulin when her teen-age son came home recently from a "lock-down" day.

Like so many of the nation's high-school kids in the last year, the 13-year-old went through a "Columbine" drill, a scenario meant to prepare schools for the type of violence that erupted April 20, 1999, at the school near Littleton, Colo., where 15 people died. In the drill, students and teachers scrambled under desks and into rooms as others pretended someone had charged into the school with weapons. It was unannounced, unnerving and chaotic, a practice session for something that just two years ago was unthinkable.

Fueled by the fear that schools aren't safe, Dulin and thousands of other women joined together to organize the **Million Mom March**. Donna Dees-Thomases, a New Jersey media consultant and mother, started the grass-roots group after seeing a man shoot up a California day-care center last August.

What's driving the **Million Mom March** organizers are the horrifying images of school shootings, shootings in fast-food restaurants and deaths of such children as Kayla Rolland, the Michigan first-grader killed this year by a 6-year-old classmate.

Yet statistics overwhelmingly show most kids are safe from gun violence associated with such events as Columbine: A child's odds of being killed in a U.S. school are one in 2 million. Youth homicide has dropped 56 percent from 1993 to 1998. And a child younger than 6 is nearly 6,000 times more likely to be exposed to household poison than killed by a firearm.

Still, mothers, whether gun owners or not, are increasingly afraid that their children aren't safe. Anywhere.

"None of us want to lose any more children," said Karen Kaukol, a Denver mom of two who is public relations director for the Women's Shooting Sports Foundation.

Why these mothers want to act to protect their children isn't up for disagreement. How they choose to act reflects a schism in society that seems to be growing wider.

Spring Nelson said what the Million Moms want is "common-sense" legislation. They want background checks on all gun sales, licensing of gun owners, registration of all guns, mandatory safety locks, longer "cooling off" periods, a ban on "straw" gun purchases and enforcement of gun laws. She sees these as some solutions to prevent gun violence.

"We're not trying to take (people's) guns away," Nelson said.

Nelson isn't just a bystander in the debate. The day after she sat watching the massacre at Columbine unfold on television, she reported to work as a nursing assistant in the Intensive Care Unit of a Denver-area hospital.

There she saw two teen-agers, their bodies riddled with bullets, their minds terrorized. Through tear-filled eyes, she listened to their fear - fear someone would come into the hospital to shoot them again.

Though their fear subsided, Nelson's hasn't. And when her 7-year-old asks her what he should do if it happens at his school, she tells him it won't. But Columbine eats away at her certainty that kids are safe. They won't be, she said; not until guns are out of their reach.

"We just want everyone's children to be protected and to be safe from this type of violence," she said.

Colleen Kenna-Bouvier says thanks, but no thanks. The Indiana mother looks at the school shootings on television and thanks God she's got her 9mm handgun.

Kenna-Bouvier, mother of 2-year-old Kennedy, carries the sleek, black handgun everywhere - trips to the bank, the grocery store, the play group she started with other moms of pre-schoolers, even in her home office, doing ABCs with her son, gun on one hip, Kennedy on the other.

"I am sensitive to death and violence," said Kenna-Bouvier, Indiana chairwoman for Second Amendment Sisters, a group of gun advocates that will counter-protest in Washington on May 14. "I prefer that my family not experience death by a criminal. That's why I carry a gun."

Debra Collins, like Kenna-Bouvier, doesn't want her right to protect herself and her family hindered by what she deems unnecessary gun laws. Collins, of Aurora, Colo., is her state's chairwoman for Second Amendment Sisters. She remembers the terror of being strangled into unconsciousness by her ex-husband - and how he backed off after she threatened him with a gun at another time.

"Thank God I wasn't hampered by a trigger lock," she said. She balks at registering and licensing guns, fearing that could lead to eventual gun confiscation.

"Self-defense is a basic human right. A firearm can be a woman's best friend."

So women buy guns. They've joined the National Rifle Association, helping increase the group's numbers to a record 3.5 million at a time when overall crime rates are steadily decreasing.

Paradis, who urges people who come into her gun shop to take a gun-safety class before purchasing a firearm, says education is the key to minimizing gun violence in a culture steeped in weapons.

"It doesn't matter if it's the NRA, the DEA or even the IRA; why can't we cut through all the bickering and teach gun safety?" she asked.

On Mother's Day, when thousands of moms converge on Denver, Washington, D.C., and about 19 other cities, Furnish suggests the event will offer a micro-view of the ongoing battle over guns. Thousands of moms will be convinced their children aren't safe. Some will ask legislators for stricter gun laws. Some moms will demand their right to protect remain intact.

Dulin, who plans to take her husband and two children to the Denver march for strict gun laws, said it will be impossible for legislators to ignore the **Million Mom March**.

"With all the moms associated with this march, I don't know how anyone can't hear us," she said. "A mom will get to the point where she would do anything to protect her child."

For more on the national march, call (888) 989-MOMS. Or check the Internet at www.millionmom.march.com

GUN RIGHTS DEBATE

The case for gun rights:

John Lott Jr., author of "More Guns, Less Crime: Understanding Crime and Gun Control Laws," (University of Chicago Press, 1998), studied 18 years of data from more than 3,000 counties. He asserts that right-to-carry laws decrease crimes, while gun-control laws aren't effective in protecting law-abiding people.

According to the National Rifle Association, more than 2 million documented crimes are averted each year by people who own guns.

The Bureau of Justice, in its 1994 victims report, says around 83,000 crime victims use firearms to defend themselves or their property annually. Seventy-five percent of those used them during violent crimes, and the rest during personal-property crimes.

The case against gun rights:

Handgun Control Inc., quoting FBI statistics, said there were 176 justifiable handgun homicides in 1996, compared to 9,390 handgun murders in the United States.

Guns kept in the home for self protection are 22 times more likely to be used to kill somebody than used in self-defense, according to a 1998 study by the New England Journal of Medicine.

American children under age 15 are 12 times more likely to die from gunfire than children in 25 other industrialized countries combined, according to **Million Mom March** supporters citing CDC figures.

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Chicago Sun-Times

May 02, 2000, TUESDAY, Late Sports Final Edition

SECTION: NWS; Pg. 14**LENGTH:** 384 words**HEADLINE:** Sons' deaths spur S. Side mom to join fight against guns**BYLINE:** BY CURTIS LAWRENCE**BODY:**

On Mother's Day, Angela Junior's thoughts will be with her children, two sons gunned down on the South Side within seven months of each other.

But instead of spending the day alone in sadness, she plans to join the Chicago observance of the **Million Mom March**, a national effort to force Congress to take action on gun safety.

Like many of the mothers who will participate in bipartisan marches and rallies from Washington, D.C., to events in at least 12 states, Junior is frustrated with Congress' failure to pass stricter gun licensing and registration laws.

"Why does it take so many children to get killed for somebody to step up and do something?" asked Junior, who will attend Chicago's **Million Mom March** rally 1 p.m. May 14 at Lake Shore Drive and Randolph.

Junior's son Kendrick, an honor student at Harlan High School, was 15 when he was shot in the head and killed near 87th and the Dan Ryan while on his way to the movies in July 1998.

As a result, Junior sent her older son, Kamal, to Atlanta to live with relatives. He landed a job at Target and seemed happy there, his mother said.

But in February 1999, while returning home for a visit, Kamal was caught in gang crossfire at 115th near Interstate 57, Junior said.

"They were my only two children," Junior said. "I buried them both."

Junior was joined by Chicago area elected officials Monday at a news conference promoting the national gathering.

"We're going to show that bullets don't have any party affiliation," said U.S. Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.) who joined Republican Palatine Mayor Rita Mullins and U.S. Rep. Bobby Rush (D-Ill.), who lost his son, Huey Rich, to gun violence last October.

Donna Dees-Thomases, the national organizer of the **Million Mom March**, said planning for the

event "has been an intense bonding experience for women from all walks of life, from suburban moms in local Junior Leagues to moms who live in housing projects.

"When you get that much maternal instinct behind a movement, I think it will be more frightening than the gun lobby," said Dees-Thomases, who expects at least 100,000 people to march in Washington.

She was inspired to organize the national effort after watching television coverage of the August shooting at the North Valley Jewish Community Center in Los Angeles.

LANGUAGE: English

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*Los Angeles Times May 1, 2000, Monday,*Copyright 2000 Times Mirror Company
Los Angeles Times◆ [View Related Topics](#)**May 1, 2000, Monday, Home Edition****SECTION:** Southern California Living; Part E; Page 1; View Desk**LENGTH:** 1047 words**HEADLINE:** L.A. MOMS FIGHTING GUNS ON A LOCAL LEVEL;
ORGANIZING: THE GROUP ONE VOICE SEEKS SUPPORT ACROSS RACIAL LINES FOR STRONGER
LAWS AS WELL AS BACKING FOR THE **MILLION MOM MARCH** ON MAY 14.**BYLINE:** LYNN SMITH, TIMES STAFF WRITER**BODY:**

Kathi Friedman's epiphany came in February, the afternoon she joined other mothers being interviewed about the **Million Mom March** at a television studio in South-Central Los Angeles. The only white woman in the room, the property manager who lives in Hancock Park suddenly realized she was also the only mother there who hadn't lost a child or family member to gun violence. Some had lost two or three.

"It was a life-changing experience," said Friedman, an anti-violence activist for 15 years. What had been an abstract image of suffering suddenly became tangible. "The pain was so heavy in that room, you could reach out and touch it," she said. She realized that she had been oblivious to the commonplace horror that inner-city mothers have faced for years. "I said, 'I've got to do something now. These people have suffered too long alone.' "

In March, Friedman, Joyce Black, an African American businesswoman in East Los Angeles, and four other members of the **Million Mom March**, which plans a May 14 march in Washington, D.C., to promote gun-control laws, founded One Voice. This group hopes to be more effective in stemming gun violence by mobilizing mothers to work together across racial and ethnic lines. In the past three weeks, One Voice has led groups of 20 mothers from the San Fernando Valley and the Westside of Los Angeles to visit mostly African American churches, where they talked to mothers about the march and solicited their support.

Friedman also wrote a letter, circulated by e-mail and read at church services, in which she apologized for failing to address violence in a more unified way.

"You buried oh, so many babies from gun violence, while too many of us did nothing," she wrote ". . . We were safely detached as we watched the violent scenes unfold on television. . . . We will no longer stand silently on the sidelines as you walk through the shadows of darkness in your neighborhoods. We will instead walk side by side."

The march organizers brought to the churches a banner that will be carried to Washington to show the breadth of support for stricter gun-control laws.

Black said it was an eye-opening experience for both groups of women. "It was awesome. After church, those women stood waiting to sign the banner to carry to Washington," Black said.

After her visits, Friedman said she received a call from a woman from the central city who had lost a daughter last fall to gun violence. "She said, 'It won't be Mother's Day for me anyway. I really want to go to Washington.' I said, 'Then we'll see to it that you get there.' "

The dialogue was "clearly a great breakthrough in grass-roots civic participation in Los Angeles," said Fabian Nunez, political director for the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor. "How often do you have concerned parents, mothers in particular, from different social classes coming together to tackle a common problem?"

"You haven't seen this kind of thing in community politics, whether around gun violence or housing or education."

He said many inner-city residents are bitter that it appears to take violence in affluent suburbs to make people in other parts of the city and the media to pay attention to the issue.

Of the 1,088 residents of Los Angeles County who died from gun violence in 1998, the majority were Latinos, according to information disseminated by Women Against Gun Violence, a Los Angeles-based coalition. African Americans were killed by guns at a rate more than double their percentage in the county population, according to state data collected by Women Against Gun Violence.

