

strong, and their victory in the final minutes is a credit to the determination and commitment of the entire team and Coach Rod Sherman.

It is an honor to highlight the accomplishments of these young men, who finished the season 12–2 and established an impressive 30–1 playoff record.

I would also like to recognize the championship game MVP, junior quarterback Dylan McCaffrey, who led the team on two touchdown drives in the final minutes to win the comeback victory.

Again, congratulations to the Valor Christian High School football team on their impressive season.

GUN VIOLENCE

(Mrs. LAWRENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to stop the silence and to encourage and stress that my colleagues need to take action to expand background checks and to close the loopholes. I will continue to stand here and fight, and I will not be silent.

While many of my colleagues have spoken about the loophole that allows terrorist suspects to purchase guns, we have many other loopholes that present a danger to the safety of Americans and our homeland.

Since the enactment of the Brady Act in 1994, the law has stopped nearly 2.5 million guns from being transferred to individuals legally disqualified. However, despite the success of this law, it does not apply to 40 percent of all gun purchases.

Mr. Speaker, 92 percent of Americans favor universal background checks. It is well past time for us, as Congress, to reflect the will of the people that we represent, to pass legislation to expand background checks, and to close the loopholes.

Stop the silence. We must do what the people sent us here to do, and that is to take action.

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Human Rights Day.

Sixty-seven years ago today, December 10, 1948, the U.N. General Assembly proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Universal Declaration set out a common understanding of the fundamental human rights that were to be universally protected.

Today, we recall the inalienable rights intrinsic to every human being. In many regions of the world, people continue to struggle to attain the most basic rights and respect for their basic human dignity. In several regions of the world, defenseless civilians face at-

tacks by terrorist organizations and networks that seek to intimidate, maim, and kill in the name of a distorted theology.

I join my distinguished colleague from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) and people everywhere in reaffirming our commitment to the fundamental rights and freedoms contained in the Universal Declaration, and urge all leaders to redouble their efforts to promote and guarantee them.

I also want to thank the human rights defenders everywhere, who so often carry out their work at great risk to themselves and their families.

NO GUNS FOR SUSPECTED TERRORISTS

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I come here today to speak about weapons of murder and terror.

Mr. Speaker, suspected terrorists should not be able to walk into a gun store and come out with weapons of murder and terror.

As Members of Congress, we have an obligation to keep American families safe. To not bring the bipartisan bill, H.R. 1076, to the floor for a vote is to deny us the opportunity to keep our families safer.

This bill, H.R. 1076, is sensible and straightforward. If you are a suspected terrorist, you should not be able to buy a gun. If you are a suspected terrorist, you should not, Mr. Speaker, be able to buy a gun. I will say it today and tomorrow and repeatedly: if you are a suspected terrorist, you should not be able to buy a gun. We should not have guns and weapons of murder and terror.

I will no longer be silent. Mr. Speaker, we should no longer be silent. Let's transcend partisan politics and uphold our promise to keep American families safe.

SAN BERNARDINO VICTIM, SHANNON JOHNSON

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Shannon Johnson.

On December 2, our country witnessed the worst terrorist attack on American soil since 9/11. On this horrific day in San Bernardino, California, 14 people were tragically killed.

Mr. Shannon Johnson was one of the people whose life was cut short that day. His friends and family say he enjoyed laughter, conversation, and music. He believed in the greatness of love, equality, and kindness, and treated others accordingly.

On December 2, Mr. Johnson, who was a native of Jesup, Georgia, in the First Congressional District, displayed the ultimate act of heroism and sacrifice by shielding fellow coworkers

from a hail of bullets. His last words were: 'I got you.'

Mr. Johnson died a hero. My thoughts and prayers go out to his friends and family. I hope we may all recognize and never forget the acts of sacrifice that Mr. Johnson and others have made to protect the ones we love.

THANKS TO THE SPEAKER

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my profound appreciation to the Speaker for his recent acknowledgment that he expects the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act to be part of the omnibus bill.

I thank Leader PELOSI for her steadfast commitment and leadership in support of this important lifesaving legislation.

I am grateful to every single Democratic Member of this Congress, all of whom are cosponsors of this important legislation, and the many Republicans who are sponsors of this bill. All of them have helped us to live up to our commitment that: "We will never forget."

Heroic first responders and survivors of 9/11—men and women from all 50 States and nearly every Congressional District—will now be able to breathe a little easier, and will certainly have a much happier holiday season when this bill is finally across the finish line. This is how Congress can, and should, work in a bipartisan way, doing the right thing more often.

Happy holidays and Happy New Year. Now, when do we vote on this important lifesaving legislation.

□ 1230

REESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH BELARUS

(Mr. ROHRBACHER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution calling for reestablishing full diplomatic relations between the United States and the nation of Belarus with the focus of exchanging ambassadors between our countries. This resolution recognizes that the Government of Belarus has reached out to the West and has improved political conditions in their own country.

For example, the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe monitored the recent Presidential election in Belarus and noted the progress made in establishing a more democratic and open system.

Another example of Belarus' positive action is that it played a significant role in bringing about a cease-fire in Ukraine. It did this by hosting immense diplomatic talks between all