

United States Senate
SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

*Shattering the Silence: Confronting the Perils of
Family Elder Abuse*

STATEMENT OF SENATOR CRAIG

**October 20, 2003
1:30 P.M., SD 628**

I am pleased that Ranking member Senator Breaux has called for this important hearing today. As you know, crimes of abuse and exploitation perpetrated against the elderly are issues of high priority to me as Chairman of this committee.

The abuse of our most vulnerable Senior citizens is a reprehensible crime and those who commit such offenses should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. It is important to note, however, that there are various forms of abuse. As Chairman, I have convened several hearings on crimes which harm the elderly. We have explored abuses perpetrated by court-appointed guardians; financial exploitation by Social Security representative payees; identity theft targeting seniors where life savings have been lost; and Elder Abuse arising in the homes and communities of our nation's Seniors.

We in Congress are considering a number of initiatives that would provide protection to senior citizens from those who would prey upon their vulnerabilities. We must continue to explore ways to coordinate federal and state efforts to resolve these devastating crimes.

I continue to work with Senator Breaux on Elder Justice issues. He and I both agree that we must provide protections from abuse as well as preserve the dignity and freedoms of our most vulnerable citizens.

I look forward to hearing today's testimony.