Organizing for the **Million Mom March** began last year by a New Jersey mother of two after she saw television news footage of preschoolers being led from the North Valley Jewish Community Center the day a self-described neo-Nazi went on a shooting spree that killed one and wounded five. The organization is seeking legislation that would require child-safety locks on guns and would regulate sales at gun shows.

On May 14, counter demonstrators from a gun-rights organization, Second Amendment Sisters, will also march in the nation's capital, while **Million Mom March** supporters will host local events in cities nationwide.

In Los Angeles, various gun-control and anti-violence groups joined to support the Washington march, and two demonstrations emerged: a 10 a.m. event at the Federal Building in Westwood, and a 1 p.m. march on Olvera Street in downtown Los Angeles.

Ann Reiss Lane, chair of Women Against Gun Violence, said her organization proposed a morning event in Westwood after learning the march was scheduled in the afternoon at Olvera Street. The goal was to offer an alternative to engage as many people as possible. "There was a difference of opinion about what the best place, so people chose where they wanted to go," she said.

Dawn Sinko, co-chair of the Southern California Regional Mom March, said she argued that Olvera Street was the most convenient location "to serve the various communities we were trying to reach out to. We believed that was the fairest location where east, west, north and south of Los Angeles could come together in one spot."

Black said she thought that two separate events in Los Angeles was "insanity. You cannot solve a problem with people marching off in different directions. If we do not march unitedly, we do not achieve a good end. It's just that simple."

Representatives from both events characterized the disagreement as difficult. Lane called Black and Friedman peacemakers for "making the march for everyone."

As a result of meetings instigated by One Voice, Black said the two local demonstrations will be

coordinated, with participants rallying at the Federal Building, then caravanning to Olvera Street. Organizers are holding a press conference today to promote the demonstrations.

Nunez said the key to the mothers' effectiveness on gun control will be their ability to build solidarity by bridging support across communities. He said gun violence is an example of "how issues that are complex but very serious don't get resolved. People always look at how do you deal with this from the perspective of the community where they reside, not how to deal with it from a broader, more holistic way."

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: May 1, 2000

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April 27, 2000, Thursday

SECTION: NATIONAL AND CITY DESKS**LENGTH:** 383 words**HEADLINE:** Barbara Lee Family Foundation Donates \$200,000 to **Million Mom March****DATELINE:** BOSTON, April 27**BODY:**

The Barbara Lee Family Foundation today announced a \$200,000 leadership gift to the **Million Mom March**.

On Mother's Day, Sunday, May 14, the march on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. will amplify the voices of concerned mothers across the United States in calling for an end to gun violence.

"More than 11 children in this country are killed by gun violence every single day," said activist and philanthropist Barbara Lee. "As a mother I believe every child deserves a safe community, a safe school, and a safe home. It is time for mothers to take the lead on sensible gun control to ensure the safety of our children. We must keep guns out of the hands of children and criminals."

The **Million Mom March** is expected to bring tens of thousands of mothers and others from across the United States to the National Mall in Washington, D.C., on Sunday, May 14. Marchers and supporters are calling for sensible national gun laws, including licensing and registration of handguns, and strict enforcement.

"The Barbara Lee Family Foundation initiates projects to advance and support women's leadership and improve democracy," said Julia Dunbar, the Foundation's executive director. "The **Million Mom March** was started by a concerned mother, Donna Dees-Thomases, who believed she could make a difference. We are proud to join thousands of women across the nation who are taking leadership roles in the critical effort to protect our children."

"We hope that our participation and this leadership gift will inspire other foundations and individuals to get involved and contribute to this historic Mother's Day March," said Barbara Lee.

Recent leadership gifts of the Barbara Lee Family Foundation include: count-me-in.org, an on and off-line microenterprise financial loan program for women; grassroots outreach to promote the 1999 Ken Burn's documentary, Not for Ourselves Alone, the story of suffragists Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony; the Boston Women's Memorial, and a significant gift

to build a new Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston. The Foundation's other interests include making the arts accessible to broad and diverse audiences as well as protecting the environment.

CONTACT:Gail Hoffman, 202-728-0800, for the Barbara Lee Family Foundation

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: April 27, 2000

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THE O'REILLY FACTOR, April 25, 2000, Tuesday

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SHOW: THE O'REILLY FACTOR (20:00 ET)

April 25, 2000, Tuesday

Transcript # 042501cb.256

SECTION: News; Domestic**LENGTH:** 2748 words**HEADLINE:** Interview With Donna Dees-Thomases**GUESTS:** Donna Dees-Thomases**BYLINE:** Bill O'Reilly**BODY:**

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

BILL O'REILLY, HOST: Hi. I'm Bill O'Reilly. Thank you for watching us tonight.

Well, the fallout continues over the Elian situation, and it is affecting the entire country. That's the subject of this evening's Talking Points memo.

Fallout No. 1: Al Gore can say goodbye to Florida's 25 electoral Cuban community will rally to George Bush.

Fallout No. 2: The video of the federal raid is already being used by China, some of the Arab states, Serbia, and other countries hostile to the U.S. as an example of American brutality. Of course, this is not an accurate picture, but it doesn't matter. The propaganda aspect of that video is overwhelmingly negative for America.

Fallout No. 3: Instead of being unhappy with the action, our brilliant attorney general says this...

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JANET RENO, ATTORNEY GENERAL: I have no regrets whatsoever.

O'REILLY: No regrets? What?

While it may be true that the feds tried to avoid a confrontation, every clear-thinking American should have regrets that it came down to violent action to extricate Elian. Ms. Reno continues to amaze me with her lack of perspective on almost all matters.

Fallout No. 4: The press. The left-wing media is happy about things and are making the story a vehicle to change American policy toward Castro.

Here's an example. Writing in "The New York Times," columnist Thomas Friedman says, "It was precisely the ease with which the hard-line Cuban- Americans kidnapped U.S. policy on Cuba for all these years with the help of pandering politicians that made them believe they could get away with kidnapping Elian."

What? The Gonzalez family in Miami kidnapped the little boy? What a crock. They provided for him and offered him freedom after his mother drowned trying to achieve that.

While it's true the family was unreasonable in their protection of Elian -- his father has rights, too -- their motives were not sinister as Mr. Friedman implies. Of course, when called, Mr. Friedman said he was too busy to come on THE FACTOR and talk about his column. Another profile in courage right there.

And finally, THE FACTOR has been told by high-level sources that Fidel Castro is taking no chances about Juan Miguel Gonzalez defecting with Elian. Castro has now removed Gonzalez's elderly mother from her home in Cuba and has her in custody.

Summing up, the Elian situation was bad for America in every way. No leadership was shown in Washington, the media can't seem to get a grip on the big story, and Americans themselves are divided.

We'll have more on the story coming up.

And that's the memo. Now for our top story tonight. Seventeen teenagers are in the hospital after shooting broke out at the Washington, D.C., zoo. Police believe it was gang related and have arrested a 16-year- old suspect. The crimes come shortly after the anniversary of Columbine and, again, raise the question of how guns should be dealt with.

With us now is Donna Dees-Thomases, who is leading the **Million Mom March** in Washington on Mother's Day.

So what very precisely do you want to accomplish by this march?

DONNA DEES-THOMASES, **MILLION MOM MARCH** FOUNDER: We want to mobilize people to this cause. We know moms across the country have been crying in their kitchens about this now for many, many years, and particularly with the wake of all the shootings in the last few months that -- we're just sick of it, and it has called our attention that something has to be done, and we've put together some policy goals, and we plan to...

O'REILLY: Give us very precisely what those goals are.

DEES-THOMASES: Licensing and registration.

O'REILLY: All right. Licensing and registration of what?

DEES-THOMASES: Handguns.

O'REILLY: All handguns.

DEES-THOMASES: Handguns. And the owner should be licensed, just like we license a driver for a car, that they should take a safety course and that they should understand the rules of the road. They should understand what the laws are about their handguns.

O'REILLY: All right. What else?

DEES-THOMASES: That the handgun should be registered and, that way, they would think twice before they let that handgun fall into the wrong hands, particularly that of a child or a criminal. And we're asking for child proofing. You know, the industry has put its money in the -- in making guns deadlier for years, but they haven't really done much about making them safer.

O'REILLY: All right. So you want licensing, registration, and child proofing. Anything else?

DEES-THOMASES: And enforcing existing laws. We understand that some laws need better enforcement, and we agree with that.

O'REILLY: OK. So enforcement of federal and state gun laws right now...

DEES-THOMASES: Yes.

O'REILLY: ... which is not being done, you know. I mean, the Brady bill that -- they haven't enforced anything.

DEES-THOMASES: Oh, the Brady bill has stopped 400,000 people from getting guns.

O'REILLY: Well, that's the propaganda.

DEES-THOMASES: Well, Bill -- Bill...

O'REILLY: I'm not exactly sure that's true.

DEES-THOMASES: Bill, the propaganda is -- what you see -- you turn on your news, and you see that kids are getting shot every day. That's...

O'REILLY: Yeah. I like the Brady bill.

DEES-THOMASES: That's not -- that's not propaganda, Bill. That is news. It's all real life.

O'REILLY: Well, look -- whoa, whoa. Donna, hold on for a minute. One minute, OK? I like the Brady bill, and I'm for strict regulation of handguns. But I will tell you this. Propaganda on both sides is forehead deep, on the NRA side and on the administration's side, and if you're going to swallow stats that come at you by these people, I will tell you to rethink.

Now...

DEES-THOMASES: First of all, Bill, I don't speak for the administration. I'm here speaking for mothers. I don't...

O'REILLY: But I will tell you this.

DEES-THOMASES: ... speak for the administration. I don't use their stats.

O'REILLY: We know how many cases of Brady bill denials have been enforced by the federal government, and it's less than 3 percent.

DEES-THOMASES: Well, Bill, should we not do anything? Should we not...

O'REILLY: No. I'm just telling you...

DEES-THOMASES: And let me tell you. You...

O'REILLY: ... don't swallow their propaganda.

DEES-THOMASES: Bill, tell me what national laws are on the books now that call for some at least basic standards across the books? There are none. Other than the Brady bill, there is nothing out there.

O'REILLY: Again, I am for sane and...

DEES-THOMASES: Absolutely.

O'REILLY: ... effective gun-control measures. I support that, but I want to get very precise, and I want to cut out the rhetoric, and I want to drop these ridiculous statistics on both sides because they're bogus.

DEES-THOMASES: I didn't come out here, you know, spilling statistics, Bill.

O'REILLY: OK. Now we have this thing in Washington, D.C., where it looks like it's gun related. I believe that all of your points that you called for would not have prevented that crime. Am I wrong?

DEES-THOMASES: First of all, Bill, I don't come here to talk about whether these specific laws would have cured that, but absolutely -- you know what? If these laws had been done 25 years ago, yes, I think so.

O'REILLY: Really?

DEES-THOMASES: Absolutely. Twenty-five years ago. You know, Barry Goldwater said 25 years ago -- he was against gun control -- because there were so many guns in this country, it would take 50 years to get them under control. Well, you know, if we'd done this 25 years ago, we'd be halfway there right now, Bill.

O'REILLY: But how would these laws have kept a handgun out of the presence of a gang member? How would they have done that?

