

50 million Latinos in the United States. If mass deportation was good enough for President Eisenhower, he feels it should be good enough for America today.

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I will agree with one leading candidate, Jeb Bush, who recently said that “stuff happens.” Stuff does happen. A lot of stuff has happened since the 1950s when I was born and the 1960s when I grew up in America.

Our laws and our culture have evolved to become more inclusive, and we have a more diverse and egalitarian society because of it. Many Republicans call that stuff the problem. I call that stuff progress.

LOSING A GENERATION TO GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I am tired. I am tired of, once again, being asked to rise to honor the victims of gun violence.

Not even a month ago, I stood at this very podium on behalf of gun violence victims. With nearly 300 mass shootings in less than 300 days, this Congress has proven that there is no appetite to end gun violence.

I am tired because we will have more moments of silence in honor of gun victims, and then we will have moments of action from leaders working to stop gun violence.

To my colleagues who came here on the platform of caring about children, to my colleagues who came here for peace, to my friends on the left and right of the aisle, can't we own up to our responsibility to stop this violence? Can't we own the fact that we are losing a generation of Americans to gun violence?

Every year, over 100,000 people are shot in America, more than 30,000 of them fatally. This is a crisis that demands more than a moment of silence from Congress.

With every mass shooting, we hear every excuse in the book for inaction: it is a family problem; it is a mental health issue; it is a people problem. Apparently, it is everything but a gun problem. At this point, even our excuses are tired.

Let me share some headlines from my hometown this week:

From Sunday's Chicago Tribune, “Man Killed, 4 Injured in Shootings”;

Monday, CBS Chicago, “One Dead, 11 Wounded in Weekend Shootings Across Chicago”;

Tuesday, Chicago Sun Times, “Man and Woman Shot Near Douglas Park on West Side”;

Wednesday, Chicago Tribune, “One Dead, Eight Wounded in Shootings in Chicago.”

These aren't just headlines. They are deferred dreams and altered realities for countless families. This isn't a Chi-

cago problem, a Newtown problem, or an Oregon problem; it is an American problem.

Today, gun deaths are on pace to be the leading cause of death for Americans aged 15 through 24, not because our kids are leaving the home front for war, but because the home front is becoming a war zone. It is because military-style weapons are flooding our streets. It is because Hadiya Pendleton was in the wrong place at the wrong time, even though she had the right to be in the park. It is because Reverend Pinckney held Bible study, and a journalist and cameraman in Virginia woke up and did their job. It is because a couple of teens wanted to see an Amy Schumer movie.

We have had no votes on legislation to stop this. Mr. Speaker, for all the talk about needing to improve our mental health system, we have yet to take a single vote on a comprehensive mental health bill.

I have had multiple bills that will reduce gun violence; but the simplest one, H.R. 224, will require the Surgeon General to submit to Congress a report on the public health impact of gun violence.

Simple, right? After all, we can't have a conversation about gun violence without data on the death and disability it causes, its mental health effects, its community impact, and its economic costs. Mr. Speaker, this Congress has no appetite for conversations about gun violence. After all, there are A ratings to protect.

The American people are tired, tired of their representatives paying lip-service to tragedies they were elected to help prevent. They are tired of their peace of mind being held hostage by those we should be preventing from ever getting their hands on a gun in the first place.

I am calling everyone out here today. You have talked the talk; it is time to walk the walk. You say that you want to save lives, then do it.

Where is the background check legislation that 90 percent of Americans support, including NRA members?

Bring my bill, H.R. 224, up for a vote, and let the Surgeon General see if gun violence is a threat to public health, which I know it is. Show that you care. Stop pivoting. Stop punting. Start leading.

HIGHWAY BEAUTIFICATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise on a lighter note, a very positive note because I represent a very beautiful and positive part of the United States: the central coast of California. This is a place where you hear the towns of Santa Cruz, Monterey, Pacific Grove, the beautiful fertile Salinas Valley, and the magnificent Big Sur coastline, which this poster here shows a photograph of.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today because the House of Representatives, 50 years ago, passed marvelous legislation called the Highway Beautification Act, and that act came about because the States were ruining the aesthetics of America. It was a bill that First Lady Lady Bird Johnson so much supported. In fact, it became known as Lady Bird's bill.

So 50 years ago, this House of Representatives took a bold move to protect and improve our scenic highways. Why are those important?

We sell scenery where I live. This is another picture of a scenic highway in the South, in the Southern States. When you drive through these, you don't see any billboards, you don't see the urban clutter, or, as my friend Ansel Adams said: “You don't see the urban acne that is covering our roads.”

It is Big Business that we are fighting, because the billboard lobby in the United States is very powerful. It was powerful then, but the First Lady was more powerful.

I have a personal story in that because my father, who was in the California State Senate, authored the first legislation to create the California Scenic Highway Program. In 1966, this time of the year, Lady Bird Johnson came all the way to California, not to campaign for a Governor or United States Senator, but to recognize the work that my father, State Senator Fred Farr, had done by dedicating Highway 1 in California, the Big Sur highway, as California's first State scenic highway and perhaps the first State scenic highway in the United States. It was a great day.

What Congress did is they ensured that States would be able to have money to enforce this billboard ban. They would give them more money if they would incorporate in their State, county, and city laws billboard bans.

Now, we have a \$7 billion industry out there, the outdoor advertising industry, and it has been fighting highway beautification for over 50 years. They have been unsuccessful at repealing the Federal law, but they have made incredible progress in being able to find exemptions for it.

They have prevented the 10 percent penalty that States would receive for not adopting highway beautification. They have encouraged localities to change zoning laws in rural areas, calling them commercial or industrial or anything to bypass the act. And they have been able to loosen the rules on repairing old signs, allowing them to remain forever rather than being torn down.

We now have approximately 700,000 billboards in the United States, and yet this is a country that will be celebrating its 100th anniversary of our National Park System. We advertise around the world: “Come to beautiful America. See the scenery of America.” In many places in America, all you see is billboard scenery.

So as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of this act—which is not well