

passed legislation to stop the easily obtainable assault weapons.

Does anybody think these assault weapons are good for hunting or protecting your family? This evil man that went into this nightclub in Orlando, FL—I don't personally know how many clips he had, but he had at least three 30-bullet clips. It took less than 3 seconds to shoot those victims. They were all gone in less than 3 seconds. If you are really not very good at it, it takes a couple of seconds to reload. So to fire off 90 shells would take 10 or 15 seconds if that was what he wanted to do.

DIANNE FEINSTEIN was right many years ago, and she is still right today. These assault weapons are not for the American people's entertainment, and they shouldn't be, but the NRA and Gun Owners of America love to sell these guns. We are going to vote on the Murphy-Booker-Schumer legislation to expand background checks, and we are going to vote on the Feinstein measure to close up terrorist loopholes to prevent a terrorist from walking into a gun store and buying all of the firearms and explosives they want. These are commonsense safety measures that the American people overwhelmingly support.

According to a December poll—December, September, October, August, it doesn't matter; it has been this way for years—almost 90 percent of Americans are in favor of expanding background checks. Ask anyone: Do we want a criminal or someone who has problems with their mental capacity to purchase a gun? Of course we don't. That is what background checks are all about. More than 80 percent of Americans want to close the so-called terror loophole preventing suspected terrorists from purchasing firearms, and legislation by Senator FEINSTEIN will cover just that.

I am glad that there will be votes, and I appreciate that very much. I shouldn't have to be appreciative about something that should just happen, but I am because around here we don't get votes on a lot of stuff.

I want to be very clear: It is not enough for Republicans to simply let us vote. Democrats can't pass the gun safety legislation by ourselves. We are the minority party as a result of the elections 2 years ago. It will change, and there will be a new majority in the first part of next year, but for now we are in the minority in this Chamber and Republicans must join us in order for those measures to pass. That will not happen if the Republicans continue to take their orders—and I mean orders—from the National Rifle Association and Gun Owners of America. We need Americans to understand that we need Republicans to follow Senator MURPHY's and Senator FEINSTEIN's lead and show courage in standing up to the gun lobby.

In the aftermath of the worst shooting in modern American history, our constituents elected us for help. They want to feel safe, and they want to be

safe. We can help provide that safety by closing the terror loophole and expanding background checks today and do it immediately. I hope Republicans will do the right thing and work with us to protect Americans from this gun violence. We need gun safety, not more guns. We must take a stand in the Senate and say enough is enough.

CELEBRATING JUNETEENTH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this Sunday, June 19, is Juneteenth, a day we celebrate each year as a reminder that liberty and justice must reach all corners of our great Nation.

On June 19, 1865, nearly 2½ years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and more than 2 months after General Lee's surrender at Appomattox, a number of slaves in Galveston, TX, learned that the institution of slavery was no longer. There was no media, no press, no Internet, and no television at that time.

As we celebrate Juneteenth, I hope we take a moment to reflect on what it represents, the celebration of liberty and freedom for all Americans. Sadly, 151 years later, we have much work to do to ensure that all citizens are treated equally, no matter their race, religion, national origin, or whom they love.

We must ensure all of our citizens can assert their right to vote. Our Nation continues to struggle to make the ballot box more accessible for those who continue to be disfranchised in a number of areas, including ex-felons. They have done their time. Let them be a part of society. We want them to come back and be citizens and a part of the network of our great communities. Let them vote.

Here in our Nation's capital, Washington, DC, more than 600,000 residents in the District of Columbia—that is how many live here—continue to face taxation without representation. I have been here a long time, and I have always supported Statehood for DC. Why not?

As we celebrate Juneteenth this year, I hope that all Americans will look at the example Lincoln set when he sent troops to Galveston, TX, which is, no matter who you are or where you may be, this Nation is a land of liberty and justice for all.

Let the record reflect, I understand protocol here, and I was told that Senator MCCONNELL may be a little bit late. So I was told to go forward.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of debate only until noon today.

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

FIGHTING TERRORISM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, over the past few months, terrorists inspired or directed by ISIL have committed mass murder in Brussels, in California, and in France. When ISIL issued a call for lone-wolf attacks against the West during Ramadan, its followers heard the call.

This week, just outside Paris, more innocent lives were ended brutally by a terrorist who broadcasted news of the attack over the Internet.

This week in Orlando, Americans were targeted deliberately and taken forever from their families by a terrorist ISIL has claimed is "one of the soldiers of the caliphate."

It is clear from his behavior that this was not a random act of violence. This was a calculated act of terror.

As CIA Director John Brennan testified this morning before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence: Islamic State militants are "training and attempting to deploy operatives for further attacks on the West." He also called this terrorist attack an assault on the values of openness and tolerance that define the United States as a nation.

Well, of course, he is absolutely right. It throws into stark relief the troubling reality we now face.

ISIL is not the JV team. ISIL is certainly not "contained." ISIL is the personification of evil in the world, and it will continue to bring tragedy after tragedy to our own doorsteps until it is defeated.

President Obama needs to finally lead a campaign to accomplish this objective or, at the very least, prepare the military and intelligence community to help the next President do it if he won't. This is his primary responsibility in the wake of this terrorist tragedy.

Here is ours. Here is what we need to do. Our responsibility in the Senate is to make a choice: work on serious solutions to prevent terrorist attacks or use the Senate as a campaign studio—as a campaign studio. Yesterday, the FBI Director came to deliver a critical briefing on Orlando and explain what is needed to prevent similar terrorist attacks in the future. Senate Republicans attended and asked serious questions. A rather significant group of Senate Democrats skipped it—skipped the briefing all together—for a campaign talkathon out here on the Senate floor, which also prevented us from going forward on the bill, offering amendments and votes.