DEES-THOMASES: You know, people still get killed on the road, even though we have driver's licenses. People still get killed on the road, even though we have cars registered. But you know what? It sets up a preventive force to keep some people from doing the wrong thing on the a road. And you know what? Can you imagine the chaos on the road if no one had a driver's license or that no one had their car registered? All we're asking for is preventive things. You know, we're not going to save every life here. We're not going to save every life here. But we have to put some regulations in place that will start saving some.

O'REILLY: OK. All right. That's a good answer, but I -- I think that you and I will both agree that criminals are going to get guns, no matter what you do.

DEES-THOMASES: Some criminals.

O'REILLY: Some criminals are.

DEES-THOMASES: Some criminals will.

O'REILLY: OK. Most of them. If you want to get a gun, even though you have these laws, you'll get a gun.

DEES-THOMASES: Because they're so easy to get. Because...

O'REILLY: Well...

DEES-THOMASES: Because of -- the Mafia and the gun industry has put so many guns in this country...

O'REILLY: You know what's going to happen?

DEES-THOMASES: ... right now, Bill...

O'REILLY: You know what's going to happen? And, again, I'm not arguing with your basic tenet, but what's going to happen is, if all of these things were put in place, the price of guns would go up, and the traffic, as in narcotics, would be brisk.

We'll have more with Mrs. Thomases in a moment.

And then, we'll talk with a man who was in the Gonzalez house when the feds stormed it.

Back in a moment.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

O'REILLY: Continuing now with Donna Dees-Thomases, who is leading the **Million Mom March** in Washington on Mother's Day for gun control.

Now I'm furious at both sides of this issue.

I believe that the gun advocates and the NRA are selfish in the sense that they don't want to give up their guns. They like the hobby, they like to shoot, they like the protection they believe guns afford them, and they don't want to compromise and register guns or, as you said, get a license for them or any of that. They say, "Look, I'm a law-abiding citizen. I have a right to protect my family. I don't want any government intrusion period, and I don't care about anything else." I think that's a little

But, on the other side, we have the Clinton administration and Attorney General Reno who demagogue the issue shamelessly -- and to me -- that just drives me through the ceiling -- by saying, "Yes, we need all these gun-control laws, but we're not going to enforce them," you see.

Now if you're going to have licensing, registration, child proofing, and all of that, then I say if -- if the gun owner is going -- if the legitimate gun owner, the law-abiding person is going to do that, then if you break that law, you've got to punish those people. You've got to have both in play.

DEES-THOMASES: Absolutely. Absolutely, Bill, and if you go to our Web site, www.millionmommarch.com, you will see that we also call for -- in our platform is -- for the ex -- enforcement of existing laws and the no- nonsense enforcement of these laws that we want passed...

O'REILLY: OK. Now...

DEES-THOMASES: ... which are all on the same page.

O'REILLY: ... the argument that the NRA and the gun advocates say is that this is the first step toward confiscation of guns and, ironically, it's the same argument the abortion advocates give for partial-birth abortion which we're going to deal later on in the program with.

But now you can say to yourself, you know, "If I register my gun and I tell my government who -- what I have and this and that and an administration gets in that doesn't want any guns, they're

going to come in and take my guns."

DEES-THOMASES: You know, Bill, the Mothers Against Drunk Driving -- they didn't ban alcohol, but what they did was ban the irresponsible use of alcohol, and that's all we want, the same thing. We want responsible laws in place that people know that they cannot sell their gun over the fence to the neighbor who may want to take it and kill his children and his wife.

This happens every day in this country, Bill, because -- I know. I talk to these women every day who've lost their children or someone who's lost a spouse because someone has gotten a gun too easily.

O'REILLY: What do you think about law-abiding Americans who want to buy a handgun? Do you think they should be allowed to do that?

DEES-THOMASES: Guess what? We have many, many law-abiding gun owners who believe in what we're doing because they know it will help them and protect their families as well.

O'REILLY: So you don't want to stop anybody from buying a handgun?

DEES-THOMASES: I want to stop children, juveniles, and people who are mentally ill or who have criminal records from getting guns, yes.

O'REILLY: All right.

DEES-THOMASES: They should not get guns.

O'REILLY: Now how do you know when somebody's mentally ill, though? That's a tough thing, right?

DEES-THOMASES: It's a tough thing and, you know, that's one thing that we have to look into, and I hope we throw some money at it, whether in this administration or the next administration. How do we go through records and find out who should and who should not have a gun, and it's a hot potato.

O'REILLY: Right, because there's...

DEES-THOMASES: It's a...

O'REILLY: ... a privacy act that you can't be going...

DEES-THOMASES: It's a privacy issue.

O'REILLY: ... into people's medical records, so you're never going to get that done.

DEES-THOMASES: Well, I think -- well, I think it's time.

O'REILLY: I agree with the criminal record, but I -- I will tell you to solve this problem.

Now the **Million Mom March** -- you're not going to get a million moms out there.

DEES-THOMASES: Well, you know, a million is a metaphor for a lot of people, and...

O'REILLY: OK. How many do you think...

DEES-THOMASES: ... when I filled out the application for the permit...

O'REILLY: ... of the moms are going to show up?

DEES-THOMASES: Well, I put down 10,000 when I filled out the application. I think we have 50,000

at least, and we hope for a hundred thousand.

O'REILLY: A hundred thousand in D.C.

Now how did you get involved in this? You're -- you're -- you live in Short Hills, New Jersey, just a regular citizen, right?

DEES-THOMASES: I'm a regular citizen. I have some PR savvy, you know, but I decided after the shooting at the Granada Hills Day Camp -- where it -- it was the Jewish Community Center...

O'REILLY: Out in California where those...

DEES-THOMASES: California. It was just...

O'REILLY: ... kids were shot.

DEES-THOMASES: Absolutely. It was just too close to home. I have kids the exact same age as -- who go to a JCC, and I did a little, you know, research on the Web, and I realized, "Oh, my God. Where have I been?" I always thought we had decent gun laws in...

O'REILLY: So you're just a citizen who decided to do something?

DEES-THOMASES: Yes.

O'REILLY: Well, congratulations to you.

involved, too, and then it was 25, then a hundred, and...

O'REILLY: But, you know, that guy who did that, no matter -- you could have every gun-control law in the world, and he still would have got the gun. He was crazy.

DEES-THOMASES: Bill, 25 years ago, if we had put these laws in place...

O'REILLY: I know. You told me that.

DEES-THOMASES: And guess what? Maybe I'm not really doing this for my children, but I'm doing this for my grandchildren.

O'REILLY: All right.

DEES-THOMASES: In 25 years, I'm going to have grandchildren, and I want better laws on the books so that we don't have to live where everybody's shooting at each other. I mean, you can't even go to the zoo anymore, Bill. You can't even go to the zoo, and...

O'REILLY: All right. Well...

(CROSSTALK)

DEES-THOMASES: ... for your children's safety.

O'REILLY: We appreciate your coming in here, Mrs. Thomases.

DEES-THOMASES: Thank you.

O'REILLY: Thank you very much.

DEES-THOMASES: Thank you.

O'REILLY: And, directly ahead, what was it like for the people inside the Gonzalez home at the time of the raid? We'll talk with a man who was there.

And then on the rundown, the Supreme Court hearing a suit about partial-birth abortion. We'll report on that and the similarities to the gun-control issue in just a few moments from now.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

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USA TODAY

April 24, 2000, Monday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 9A**LENGTH:** 1159 words**HEADLINE:** Leaders of mom march call it a starting step**BYLINE:** Wendy Koch**BODY:**

Mary Leigh Blek had never been active in politics. She was a stay-at-home mom who organized PTA events and lived in a gated community in Orange County, Calif.

But that was before -- before June 29, 1994, the day her 21-year-old son Matthew was murdered with a cheap handgun in New York City, the day she says "pure joy" was taken from her life.

"I realized I was not immune to gun violence," says Blek, a Republican who is the volunteer president of the board of directors for the Bell Campaign, a national gun-control group. She'll take her message to Washington on Mother's Day, May 14, when she'll join other parents for what's being billed as the **Million Mom March**.

The march is expected to be the largest rally ever for gun control. It signals a new step in the movement to regulate guns, which until now has lacked the visible public passion that the powerful gun lobby has long shown.

The event is unlikely to turn out a million moms. Organizers say the Washington rally could attract at least 100,000 men and women, and 43 other rallies nationwide that day could reach a total of a million.

The rallies might not succeed in prodding Congress to pass new gun laws this year, and critics are skeptical of a lasting impact.

"Marches in Washington are many," says the National Rifle Association's chief lobbyist, James Jay Baker, who doubts it will change the dynamics on Capitol Hill.

Organizers, almost all of whom are volunteers, say they won't just walk away. They plan to mobilize into a national network that, in time, could force change.

"The march is not the end of a grass-roots movement. It is the beginning," says Naomi Paiss, spokeswoman for Handgun Control, which backs the event. She says many of the marchers are vocalizing their support for gun control for the first time and will cast decisive votes in this year's elections.

'Mystical power of mom'

"If this Congress doesn't act, we'll elect a new one," says Donna Dees-Thomases, a New Jersey mother and part-time publicist who founded the march.

Dees-Thomases got the idea for the march in August after watching TV news coverage of a shooting at a Los Angeles day camp that looked like one her two daughters attend. The image haunted her: "I couldn't stop thinking about those kids." She applied for a march permit, hoping to harness what she calls the "mystical power of mom."

Dees-Thomases has better political connections than the average suburban mother: She worked on Capitol Hill as an assistant press secretary to then-Sen. Russell Long, D-La. Her sister-in-law is Susan Thomases, a close friend of first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Word about the march spread, from "stroller mom to stroller mom" as Dees-Thomases puts it, and through PTAs, churches, synagogues and the Internet (www.millionmommarch.com).

Some participants are flying cross-country to the Washington march. Others are driving hundreds of miles, in minivans and chartered buses.

Some have heart-rending stories of personal loss.

There's Gregory Jaskolka, a former police officer and member of the National Rifle Association, who stood about 100 feet away in the early hours of 1999 when his son, 11, was struck in the head by a stray bullet during a New Year's Eve celebration in Philadelphia.

The boy now must use a wheelchair.

And there's Carole Price, a stay-at-home mom in Delaware whose son, 13, was killed five houses away when a 9-year-old neighbor was playing with his father's gun.

There will be thousands of other marchers whose families have not suffered directly from gun violence but who are nonetheless scared.

"I'm fearful for my grandchildren," says Estelle Edelson, 62, of Mountainside, N.J., who's organizing busloads to the march.

Lou Pare, 66, a retired negotiator for a defense contractor, is setting up a network of grandparents from his home near Holderness, N.H. Pare learned of the march by seeing Dees-Thomases on a TV news show.

She welcomed him as the movement's "Grandpa Lou."

Dees-Thomases says she's modeling the march and the follow-up effort on the experience of Mothers Against Drunk Driving. "MADD didn't ban alcohol, just the irresponsible use of it," she says.

The marchers want Congress to:

- * License handgun owners and register handguns.
- * Require childproof safety locks on handguns.
- * Require "cooling off" periods and background checks for all gun buyers.
- * Limit handgun purchases to one a month.
- * Promote tougher enforcement of existing gun laws.

Members of Congress have yet to resolve their differences over several gun-control measures that the Senate approved last year, including requirements that handguns be sold with safety locks and that all buyers at gun shows undergo background checks.

"The march will make a difference," says Sen. Chuck Schumer,

D-N.Y., a gun-control advocate. "It highlights how strongly American women feel about this."

Some advocates have doubts

However, even some gun-control advocates need convincing.

"I don't think a march can have any real lasting change," says Kristen Rand, director of federal policy at the Violence Policy Center, a gun-control group.

