

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FORT HOOD SHOOTING

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, last week the men and women at the Fort Hood Army post in Killeen, TX, witnessed a shocking act of violence as a gunman suddenly and inexplicably opened fire, killing 3 fellow soldiers and wounding 16 others. Yet, even as our attention has focused on the horror of this event, I think it is also important to talk about the very best of humanity demonstrated during this time of tragedy and crisis.

The men and women at Fort Hood saw the very best of humanity in the military police officer who confronted the shooter, for example.

They saw it in Private Jacob Sanders, who risked his own life in the hopes of saving one of the victims.

They saw it in SGT Jonathan Westbrook, who was shot and wounded by the gunman but still managed to radio Fort Hood officials and sound the alert so that others might be protected and safe.

They also saw it in SFC Danny Ferguson, who served a combat tour in Iraq and had recently gotten home from a second one in Afghanistan. Last Wednesday Sergeant Ferguson used his own body to prevent the shooter from entering a crowded room. He gave his life so that his fellow soldiers could keep theirs. He showed the kind of heroism that few of us could even imagine, the kind of heroism that defines our men and women in uniform.

So even as we mourn the terrible loss of Sergeant Ferguson, we want to also take a moment to celebrate his wonderful example and his wonderful life, just as we celebrate the remarkable lives of SGT Timothy Owens and SSG Carlos Lazaney-Rodriguez.

Sergeant Owens served his country in Iraq and in Kuwait. He also served as a counselor at Fort Hood. According to his mother, he counseled literally "hundreds of people." His brother Darrell described him as someone who "would help anybody who needed help."

Sergeant Lazaney-Rodriguez was a native of Puerto Rico, and he served multiple combat tours in Iraq. He too made a distinct impression on his friends and fellow soldiers at Fort Hood. One of them described him as "the epitome of what you want a leader to be in the Army."

As I mentioned a moment ago, as we mourn the loss of Sergeant Ferguson, Sergeant Owens, and Sergeant Lazaney-Rodriguez, we should take a moment to celebrate their lives and their service. All three of these men chose—they volunteered—to devote their lives to a noble cause—the defense of our country—and our memories of their work and their sacrifice will live forever.

Before I conclude, I wish to say one more word about Fort Hood, where I will be traveling to tomorrow with the President. Fort Hood is also known as The Great Place. They call it The Great Place. I had the honor of visiting the post last Thursday, and I will do so again tomorrow for the memorial, as I said. As we all remember, Fort Hood was also the scene of an earlier mass shooting in November of 2009. That was yet another day where we saw both the worst and the best of humanity. We saw the very best of humanity in people such as Michael Cahill, a civilian physician's assistant and retired soldier, and Army CPT John Gaffaney, both of whom charged the gunman—MAJ Nidal Hasan—and gave their lives in order to save the lives of others around them.

Over the last 13 years, the Fort Hood community has made enormous contributions to America's missions in Iraq and in Afghanistan, where more than 550 of their soldiers have made the ultimate sacrifice. In fact, the last combat brigade to leave Iraq was a Fort Hood brigade—the Third Brigade of the storied 1st Cavalry Division.

I sometimes think about the fact that most Americans probably don't have a close friend or relative who has served in the Armed Forces. So in some ways the American people have become isolated to some degree from the realities of war and national security. For them the war in Afghanistan is something they read about in the newspaper or they hear about on TV, but it is not very real to them unless they have a family member or a loved one or a friend who has served.

For the families at Fort Hood and in the surrounding Texas communities of Belton, Copperas Cove, Harker Heights, Killeen, and Temple, it is something much different, something much more personal because it is a family member, it is a loved one, it is a friend who has served, and many of them have lost their lives in the process because they believed that keeping the American people safe was more important than their own personal security and safety.

I wish to take this moment to let the families and friends of the victims at Fort Hood know that—and, indeed, to tell all the good people at Fort Hood—your fellow Americans are thinking about you, we are praying for you and keeping you close in our hearts during this difficult time.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UCONN VICTORY

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I want to begin by remarking on the ex-

traordinary and remarkable triumph of the UConn men's basketball team last night—a victory that is beyond my words to describe—and the achievement it represents for those players, for the school, for coach Kevin Ollie, and for the entire university, particularly in the face of last year's disqualification—unfair and unjustified, in my view.

I am so proud of our team and the University of Connecticut for its steadfast and relentless pursuit of this national championship, which last night culminated in a huge and joyous triumph felt throughout Connecticut and, in fact, throughout the country.

I will be commenting in greater length and depth on how this achievement reflects on the University of Connecticut, what it means to college athletics, and what lessons we can take from this great triumph.

In the meantime, I am wearing my University of Connecticut tie with the emblem of the Huskies because last night's triumph is only a prelude to tonight.

UConn is rolling with momentum toward two national championships. The women, I believe, will prevail tonight, and I expect to collect on another debt—the debt owed to me already by my colleagues from Kentucky I think will be supplemented tomorrow—and I will ask that my Kentucky colleague, Senator PAUL, wear this tie, if only for a brief moment, to demonstrate who was the better team last night. They are both great teams, but Connecticut was the greatest.

PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am here this morning on a very serious and important subject—the Paycheck Fairness Act. I thank my colleagues who were with me earlier today at an event we attended. The President is doing an event right now. He has announced he will require all Federal contractors to follow the rule that there should be no retaliation against people in the workplace who share information about their pay. It sounds like a basic principle of fairness but, unfortunately, the law has gaps that permit discrimination—gender discrimination, unequal pay for the same work. So today on Equal Pay Day, I am here to advocate for the Paycheck Fairness Act, which will help fill some of those gaps.

This issue is not a man's issue, it is not a woman's issue. It is a family issue. It is not about women, it is about paycheck fairness. So it is as much about men as it is about women. Right now 40 percent of all our families are supported by women either as the sole or primary breadwinner. That means the children in those families, and the men, depend on that income and on the fairness of their paychecks to keep a roof over their head and to keep food on the table.

Paycheck fairness is about a fair shot—a fair shot for every woman and