

# Public Safety

## PUBLIC SAFETY IS BIG CONCERN FOR AMERICANS

■(WASHINGTON) "Regardless of any statistics on crime rate, too many Americans fear for the safety of themselves, their homes and their families. It's an accumulation of multiple factors, including lack of regard for human life, lack of respect for others and their property, lenient court rulings, early prison releases, terrorism, and even hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens who end up in U.S. prisons (one fourth of the inmates in those prisons). Congress is confronting these concerns with a multipronged attack on crime. The anti-terrorism legislation (now in a House Senate conference) cracks down on both domestic and international terrorism, including first ever authority for victims of terrorism to sue (in American courts) nations which harbor and aid terrorists, and the ability to attach the assets those nations have in the U.S. The bill also limits the currently unlimited appeals for convicted murderers, so they no longer can avoid the death penalty for years and years. The bill also streamlines the deportation process of aliens who commit crimes in the U.S., and toughens the entrance visa standards, to stop dangerous foreigners from ever entering America. Also, those who commit acts of burning or bombing federal property will face stiffer penalties.

A separate bill on immigration reform has passed the House. It redoubles efforts by authorizing 5,000 additional border agents through the year 2000. Overlooked by some are the tougher sentencing provisions included with the House passed measure to repeal President Clinton's 1994 ban on so called assault weapons. Rather than using a ban that is high on pretense and short on results, the measure instead cracks down on ALL crimes committed with a firearm. It establishes mandatory minimum prison sentences for those convicted.

We need laws (and judges) to be tough on crime and terrorism, and prisons that keep the dangerous locked away, to isolate them from menacing our homes and families. Congress is making those efforts. And, because most law enforcement is at the state and local level, our states must continue to make them, too.

FROM: CONGRESSMAN ERNEST ISTOOK, R-OKLAHOMA

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"Hello, I'm your gate keeper."