Rand argues that her fellow activists should do what NRA members do, such as deluging state and federal lawmakers with letters and phone calls.

"You don't see the NRA having marches," she says. "These moms want to feel they're doing something. But the reality is, the legislative process is a grind."

Jan Dizard, a professor of American culture at Amherst College, says the march is an important development. However, he sees it as less a statement for gun control and more a general alarm about parents' inability to protect their children. He calls it "the liberal version of family values."

Dizard, author of the 1999 book *Guns in America*, says he doubts that the marchers' proposals would do much to reduce gun deaths. He says the rate of gun accidents among children has fallen, and the reasons for gun homicides or suicides are more complex than access to firearms.

The nation's firearm death rate among children 14 and younger fell from 1.33 per 100,000 in 1987 to 1.08 per 100,000 in 1997, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Gun-control advocates note that the rate is still higher than in other industrialized countries. And, to bereaved parents, the pain of losing a child to gunfire is indescribable.

Blek says her son Matthew was walking a date home in New York City when three 15-year-olds demanded that he give them everything he had. When he reached into his pocket for his money, they shot him in the head.

Blek still cries when she tells that story. She says she supports gun control because she doesn't want other mothers to feel what she feels.

"I do this," she says, "because I need to do this."

GRAPHIC: PHOTO, b/w, Mike Derer, AP; PHOTO, b/w, Jud Burkett, AP; PHOTO, b/w, Kathy Willens, AP; PHOTO, b/w, The Bell Campaign; PHOTO, b/w, Famiy photo; Mom in charge: Donna Dees-Thomases thought up the **Million Mom March** after seeing TV news coverage of a shooting at a day camp. For gun rights: Larry Meyers of Republicans for the Right to Bear Arms at a rally Saturday in St. George, Utah, to protest the march. Kickoff: Johnnie Mae Robinson and Jean Jamate ring a bell to symbolize gun-violence victims. Mother turned activist: Mary Leigh Blek celebrates a ban in California on 'junk guns,' which are certain cheap handguns, last July. Matthew Blek: Shot by three teens while walking a date home.

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April 19, 2000, Wednesday, Final Edition

SECTION: METRO; Pg. B01**LENGTH:** 1149 words**HEADLINE:** Fight Against Guns Gives Moms a Cause**BYLINE:** Susan Levine , Washington Post Staff Writer**BODY:**

Tierney Siegel figured her idea was a long shot. In fact, just getting an audience with sports mogul Abe Pollin was going to be tough. To her astonishment, he took her phone call and put her on his calendar. "I'm nobody," she told him when they met. "I'm just a mom."

Yet something about this Montgomery County mom's appeal persuaded the Washington Wizards owner to bend--no, break--his own rules. The tragedy of gun violence and children, he decided, was too important to say no.

And so last night, as the Wizards played their final home game of the season, Siegel and seven other women became the first private group ever allowed to leaflet at the MCI Center. Their cause is the **Million Mom March**, and even before halftime they succeeded in passing out more than 10,000 fliers advertising the Mother's Day gathering on the Mall.

The mothers, it seems, are on a roll. From city to suburbia, they're organizing their rally through play groups, book clubs, churches and synagogues; communicating via e-mail, newsletters, phone trees and committees; spreading the word, corralling support, winning endorsements and pulling in cash. Many have been volunteering 50- and 60-hour weeks for an issue that they believe will bring huge crowds to the nation's capital.

The May 14 demonstration will be a public demand for gun control unlike any before it--emceed by television talk show host Rosie O'Donnell, serenaded by the likes of Rosanne Cash, Melissa Manchester and Emmylou Harris, and undoubtedly drawing tears as women whose children have died from guns tell their stories.

"This is actually going to be a very potent force," predicted Stephen Teret, director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research. "The image of moms marching is a wonderfully powerful image."

In the almost nine months since one angry and scared mother in New Jersey proposed the idea, the

Million Mom March has gained national legitimacy, a projected \$ 1.7 million budget and the backing of more than 300 organizations. The NAACP and YWCA have endorsed it. So have the National PTA, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the United States Conference of Mayors and an assortment of religious groups.

The battle cry is for what organizers term "sensible gun laws," including background checks for handgun purchasers and required licensing and registration of handguns, as well as mandatory safety locks. Surveys show women are far more receptive than men to such laws. According to a poll last year by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 75 percent of women favored controlling gun ownership over protecting the right to own a gun, compared with 53 percent of men.

Not just mothers are expected at the rally. The organizers' most recent crowd estimate was 100,000, but since then the National Park Service has doubled the rally space to an area between Fourth and 12th streets NW.

Across the region, the women involved have missed little opportunity to publicize it. They hit last month's Feminist Expo in Baltimore, protested National Rifle Association President Charlton Heston's appearance at Georgetown University and disseminated literature outside "Arthur Live" at George Mason University's Patriot Center. One impassioned Prince George's mother, who lost two sons to gunfire, has called people randomly from the phone book to urge them to attend the rally.

A major effort these days is soliciting marchers from churches, synagogues and mosques within an hour's drive of Washington, in part to ask for help housing out-of-towners that weekend. Falls Church Presbyterian already has offered its basement. To the south, a contingent approached the Richmond City Council and was rewarded with 10 city-financed charter buses to take supporters to Washington.

"Up to 10 buses and maybe more," said Teresa Dayrit, the coordinator there. "I'm getting tons of calls now."

Just last Saturday, Northern Virginia's latest planning meeting again drew 75 women for more than two hours of strategizing at the Mount Vernon Recreation Center.

"They're organized at the very grass-roots level," said Nancy Riker, owner of Washington D.C. Accommodations, which is booking travel reservations for out-of-towners heading to the rally. "And when these demonstrations and causes are organized at a grass-roots level, they tend to be successful because they're really getting to people where they work and live and play."

The same apparently is true in other cities, nearly two dozen of which will be holding their own rallies on Mother's Day. Still, women are flying to Washington from Seattle and Los Angeles. Buses, more than 350 as of Monday, will arrive from as far away as Minnesota and Florida.

"We're all coming, and we're all bringing our families," said Gail Powers, of Los Angeles, who is overseeing California, Arizona and Nevada. She's done so mainly by e-mail--until February the **Million Mom March** existed largely in cyberspace--but she's well aware that the Internet is a foreign world to many in Watts or the barrios of her city.

Two weeks ago, she ventured into their world, visiting New Calvary Baptist Church in south-central Los Angeles to implore, "We need to do this together."

"People in poor neighborhoods, they've been shot at for decades and nobody went down there to help them," she said. Quite a different reaction from when summer day campers, including Powers's 5-year-old, were fired on last year at the North Valley Jewish Community Center in Granada Hills, Calif.

Powers apologized to New Calvary's worshipers: "I'm sorry I wasn't there for you. I was really ignorant." After the service, many stood in line to sign the banner she and other mothers will bring east.

There's no way the national **Million Mom March** office on 17th Street NW can track all these efforts--not that founder Donna Dees-Thomases has ever suggested it should try.

In the subleased space where the organization moved only last month, controlled but enthusiastic chaos frequently rules the day. Boxes loaded with pink-and-white MMM T-shirts crowd corners. The phones, expanded recently from nine lines to 75, ring in endless syncopation. During a recent coordinators' meeting, someone's toddler daughter locked herself in the copier room and had to be rescued. "Keep up the Great Work," urges a cheerleading sort of sign.

Alice Mark, Silver Spring, is one of numerous area volunteers staffing answering the phones. She learned of the march relatively late when a friend asked if she would be on the Mall on May 14.

Since then, she's become a true believer. "I'm telling all my friends," she said during a break between calls. "I'm thinking of putting notices in all my neighbors' mailboxes."

Mark will be there all right, along with her daughter and grandson. "I want something where my heart's involved," she said. "Something I can commit to."

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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ABC WORLD NEWS THIS MORNING, April 14, 2000

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SHOW: GOOD MORNING AMERICA (7:00 AM ET)

April 14, 2000, Friday

TYPE: Interview

LENGTH: 962 words

HEADLINE: MILLION MOM MARCH FOUNDER DONNA DEES THOMASES AND COORDINATORS GAIL POWERS AND TINA JACKSON TALK ABOUT THE MARCH

ANCHORS: DIANE SAWYER

BODY:

DIANE SAWYER, co-host:

Well, one month from today, tens of thousands of women are expected to converge on the nation's capital, showing support for what they call common sense gun legislation. It's being called the **Million Mom March**, and even though the number may not quite reach a million, it's still pretty impressive so far, especially, as we said, when you consider that the organizer, Donna Dees Thomases, said she never really organized anything larger than a car pool before that.

We first met her last month, and she is back to bring us up-to-date along with two regional coordinators, moms as well, Gail Powers in Los Angeles, and Tina Jackson in Washington.

And we welcome the three of you this morning.

Ms. DONNA DEES THOMASES (Founder, **Million Mom March**): Thank you.

SAWYER: I want to remind people, Donna, what it was that galvanized you to start this. You were watching television, right?

Ms. DEES THOMASES: Yes.

I was watching a news video on "Nightline" of the August 10th shooting of the Grenada Hills day camp in California, and I saw that little daisy chain of children crossing the street, and, Diane, those are my children. I have kids exactly the same ages as those kids. And I felt ashamed that I have done nothing to help our very courageous lawmakers and activists who have been battling the gun lobby for years without the help of the average citizen. So, I felt like I needed to do something.

SAWYER: And, Gail, in fact...

Ms. GAIL POWERS (March Coordinator): Good morning.

SAWYER: Good morning to you.

Your son was there that morning. Right? Your five-year-old child.

Ms. POWERS: Yes. He was four at the time he was there.

SAWYER: He was not injured.

Ms. POWERS: Thankfully, no, he was not shot.

SAWYER: And how did you link up?

Ms. POWERS: Well, we had--our board president went to President Clinton's spiritual breakfast in the end of September, and she spoke to Senator Dianne Feinstein at that spiritual breakfast and came back with the information, and I contacted Donna at the end of September and asked what I could do to help and how I could contribute.

SAWYER: And, Tina, I know that you had a tragedy in your family. You lost your...

Ms. TINA JACKSON (March Coordinator): Yes.

SAWYER: ...your grown son, and that he was killed by a gun wound during an argument. But you saw this on a TV report. Right? That was the first thing that alerted you to the possibility of taking part?

Ms. JACKSON: Yes, it was. In February, I was looking at TV around 11:00, and I saw a news brief on it, and it said, 'million moms going to march on Washington for sensible gun legislation.' And I immediately signed up on the Web site.

SAWYER: Now tell me, Donna, at this point, if you're--if you're really putting your--I guess take a chance here. How many people do you think really are going to show up?

Ms. DEES THOMASES: Well, Diane, when I applied for the permit, seven days after the shooting in Grenada Hills, I put down 10,000 people. You know a million is a metaphor for a lot of people. I didn't know how many moms I could get, but I thought you know maybe 10,000. I know we have 10,000 people now. We have hundreds of people who call, and log on to our Web site every day, www.millionmommarch.com.

And the day that we actually appeared on GOOD MORNING AMERICA, we had 4,500 phone calls logged that day. They were all positive, people who just--they couldn't get enough of this. They have been wanting to do something. They're frustrated with the fact we have lost control of this country to the gun lobby, and we want to take it back.

SAWYER: What about some of the things that you've talked about, licensing handgun owners, registering handguns, safety locks on guns?

Ms. DEES THOMASES: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

SAWYER: Are you partisan? Is--is this a Democratic agenda in some ways because, as we know, there is a divide.

Ms. DEES THOMASES: You know, Diane, it's other people who are making it partisan. And quite frankly, I've written quite a few Republicans, and they quietly say we support what you're doing. They're under tyranny as well. They're threatened by the gun lobby that, if they support these things, they'll be voted out of office. So I have to say that we--we welcome any support but we're trying to make it as nonpartisan as possible. This--you know, gun violence does not know political parties. We

have Republican moms who have been affected by gun fire, who've lost their children to guns.

SAWYER: Tina, what's your biggest hope for the day?

Ms. JACKSON: My biggest hope is to have 'lots of people,' as my granddaughter say (sic), on that mall, lots of people who will go back in November and vote because they realize that the gun violence, the guns in this country has just wreaked too much havoc, and I want everyone out there, 'lots of people,' as my granddaughter says, and there will be.

SAWYER: And, Gail, I read that before this, you hadn't really voted very much because you didn't--you didn't feel that you could make a big difference. Do you think this is going to change things?

Ms. POWERS: I do. I realized through this process that I do have a voice, and we are a very powerful force in this country. Yeah. I didn't vote until I was 30 because I didn't think that my voice could make a difference. And I have learned that that's not so.

SAWYER: All right. Well, again, we thank the three of you for coming in. We're going to be tracking it all the way to D-day.

Ms. DEES THOMASES: Great. Thank you very much.

SAWYER: The **Million Mom March**.

Ms. DEES THOMASES: Thank you.

SAWYER: Thanks, the--the three of you as well, and we'll be back in just a moment.

(Commercial break)

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: April 15, 2000

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The Deseret News (Salt Lake City, UT) April 13, 2000, Thursday

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The Deseret News (Salt Lake City, UT)

April 13, 2000, Thursday

SECTION: WIRE; Pg. A05

LENGTH: 521 words

HEADLINE: Kids' escape from racist gunman leads to **Million Mom March**

BYLINE: Associated Press

BODY:

SHORT HILLS, N.J. -- It took an unforgettable image of young children escaping a racist gunman to transform Donna Dees-Thomases from a wealthy suburban mother into a grass-roots activist.

The image was from Aug. 10, when a white supremacist opened fire on a Jewish Community Center in Granada Hills, Calif.

Dees-Thomases was flipping channels when she saw the video of children the same age as her daughters crossing the street hand-in-hand with police officers.

"These were my kids crossing the street," Dees-Thomases said. "My kids go to a JCC. Anybody could walk in. It was just crazy."

One week later, Dees-Thomases registered a Web site and launched the **Million Mom March** campaign. The grass-roots effort is expected to become the nation's largest gun control demonstration to date.

The Mother's Day rally is expected to draw 100,000 people to the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Other demonstrations are scheduled in 20 cities nationwide, including Tulsa, Okla., Los Angeles, Denver and Portland, Ore.

The group is pressing Congress for stricter gun control, including measures to require all handgun owners to be licensed and registered, require built-in child safety locks and limit handgun purchases to one a month.

"Mothers are certainly an important voice in this debate, and they are a voice that has not been very strong until this point," said Shannon Frattaroli, researcher at the Center for Gun Policy and Research at Johns Hopkins University.

"We have yet to see really a grass-roots movement in this area, and maybe that's what is needed in order to change voting behavior."

National Rifle Association spokesman Bill Powers said the organization was unconcerned about the appeal of the May 14 rally.

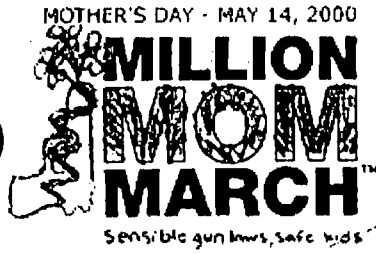
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Gun Violence Fact Sheet

Gun Deaths Among Youth:

- 4,223 young people ages 0-19 were killed by gunfire - one every two hours, nearly 12 every day in the U.S. in 1997.
- 2,580 were murdered by gunfire.
- 1,262 committed suicide using a gun-more than three every day.
- 306 died from an unintentional or "accidental" shooting.
- 630 young people killed by guns were under the age of 15.
- 191 young people killed by guns were under the age of 10.
- 84 young people were under the age of 5.

[source for all of the above: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Center for Health Statistics]

- American children under 15 are 12 times more likely to die from gunfire than children in 25 other industrialized countries combined. [source: Centers for Disease Control. Rates of homicide, suicide, and firearm-related death among children-26 industrialized countries. MMWR 46 (5):101-105. 1997.]
- Gun homicide is the fourth leading cause of death for young people 10-14 years of age. [source: National Center for Health Statistics 1997 data.]
- Gun homicide is the second leading cause of death for young people 15-24. [source: National Center for Health Statistics 1997 data.]

Total Gun Deaths:

There were a total of 32,436 people killed by guns in the U.S. in 1997. Of these:

- 17,566 were gun suicides
- 13,522 were gun homicides
- 981 were unintentional or "accidental" shootings
- 367 were shooting deaths of undetermined intent

[source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Center for Health Statistics]

- In 1997, firearm injuries were the second leading cause of *injury death* for all ages and for young people aged 15-24. Motor vehicle injuries were the leading cause of *injury death* for all ages and for young people 15-24 years of age in 1997. [source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Vital Statistics Report, 47 (19), June 30, 1999:table 19]
- The risk of suicide or homicide is twice as high for individuals with a family history of registered handgun purchase, than for those without such a history. [source: Cummings, P. et al. The Association between the purchase of a handgun and homicide or suicide. *AJPH*, 87(6) June 1997:974-978.]
- Suicide is nearly 5 times more likely to occur in a household with a gun than in a household without a gun. [source: Kellermann, A.L. et al. Suicide in the home in relation to gun ownership. *N Engl J Med*, 327(7) Aug. 12, 1992:467-472.]
- The presence of a gun in the home triples the risk of homicide in the home. [source: Kellermann, A.L. et al. Gun ownership as a risk factor for homicide in the home. *N Engl J Med* 329 (15) October 7, 1993: 1084-1091.]
- Guns were used in approximately 7 out of every 10 murders in the U.S. in 1997. Handguns were used in 53% of all murders and in 78% of all murders committed with a firearm. [source: Federal Bureau of Investigation. *Crime in the United States, 1997*. Washington, DC: Department of Justice. p. 20.]
- Americans own nearly 200 million guns, 65 million of which are handguns. [source: Cook, P.L. and Ludwig, L. *Guns in America: national survey on private ownership and use of firearms*. Research in Brief. National Institute of Justice, May 1997.]

One-quarter of adults in the United States own a gun and only about one in six Americans (16%) own a handgun. That means that five out of six Americans do *not* own a handgun. [source: Diaz, T. *Making a Killing, The Business of Guns in America*. New York: the New Press, 1999.]



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FACTS *for* FAMILIES

No. 37 (11/95)

CHILDREN AND FIREARMS

Parents, professionals, and many others are concerned about the increasing numbers of children and adolescents killed by firearms:

- o Every day, 10 American children ages 18 and under are killed in handgun suicide, homicides and accidents. Many more are wounded.
- o Gunshot wounds to children ages 16 and under have increased 300 percent in major urban areas since 1986.
- o Sixty percent of teen deaths by suicide involve the use of a gun. Nearly 3,000 teens use handguns to commit suicide every year.
- o An estimated 400,000 youngsters carried handguns to school in 1987. In Baltimore, half the males reported having taken a gun to high school.
- o At least 25 million American households keep handguns and 50% of owners keep them loaded.

We cannot gun-proof our children and adolescents. Children are playful and active. Adolescents are curious and impulsive. Such healthy traits when mixed with guns can cause death.

The best way to protect children against gun violence is to remove all guns from the home. If parents feel they must have one or more guns in the home, there will always be some dangers. The following actions are crucial to lessen the dangers:

- o Store all firearms unloaded and uncocked in a securely locked container. Only the parents should know where the container is located.
- o Store the guns and ammunition in separate locked locations.
- o For a revolver, place a padlock around the top strap of the weapon to prevent the cylinder from closing, or use a trigger lock; for a pistol, use a trigger lock.
- o When handling or cleaning a gun, never leave it unattended, even for a moment; it should be in your view at all times.

Children and Firearms, "Facts for Families," No. 37 (11/95)

Even if parents don't own a gun, they should check with parents at other places where their children play, to make sure safety precautions are followed. In a study of accidental handgun shootings of children under 16, nearly 40% of the shootings occurred in the homes of friends and relatives. The tragedies occurred most often when children were left unsupervised.

When youngsters use alcohol and also have a gun available, the risk for violence rapidly increases. In a youth suicide study, victims who used firearms were about five times more likely to have been drinking than those who used other means. In a study of firearm-associated murders among family members, almost 90% of the offenders and victims had used alcohol or drugs before the killings.

The average American child witnesses 45 acts of violence on TV each day, most involving handguns. Children often imitate what they see, and are more aggressive after extensive viewing of TV violence. Parents should help protect their children from the effects of watching TV violence. For example, they can watch with children; ration TV; and disapprove of the violent episodes in front of the children, stressing the belief that such behavior is not the best way to resolve a problem.

Children and adolescents with emotional or behavioral problems may be more likely than other children to use guns, against themselves or others. Parents who are concerned that their child is too aggressive or might have an emotional disorder may wish to seek an evaluation by a child and adolescent psychiatrist.

More information about gun safety issues and guidelines is available from the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, 1225 "I" Street, N.W., Suite 1100, Washington, D.C. 20005.

Free distribution of single *Facts* sheets is a public service made possible by the Academy Endowment Fund. This fund supports educational programs and materials designed to educate parents, families, teachers, caregivers, and others about the mental illnesses affecting nearly 12.5 million children and adolescents in an effort to de-stigmatize these illnesses, promote early identification and treatment, and encourage funding for scientifically based research. Please make a tax deductible contribution to the Academy Endowment Fund and support this public outreach. (AACAP Endowment Fund - FFF, P.O. Box 96106, Washington, D.C. 20090)

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GUN VIOLENCE STATISTICS

The Mirror, April 22, 1999

- Firearms have killed more than 60,000 people in America in the last two years.
- Every six hours a United States teenager commits suicide by shooting.
- An estimated 1.2 million children have access to weapons when they are alone at home.
- Nearly one million teenagers carry a gun to school.
- In America a gun is produced every 20 seconds. Someone is shot with a gun every two minutes.
- In 1996, there were 2 handgun murders in new Zealand, 13 in Australia, 15 in Japan, 30 in Great Britain, 106 in Canada, 213 in Germany, and 9,390 in the United States.
- For every self-defense killing there are 42.9 other deaths caused by guns.
- Handguns kill 60 in the United States every day.
- Each day handguns are used in 33 rapes, 575 robberies, and 1,116 assaults.
- Shooting is the leading cause of death among African-American males aged 15 to 24.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch, May, 1, 1999

- Firearms are used in 70% of homicides.
- There are an estimated 223 million guns in the United States.

Washington Times, May 2, 1999

- 31 states allow some degree of carrying a concealed weapon.

Washington Post, April 25, 1999

- In 1996, 4,643 children and teenagers were killed with guns – 2,866 murdered, 1,309 by suicide, 468 in unintentional shootings.
- 13 children are killed with guns every day.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, June 9, 1999

- About 1% of federally licensed firearms dealers in the United States sold nearly half of all traced guns used in crimes last year.
- 137 licensed gun dealers, labeled “bad apples,” sold more than 13,000 of the 77,010 crime guns traced in 1998.

Bangor Daily News, January 28, 1999

- There are 500 children accidentally shot by playmates a year.

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The New York Post**April 21, 2000, Friday****SECTION:** All Editions; Pg. 008**LENGTH:** 633 words**HEADLINE:** TELL THE SLAIN KIDS, GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE'**BYLINE:** Andrea Peyser**BODY:**

PEOPLE who hate guns tell blatant lies to advance their anti-firearms agendas.

At least, that's what people who love guns like to tell you.

So for just one muzzle flash, let us give the floor to gun enthusiasts. Let the "truth" - as the gun people see it - have its day.

Never mind that in the time it takes for you to travel to your subway destination, an innocent person - not a criminal or someone committing suicide - will be shot to death somewhere in this country.

But never mind ...

Here, then, is The Big Lie advanced by gun-haters:

Anti-gun activists are fond of stating that between 13 and 17 **children** lose their lives each day to gunfire in the United States.A misleading **statistic**, maintains Dave Kopel, a former Manhattan prosecutor who is now research director for the Independence Institute in Aurora, Colo.In the latest issue of the National Review, Kopel wrote that the number of juvenile **gun deaths** is unfairly inflated by such factors as 18-year-old drug dealers who shoot competitors, and 19-year-old armed robbers who get shot by police. Not an accurate reflection of little kids dying senselessly.

So, let's examine the "true" number of dead kids.

"As for actual **children** [14 years old and under], the daily death rate is 2.6," writes Kopel.**Children** 10 and under die at a rate of 0.4 per day, Kopel writes.

What? No collective sigh of relief?

Let's do the math.

According to Kopel's conservative estimate, 18.2 **children** ages 14 and under die each week from gunshots.

The annual death toll for the most helpless members of society is 949. Add a few more bodies to that total in a leap year. That's about 950 families trapped in wrenching, lifelong grief.

Kopel, by the way, does not come off like some kind of zealot.

"I don't think even one [death] is acceptable," Kopel told me yesterday.

"Look, I've got three kids. If I lost 2.6, it would be pretty distressing," he said, but maintains, "Getting accurate information is important."

In the interest of gathering accurate information, I contacted Gary Kleck, professor of criminology at Florida State University.

Kleck has been crunching **gun-death** numbers for years. The number of **gun deaths** in 1997 - the most recent year for which **statistics** are available - was 32,436, says Kleck.

But that number is misleading.

First, take away the 981 accidents and the 17,566 suicides.

Justifiable killings are harder to get a handle on. Through his research, Kleck has pegged the number of people killed justifiably, by cops or civilians, at approximately 1,273.

That means that in 1997 only 12,616 people who didn't want to die - or didn't "ask" for it - were killed by guns. About 34.6 per day. Some 1.4 each hour. During a 40-minute subway commute, only one person will lose his life.

So why aren't you relieved?

Kopel maintains that the national love affair with firearms - 250 million guns are owned by Americans - can make us safer, not just more vulnerable.

He uses England as an example. While **gun deaths** there declined after handguns were outlawed, Kopel said other crimes, like burglary, went up. He said that's because crooks have little fear that the folks they rob are armed.

"There is no way to count the number of crimes that aren't committed because someone has a gun," Kleck said.

That's a hard point to argue.

But then, how can you explain that in cities where gun-control is strong - like New York and Boston - you almost never see the kind of mass shootings that have struck the heartland? Or shattered two senior centers in the past two days?

The answer is that where there are fewer **guns**, there are fewer **gun deaths**.

This view may be attacked by anti-gun forces. But I assure you, their own numbers will bear me out.

It is no lie.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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The Houston Chronicle♦ [View Related Topics](#)**May 03, 2000, Wednesday 3 STAR EDITION****SECTION:** A; Pg. 21 Metfront**LENGTH:** 253 words**HEADLINE:** Police fish for guns with gift certificates;
HPD program to buy back firearms**SOURCE:** Staff**BYLINE:** S.K.. BARDWELL**BODY:**

Houston police on Saturday will offer \$ 100 gift certificates in exchange for working firearms as part of the city's gun buy-back program.

"The truth is, **statistically**, most **gun-related deaths** that occur in people's homes occur with the homeowners' own weapon," Mayor Lee Brown said Tuesday as he released details of "Operation Safe and Secure," a program to heighten gun safety awareness.

The April issue of the American Journal of Public Health reported that 8.3 million **children** in the United States live in homes that have an unsecured firearm.

"We need to do a better job of teaching citizens about gun safety and the dangers of unsecured guns in the home, especially in homes with **children**," Brown said

Saturday's buy-back program will allow citizens to turn in weapons anonymously, with no questions asked, to police officers at four locations.

Citizens who turn in working firearms will receive a \$ 100 gift certificate for Oshman's Sporting Goods, Target and other area retailers.

Volunteers at the buy-back locations will also hand out about 2,000 free gun locks, which come as part of a package containing gun safety information.

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

QUOTES

Divider Title: _____

GUN CONTROL CRUSADER

REP. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

Influential Credentials: When Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-New York) campaigns for gun control, she speaks from searing personal experience--and politicians often listen.

Bio Brief: Born January 5, 1944, in Brooklyn, New York. Married Dennis McCarthy, Wall Street office manager; one son, Kevin.

Turning Points: In 1993, a gunman sprayed a commuter train with bullets, killing her husband and five others and grievously wounding her son. That made her an activist. Then she learned that her Congressman would vote to repeal the assault-weapons ban. That made her run for Congress.

Goal: Childproof locks on handguns.

She Says: "You have to personalize it. That's what gives you the energy to keep fighting."

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Newsweek

May 15, 2000, U.S. Edition

SECTION: NATIONAL AFFAIRS; Pg. 30**LENGTH:** 806 words**HEADLINE:** The Moms' Secret Weapon**BYLINE:** Susan Faludi**HIGHLIGHT:**

Their kiddie rhetoric may sound innocent, but it's cleverly, if not deliberately, designed to hit their enemies where they live

BODY:

So now it's gun control, not abortion. Just as they did eight years ago, women are marching on Washington. As before, the cause's supporters are mostly educated, middle-to upper-class working women, rallying around an issue that has generated a huge gender gap--a 20-point divide in the current case. Then why, if you listen to these like-minded sisters, do you think you are hearing not the descendants of those old pro-choice protesters but their antagonists? Like the anti-abortion right, the Million Mom March expresses its aims in the language of "innocence" and "protection."

This goes beyond the pink-crayoned beseechings dotted with tiny hearts and steaming apple pies that mark the movement's Internet home page. The moms' pitch concentrates so single-mindedly on the salvation of what it calls "our defenseless children" that the roughly 3,500 adult women murdered each year (a rate that has remained steady even as male-homicide rates have declined) hardly get a mention in its literature and press appeals. "Moms across the country have been crying in their kitchens," declared the march's founder, Donna Dees-Thomases, a skilled publicist who dubs herself a "New Jersey mom" who just "couldn't stop thinking of those kids."

The Million Mom March Web site implores, protect a child! and offers postings entreating us to: "Look into the eyes of a child, yours or any other child. See their smiles. Touch their tiny fingers and kiss that tiny little nose. Imagine their future... How will YOU ensure those eyes still shine bright tomorrow and the next day?" If the rallying cry of the reproductive-rights campaigns was "my body, my right," this time around it sounds more like "my kid, my stroller."

What's going on here? The Right to Life movement shrewdly turned the fetus into a cute-as-a-button poster child. (Anti-abortion tracts even offered "diaries" penned by the in utero tykes themselves.) But that was at least a battle over fetuses. Why is the same rhetoric cropping up in a battle about guns? Ask the founder Dees-Thomases, and she'll say with a verbal shrug that she has no idea she was using anti-abortion lingo; she was only conscious of creating a "1950-ish feel" to her Web site to broaden its appeal. "I wish I could say I was that smart," she laughs. Nonetheless, the Million Moms' baby talk may be an unwitting masterstroke. Because it so perfectly homes in--and hog-ties--the opposition.

The pro-gun lobby has always had a strong anti-abortion sentiment. Indeed, pro-gun and "pro-life" memberships markedly overlap, as do their sources of funding and organizational ties. I've attended a number of militia gatherings, and every one had on prominent display up-close-and-personal portraits of the unborn. Likewise, if you go to a right-to-life assembly, you are likely to receive leaflets and even lectures on Second Amendment rights. Time and again, anti-abortionists who buttonholed me to decry pro-choice feminists smoothly segued into a denunciation of those same feminists for "taking our guns away."

For the men whose pro-gun and pro-life preoccupations are twinned, the connection goes deep. Whether defending their right to bear arms against government "jack-booted thugs," or proclaiming their right to save fetuses from the clutches of "the abortion mill," these men are compelled by the same desire: to resurrect their traditional male role as family protector. If there is little call for that role in their actual domestic lives, they can still dream of reclaiming it in fantasy realms. Thus, the "patriots" obsessed with Waco envisioned the Branch Davidian compound as a "family home" and themselves as sentries protecting "the innocent children." Similarly, anti-abortion activists imagine their attacks on family planning clinics to be "rescue missions" in which they are called upon to liberate the "innocent unborn."

Reproductive control and lack of **gun control** are inseparable halves of what **feminists** once dubbed the male "protection racket": If women have no control over their wombs, then they are helpless dependents in need of men's protection. But if women can make their own choices, then they no longer need the paternal guardianship either. That is why gun ownership and anti-abortion advocacy go together: each props up the other.

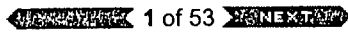
Intentional or not, the Million Mom March's rhetoric strikes a blow at the psychological solar plexus of the pro-gun movement, the alliance between pro-gun and anti-abortion sentiments. They are saying in essence: not only don't we want male protection, we are the protectors now.

That stance may prove even more unnerving for their male opponents, who will be hard-pressed to confront it openly. After all, these women are "just moms with strollers." Perhaps never has such a nonthreatening posture been so threatening.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO: Volunteers: They're pitching apple pie

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2000

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Terms: **feminist w/5 gun control** ([Edit Search](#))*The Baltimore Sun, April 2, 2000*Copyright 2000 The Baltimore Sun Company
THE BALTIMORE SUN

April 2, 2000, Sunday ,FINAL

SECTION: TELEGRAPH ,3A**LENGTH:** 891 words**HEADLINE:** Women at peak of electoral power in 2000; Leaders at Feminist Expo know their constituency does not vote in lock step**BYLINE:** Gail Gibson**SOURCE:** SUN STAFF**BODY:**

Jacqui Ceballos was born just five years after women won the right to vote in America. She remembers clearly the long stretch that followed when politicians simply weren't very interested in how women voted.

"Oh, they weren't interested at all," said Ceballos, 74, who helped lead the New York chapter of the National Organization for Women during the turbulent 1970s, when all of that started to change. "When we got some power," she said, "of course they wanted us then."

Perhaps never as much as they do this year.

With the presidential race expected to be a squeaker straight through the fall, pollsters say it could well be women -- who have turned out in greater numbers than men in recent elections -- who decide the outcome.

"There's no political analyst that will not say the gender gap will be important in this election," said Eleanor Smeal, a leading feminist thinker who coined the term 20 years ago.

At the Feminist Expo 2000 in Baltimore, which concludes today, Smeal and other left-leaning women's rights leaders are doing their best to influence how candidates think about and talk about women's issues in the presidential race.

But the collective women's vote includes many subdivisions. There are the "soccer moms" who gained fame in 1996, and their working-class counterparts for 2000: "waitress moms." Already, there are signs that older and younger women will split their vote this year, said Andrew Kohut, director of the Pew Research Center in Washington.

And while women voters traditionally lean Democratic, Kohut said, that might not hold true in a topsy-turvy election year that has seen some liberal Democratic women fall hard for conservative Republican Sen. John McCain or sniff their disapproval of first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton as a U.S. Senate candidate.

"I can't believe it; they're saying they won't vote for her because she didn't leave him," said Ceballos, one of 6,000 participants expected at the conference at the Baltimore Convention Center.

Ceballos, who as a college music student in Louisiana during the 1940s fiercely defended Eleanor Roosevelt, is the kind of stalwart Democratic woman voter who helped Bill Clinton twice win the White House.

In 1992, Clinton took 46 percent of the women's vote, compared with 37 percent that went to Republican George Bush and 17 percent to Reform Party candidate Ross Perot. In 1996, Clinton won 54 percent of the women's vote to Republican Bob Dole's 38 percent and Perot's 7 percent, Pew Center research shows.

Clinton's advantage with women was significant in part because more women than men went to the polls, said Mary Hawkesworth, director of the nonpartisan Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University. In 1996, 53 percent of the voters were women.

"Bill Clinton's election is completely owed to the women's vote," Hawkesworth said. "So both the Democratic and Republican parties are keenly aware of the need to court them."

So far, Clinton's appeal to women voters is not certain to transfer to his vice president.

When Republican George W. Bush was enjoying double-digit leads over Democrat Al Gore late last year, it was largely because he also had a slight edge with women voters, said the Pew Center's Kohut. In research last month, Kohut's organization showed Gore with a 13-point lead among women.

"What lead Gore has is predicated upon his support among women, which has been up and down in the past year," Kohut said.

Republican pollster Linda DiVall points out that Bush is far more popular among women voters -- particularly stay-at-home moms -- than either his father or Bob Dole was. She credits the younger Bush's attention to issues such as education, his youth and his campaign theme of "compassionate conservatism."

In his stump speech, Bush almost always gives a nod to single mothers, saying they have the "toughest job in America."

Bush won 49 percent of the women's vote in his first race for governor in Texas, against Democratic incumbent Ann W. Richards. He won more than 60 percent of the women's vote in his re-election in 1998.

Women won the right to vote in 1920. It wasn't until the early 1980s that the gender gap first appeared. Kohut said the gap traces to more women entering the work force and paying attention to issues such as reproductive rights and the minimum wage. Before that, Kohut said, men and women generally voted the same.

Smeal, president of the **Feminist** Majority Foundation, said issues such as **gun control** and education will help define the women's vote this year. Already, they are showing their muscle: A Million Mom March is planned in Washington on May 14 to push for stricter gun laws.

And Smeal said it won't be enough for candidates to highlight education, an issue women voters traditionally rank as a top concern. She wants to hear candidates talk specifically about protecting Title IX, the federal law that gives girls and boys equal access to sports and other school activities.

Women voters should be asking other questions as well, Smeal said. How many women would the candidates appoint to the Cabinet? How would they protect elderly women who might be hurt by an overhaul Social Security?

The candidates this year will have to pay attention, she said. "You cannot ignore the women's vote and get elected."

GRAPHIC: PHOTO(S) Political perspective: Jacqui Ceballos supports Hillary Rodham Clinton, as she supported Eleanor Roosevelt.

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Information on OHIO Million Mom Organizers:

Jennifer Robbins Hamilton, Ohio State Coordinator Dayton, Ohio

Jennifer Robbins Hamilton spends her time raising her two children, Noah, age 4 ½ , and Georgia, age 2. Jennifer got involved in gun safety issues after last year's school shootings. After researching gun control and reading Sarah Brady's story, she contacted the national office of the Million Mom March to offer her assistance. The first Ohio organizer, Jennifer has worked over the last 6 months to organize Ohio moms to participate in Million Mom March events in their hometowns and in Washington on Mother's Day.

Julie Eichorn, Columbus Bus Local Coordinator Canal Winchester, Ohio

Julie Eichorn was the second person in Ohio to volunteer to help coordinate moms for the Million Mom March. She became involved in reaction to the school shootings and her concern about the affect of gun violence on children. In the last six months, three kids have died from accidental shootings in Columbus alone. She is the mother of Matthew, age 12, and Brittany, age 10.

Cathi Webber, Willoughby Local Coordinator Willoughby, OH

Cathi Webber, a working mom and youth educator at her church, is the mother of Jennifer, age 18, and Bradley, age 12. Cathi found information about the Million Mom March while researching a youth program for her church called "Creating Circles of Peace." The Million Mom March has given her hope that we can make our world safer for our kids.

Kim Chapple, Cleveland/Akron Coordinator Cleveland, OH.

Kim Chapple, a magazine editor, became involved in the Million Mom March after seeing a spot on the Today Show. The mother of Griffin, age 4, and Adrianna, age 3, Kim feels the Million Mom March is a chance for her to do something to help kids make responsible choices.

Toby Hoover, Toledo Coordinator. Perrysburg, OH

Toby Hoover's first husband, Dale Stone, was killed by gun violence 23 years ago, leaving her alone to raise two young children. Toby became involved in the Million Mom March because she has lived through what gun violence can do to a family, and wants to help prevent other families from experiencing that loss. Toby is the grandmother of Megan, age 7, and Ryan, age 5.

Monica Shephard, Columbus Coordinator Columbus, OH

Monica, the mother of 10-year old Elizabeth, works at a Women to Work center, and is a vocal advocate for child safety. Over the last year, she has become outraged at the number of shootings involving young children, both in her hometown of Columbus and across the nation. Her outrage drove her to become involved in the Million Mom March in Ohio.

Information on Ohio Million Mom March activities:

Five Ohio cities -- Columbus, Willoughby, Cleveland, Stark County, and Cincinnati -- are organizing marches on Mother's Day as part of the Million Mom March. There will also be a morning prayer in Cleveland. In addition, on Saturday, five buses are leaving for Washington, D.C. carrying over 250 people who will participate in the national Million Mom March.

Final 05/08/00 8:20am
Heather Hurlburt

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
POINTS FOR POOL SPRAY AFTER
MEETING WITH MILLION MOM MARCH ORGANIZERS
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, DC
May 8, 2000**

- Attorney General Reno, my Chief of Staff, John Podesta, and I have just had an inspiring meeting with the organizers of the Million Mom March. I want to thank them for coming here -- those who have lost children or loved ones to guns, and those who haven't lost anyone, but understand that the death of a child is a loss for us all.
- They are here for a simple reason -- Americans want commonsense gun safety laws. People of different backgrounds are joining hands and saying enough -- it's time for sensible gun safety legislation that protects our kids. They're telling us that this is not about politics -- it's about the lives of our children. And they will be out marching on Mother's Day, May 14.
- This kind of grassroots movement is happening all across our nation. I've seen it in Colorado, where citizens are gathering signatures for a referendum to close the gun-show loophole. I've seen it in Maryland, where the state legislature last month passed our nation's first law requiring built-in safety locks for all new handguns. I've seen it in California, which banned junk guns and a new generation of assault weapons as well as limiting handgun sales. I've seen it in Massachusetts, which is now enforcing consumer product safety rules for guns.
- The Million Mom March will send a message of encouragement to everyone in those and other states who is struggling for sensible gun legislation. Millions of Americans believe that we can do more to keep guns away from children and criminals without constraining lawful gun owners across our nation. And this march will send a message to the gun lobby and its allies in Congress -- stop standing in the way of commonsense measures that will make all of us safer.
- The effort will not end when the last Mom leaves the National Mall. We still have a world of work to do to save the lives of the dozen kids who die in gun violence every single day. I urge Congress to seize this opportunity to take action on the gun safety bill that has been before it for more than 10 months. This Sunday I'll be what this group calls an "honorary Mom." And Sunday and everyday, I am proud to stand with these women who are coming to Washington from all walks of life to stand up for our children.



Christine L. Anderson
05/10/2000 07:06:24 PM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:

Subject: REVISED (note date) President Clinton Declares a Major Disaster Exists in the State of New Mexico

THE WHITE HOUSE
OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2000

**PRESIDENT CLINTON DECLARES A MAJOR DISASTER EXISTS IN THE STATE
OF NEW MEXICO**

The President today declared a major disaster exists in the State of New Mexico and ordered Federal aid to supplement state and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe fire threats on May 10, 2000.

The President's action authorizes FEMA to coordinate all disaster relief efforts which have the purpose of alleviating the hardship and suffering caused by the emergency on the local population, and to provide appropriate assistance for required emergency measures, authorized under Title V of the Stafford Act, to save lives, protect property and public health and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe in the counties of Los Alamos, Sandoval and Santa Fe.

FEMA is authorized to identify, mobilize, and provide at its discretion, equipment and resources necessary to alleviate the impacts of the emergency.

###

Message Sent To: _____

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Paul D. Glastris
05/11/2000 03:23:07 PM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:

Subject: gun topper language for teachers

Before I begin, I want to express my sadness that once again, we have had another incidence of gun violence involving a young person, this time near a school in Prairie Grove, Arkansas. We will have to wait to learn all the facts, but clearly, incidents like this have become all too common in America. It is a reminder of why so many mothers are coming to Washington this weekend to push for common-sense measures to keep guns from falling into the wrong hands—including the hands of children. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all those in Prairie Grove who have been affected by this tragic shooting.

Message Sent To:

Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP@EOP
Eric P. Liu/OPD/EOP@EOP
Anna Richter/OPD/EOP@EOP
Deanne E. Benos/OPD/EOP@EOP
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Final 5/11/00 8:30pm
Terry Edmonds

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS WITH OHIO ORGANIZERS OF MILLION MOM MARCH
AKRON, OHIO
MAY 12, 2000**

Good afternoon. I have just met with this wonderful group of mothers who are leading this state's participation in Sunday's Million Mom March for commonsense gun safety laws. I want to thank them for their courage and commitment and let them know that what they are doing is profoundly important. Like millions of mothers all over America they are outraged by the senseless acts of gun violence that continue to plague our communities.

Every day in America, nearly a dozen children are killed by guns – and twelve families suffer a wound that never heals. But what is almost as senseless as the violence is the fact that Congress refuses to enact legislation to prevent these shootings. These moms will be marching in Washington and in more than 60 other cities on Mothers Day to say to Congress – enough is enough. It is unconscionable that over a year after Columbine and over 10 months since they've had a chance to send me meaningful legislation, Congress still refuses to act.

They can ignore me...they can ignore commonsense...they can even ignore the facts...but this Sunday they won't be able to ignore the voices of more than a million moms across the country demanding action.

Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." So, I just want to say to these women and all those who will be marching on Sunday, I know you will succeed in changing the world if you keep at it.

Thank you.

MAR-18-1999 21:04

FAX

MAY 14, 2000



DATE ▶ []

Million Mom March
P.O. Box 762
Washington, DC 20044-0762

888-989-MOMS
www.MILLIONMOMMARCH.com

TO ▶ Kim Widdeo

COMPANY ▶ []

FAX NUMBER ▶ 456-6771 TOTAL PAGES ▶ 8
(including cover)

FROM ▶ Josy → Orest, Heather, Sam, Terry -
cc MIRA

NOTES ▶
TO: Karin Kullman 67431
Ruby Shamir 66244
Josh Gottheimer 62505
Stephanie Cutler 66539

Million Mom March Info. |||

Sensible gun laws, safe kids

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Bisulco

MAR-18-1999 21:04

**MAY 14, 2000**The National Mall
Washington, DC**Million Mom March Key Messages*****Who We Are***

We are Moms from all walks of life who are sick and tired of the gun violence directed at kids and often by kids. We are mothers and others who have lost kids, husbands, siblings and friends because of the easy access to guns in this country. And, we are Moms who have never lost anyone to a gun ... and we want to keep it that way.

Kids' Lives Are At Stake

Every day, a dozen children die from gun-shot wounds. They are crime victims; wrong-place, wrong-time victims; unlocked-and-loaded-in-the-house victims; and suicides, made easy by access to a gun.

This is personal, not political. We are in this for one reason only: to keep our kids safe.

Each day there is no action on this issue, we lose 12 more children. Enough is enough.

The Million Mom March

We are putting our elected officials on notice that we, the mothers, will not tolerate them putting the gun lobby before the safety of our children any longer. Our event in Washington, DC will send a strong message to Congress that they must take responsible action this session or else face a permanent time-out in November, 2000

Building toward a Mother's Day event is focusing our energies and helping us to grow into a major force on gun control. We expect results, and will hold our elected officials accountable if they don't deliver.

The Goal

No matter how you feel about guns, there are certain enforceable laws that all reasonable people can support. But, sadly, getting some lawmakers to act reasonably is about as difficult as getting our kids to clean their rooms. If we've told them once, we've told them a hundred times. But still the majority of Congress doesn't pass laws to keep guns out of the wrong hands - even in the wake of Columbine.

Now we moms are mad. And we mean business. We want Congress to create a meaningful gun policy in this country that treats guns like cars. It's only common sense that gun owners be trained in gun safety and to be licensed. It's only common sense that a deadly weapon be registered so that its owner thinks twice before giving it to someone else who may want to cause harm. Licensing and registration - it's only common sense.

888-989-MOM**WWW.MILLIONMOMMARCH.COM**

Million Mom March ☎ P.O. Box 762 ☎ Washington, DC 20044-0762

MAR-18-1999 21:04

**MAY 14, 2000**The National Mall
Washington, DCThe Million Mom March
Fact Sheet**MMM fact sheet**

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**MAY 14, 2000**The National Mall
Washington, DC

MILLION MOM MARCH
Sensible gun laws, safe kids
Backgrounder

Every day, 12 children die from gunshot wounds. Each day there is no action on this issue, we lose 12 more children. It is the horror of events like Columbine that grab the news headlines, but these daily deaths are even more commonplace than a dramatic school shooting—they are happening in everyone's backyard.

These children are crime victims; wrong place, wrong time victims; unlocked-and-loaded-in-the-house victims; neighbor accidentally killing neighbor; and suicides...all with one major factor in common: death. Lives are destroyed because a gun fell into the wrong hands.

The Million Mom March was conceived in the fall of 1999 by a New Jersey Mom who had enough. Donna Dees-Thomases received a wake-up call while watching the footage of the Grenada Hills Day Camp massacre. Her young children were untouched by gun violence, and she was fiercely determined to keep them that way. Her hope was to harness the passion of hundreds of thousands of people who are determined to keep our kids safe.

Today thousands of women and their families are working together to plan for the national Million Mom March rally on the Mall in Washington, D.C., and the local events and rallies in a number of cities throughout the country, all on Mother's Day, May 14, 2000.

These mothers, step-mothers, grandmothers, and honorary mothers in this crusade are organizing buses, planes and mini-vans to meet in Washington. And they are pulling together hometown events where they live to spread their message.

The Million Mom March is not about banning guns. The Million Mom March is about common sense gun laws—specifically they are urging Congress to enact a law requiring that all gun owners be licensed and registered, including mandatory safety training.

The hope is that this Mother's Day, from every part of the country, a voice of reason will ring out demanding that Congress take action this session.

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MILLION MOM MARCH *The Steering Committee*

Donna Dees-Thomases, founder, Million Mom March

Donna Dees-Thomases took the first step of the Million Mom March last summer following a shooting at a daycare center in California. Within a week of the August 10th shooting, Thomases created a concept for a mother's march on Washington to urge Congress and other decision-makers to take common sense action to protect children from gun violence. A mother herself, she felt she could no longer sit back while kids were dying every day.

Thomases is a part-time public relations consultant to CBS Entertainment, assigned to the *Late Show with David Letterman* since November 1995. Before that, she worked as associate director of communications for CBS News assigned to the *CBS Evening News With Dan Rather* for seven years.

Thomases worked on Capitol Hill as assistant press secretary to U.S. Sen. Russell Long after receiving an undergraduate degree from Louisiana State University in 1979. She also holds a Master's degree from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism.

A native of Louisiana, Thomases resides in New Jersey with her family. She is the mother of two girls, Lili and Phoebe, and is the stepmother of David, Danny and Greg. This is her first foray into activism.

THE BELL CAMPAIGN

The Bell Campaign is a victim-led, grassroots organization committed to preventing gun death and injury and supporting victims of gun trauma. It was founded in 1999 to give a unified voice to the victims of gun trauma and concerned community members. Like most Americans, The Bell Campaign supports laws to hold the gun industry accountable and place responsible limits on the availability of firearms, especially handguns.

The Bell Campaign is committed to providing compassionate support to gun victims from the time of their loss or injury through every step of the journey toward healing, and helps to channel grief into working for stronger gun laws. While the Bell Campaign extends this opportunity to everyone who needs victim resources, participation in advocacy is purely voluntary.

The founders of The Bell Campaign chose a symbol for this movement that could serve both as a memorial for lost loved ones and as a focal point for organizing and celebration. The bell will toll for all those killed and injured by guns and will peal to mark progress toward safer communities. The sound of the bell represents the unified voice of gun victims and the majority of Americans who support stronger gun laws.

The Bell Campaign's national office is located in San Francisco, CA.

PAX

"PAX (which means peace in Latin) was co-founded in 1997 by Talmage Cooley and Daniel Gross. The organization's mission is to create a powerful national movement to end gun violence, a movement that is positive, youthful and exciting. Through innovative media and communications initiatives, PAX intends to amplify the gun violence issue and empower every American to help create change. Applying an entrepreneurial organization model to its non-profit mission, PAX has quickly achieved success in bringing together many constituencies together which will be critical in rallying a successful national anti-gun violence movement, including many prominent individuals and organizations from the media, entertainment, policy, non-profit and corporate communities."

Talmage Cooley

In 1995, Talmage founded the Gun Violence Project, where he developed a comprehensive plan for using innovative media strategies to create an effective national anti-gun violence movement. His work has gained the support of a number of prominent individuals and organizations in the entertainment and media industries, as well as within the anti-gun violence movement. In 1997, Talmage co-founded PAX and the Gun Violence Project was merged into this new organization.

Previous to founding PAX, Talmage held positions for eight years in corporate finance and trading with Morgan Stanley and Dominion Bankshares, and then established a successful career in the creative arts as a writer, director and photographer. He received BA and MBA degrees from the University of Virginia.

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Daniel was 30 and the youngest Partner at the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency when his younger brother, Matthew Gross, was critically wounded in the 1997 shooting atop the Empire State Building. Shortly thereafter, Daniel left his advertising career to co-found PAX. Today, recognized as one of the leading national spokespersons on the gun violence issue, he has made numerous appearances both nationally and locally on television, radio and in print and has received public praise from several members of Congress as well as President Clinton. Daniel's numerous awards and honors include a fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation, which recognized him as one of the next generation of America's leaders.

Daniel received B.S. degree in psychology and economics with honors from Tulane University in 1989 and currently lives in New York City with his wife Maria.

HANDGUN CONTROL INC.

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The Center to Prevent Handgun Violence was founded by Pete Shields as the educational and research affiliate of Handgun Control. Since 1983, the Center has worked closely to educate the general public about the issues surrounding gun violence in the United States.

The Center's Legal Action Project has been at the forefront of the recent movement to compel the gun industry to reform its sales and marketing practices. The Center's Education Department has developed several innovative programs that use health-care professionals, teachers and parents as mentors for at-risk youths. The Center continues to provide innovative educational and public health solutions to gun violence in our communities.

THE COALITION TO STOP GUN VIOLENCE

The Coalition to Stop Gun Violence (CSGV) was founded in 1974 to combat the growing gun violence problem in the United States. CSGV is a unique coalition of more than forty religious, professional, labor, medical, educational and civic organizations.

The goal of CSGV is the orderly elimination of the private sale of handguns and assault weapons in the United States. CSGV seeks to ban handguns and assault weapons from importation, manufacture, sale and transfer by the general American public, with reasonable exceptions made for police, military, security personnel, gun clubs where guns are secured on club premises, gun dealers trading in antique and collectable firearms kept and sold in inoperable condition. Hunting weapons, such as shotguns and rifles would be unaffected by these bans, because they do not pose a large threat to the American public the way handguns and assault weapons do.

In addition to a ban, the Coalition supports intermediate steps to reducing gun violence. These steps include: limiting the availability of gun dealers licenses; increasing gun dealers license fees; restrictively licensing and registering gun owners; increasing the handgun and ammunition taxes to offset health care costs; imposing strict liability for gun manufacturers and dealers; regulating firearms as consumer products; banning Saturday Night Specials; and establishing a national one-handgun-a-month purchase limit.

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FAX

MAY 14, 2000



Save the Kids

DATE ▶ []

Million Mom March
P.O. Box 762
Washington, DC 20044-0762

888-989-MOMS
www.MILLIONMOMMARCH.com

TO ▶

Kim ~~Widdes~~

COMPANY ▶

FAX NUMBER ▶

456-6771

TOTAL PAGES ▶

8

(including cover)

FROM ▶

Josly → Olesol, Heather, Sam, Terry -
cc MAMA

- TO: Karin Kullman 67431
- Ruby Shamir 66244
- Josh Gottheimer 62505
- Stephanie Cutler 66539

NOTES ▶

Million Mom March Info. !!!

Sensible gun laws, safe kids

This message is intended only for the use of the individual to which it is addressed and may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If this message was sent to you in error, kindly notify us immediately by telephone (collect). Thank you.

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P. 02/07 01002

**MAY 14, 2000**The National Mall
Washington, DC**Million Mom March Key Messages*****Who We Are***

We are Moms from all walks of life who are sick and tired of the gun violence directed at kids and often by kids. We are mothers and others who have lost kids, husbands, siblings and friends because of the easy access to guns in this country. And, we are Moms who have never lost anyone to a gun ... and we want to keep it that way.

Kids' Lives Are At Stake

Every day, a dozen children die from gun-shot wounds. They are crime victims; wrong-place, wrong-time victims; unlocked-and-loaded-in-the-house victims; and suicides, made easy by access to a gun.

This is personal, not political. We are in this for one reason only: to keep our kids safe.

Each day there is no action on this issue, we lose 12 more children. Enough is enough.

The Million Mom March

We are putting our elected officials on notice that we, the mothers, will not tolerate them putting the gun lobby before the safety of our children any longer. Our event in Washington, DC will send a strong message to Congress that they must take responsible action this session or else face a permanent time-out in November, 2000

Building toward a Mother's Day event is focusing our energies and helping us to grow into a major force on gun control. We expect results, and will hold our elected officials accountable if they don't deliver.

The Goal

No matter how you feel about guns, there are certain enforceable laws that all reasonable people can support. But, sadly, getting some lawmakers to act reasonably is about as difficult as getting our kids to clean their rooms. If we've told them once, we've told them a hundred times. But still the majority of Congress doesn't pass laws to keep guns out of the wrong hands - even in the wake of Columbine.

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