It is hard to think of a clearer contrast between serious work for solutions on the one hand and endless partisan campaigning on the other.

Doing what we can to fight terror beyond our borders and to prevent attacks within our border were priorities of ours well before the terrorist attack

in Orlando, and they continue to be at the forefront of our efforts now.

We just passed the annual National Defense Authorization Act. It will go a long way toward helping Americans confront global security challenges today and toward preparing the next Commander in Chief to take on the threats tomorrow.

We are now working to pass an appropriations bill that will give the FBI and other law enforcement officials more of the resources needed to track down and defuse threats right here on American soil. As we consider that measure, we are continuing to explore additional tools that can help prevent devastating terrorist attacks, such as tools to help us permanently address the threat of lone-wolf terrorists and to help us connect the dots when it comes to terrorist communications.

Now is the time for Democrats to finally join with us in pursuing serious solutions that can actually make a real difference.

As we said on Tuesday, there will be amendment votes on this bill. There will be amendment votes on this bill. Yesterday, we were prepared to begin that process but were unable to get amendments pending because of the extended floor debate that went on until 2 o'clock this morning. We will try again today to move forward with amendments from both sides, and once there is an agreement to do so, we will update everybody.

So, look, of course, no one wants terrorists to be able to buy guns. No one wants terrorists to be able to buy guns. So if Democrats are actually serious about getting a solution on that issue and not just making a political talking point, they will join with us to support Senator CORNYN's SHIELD Act. It will give the Justice Department the ability to prevent known or suspected terrorists from purchasing firearms. It will protect the constitutional rights of all Americans. It will go a step further as well and actually allow terrorists to be taken into custody if a judge finds probable cause.

Now, that is a serious solution on this issue. Let's remember, however, that this issue represents only a piece of a much bigger challenge. Director Brennan also told the Intelligence Committee today that "despite all of our progress against ISIL on the battlefield and in the financial realm, our efforts have not reduced the group's terrorist capability and global reach." That is Brennan.

If we want to prevent ISIL-inspired and directed attacks, we have to defeat ISIL in Iraq and in Syria. If we want to prevent ISIL-inspired and directed attacks, we have to defeat ISIL in Iraq and in Syria.

Here is what that means. From the White House, it means we don't need another lecture or another threat to veto the Defense bill. It means we need real leadership and a plan of action to defeat ISIL.

From our colleagues here in the Senate, it means we don't need more cam-

paign talkathons like we witnessed yesterday, preventing us from actually voting. It means we need serious solutions and hard work. After all, that is what our constituents sent us here to do.

We may have gotten held back by a day, but now we are able to keep moving forward to set up votes on both sides, just as we always expected.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2578, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2578) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell (for Shelby/Mikulski) amendment No. 4685, in the nature of a substitute. Shelby amendment No. 4686 (to amendment No. 4685), to make a technical correction.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

OBAMACARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, most mornings when the Senate is in session, the minority leader comes to the floor—Senator REID—and talks for a while, and he sometimes talks about things in the news. So I come today to the floor to talk about a headline in the news today—in the New York Times, of all places—with this headline: "Obamacare Premiums Are Rising, and Not by a Little." "Obamacare Premiums Are Rising, and Not By a Little" is today's New York Times headline.

It is interesting that when I hear Senator REID come to the floor, so often he is coming to the floor to defend the Obama health care law. A couple of weeks ago he came to the floor and he said that ObamaCare is "continuing to work." Those are his words. So today I find interesting the New York Times story with this headline: "Obamacare Premiums Are Rising, and Not By a Little." It says:

Even in urban areas where competition was expected to be brisk and the risk pool young and healthy—

"Expected" is the key word there—

insurers appear to be struggling. In 14 major cities, insurers are asking for 2017 increases twice as big as 2016.

Twice as big as last year—yet Senator REID says ObamaCare is continuing to work.

The next day after he said that, he said that the Affordable Care Act is

working. Well, I don't know anyone who could be a Member of the Senate and could actually be going home to their home States on the weekends and listening to people who live in their home States who could believe that ObamaCare is working.

Across the country, people are seeing how much more money they are expected to pay for their health insurance premiums next year. I just read that story from today's New York Times.

Yesterday's Washington Post said:

Premiums for health plans sold through the federal insurance exchange—

the one that Democrats came to the floor and said they loved and was going to work—

could jump substantially next year—

That was from the Washington Post yesterday—

perhaps more than at any point since the Affordable Care Act marketplaces began in 2013.

Does Senator REID read the newspapers? Does he talk to his constituents? Otherwise, how can he be so terribly confused about the impact of this health care law and the damage it has done to the American people?

So far, 31 States and the District of Columbia have released information on what insurance companies plan to charge next year. The average American is facing premiums that are 22 percent higher than this year. That is what is bringing about these headlines in the Washington Post and the New York Times.

In Iowa, an insurance company says that it wants its customers in the ObamaCare exchange to pay as much as 43 percent more next year. One customer wrote in to the State insurance division and said: "You're killing me."

Does Senator REID understand the impact of this law?

Another wrote in and said: "Who can afford this? It's disastrous."

Does Senator REID note any of that?

In North Carolina, the largest insurance company in the State said it plans to charge people an average of 19 percent more next year.

In Pennsylvania, one company says it is going to charge people up to 48 percent more starting in January.

In Arizona, people are facing premium increases of 53 percent. That is the average increase in Arizona.

So it is not surprising to see a headline in the New York Times today—and I hope Senator REID read the paper: "Obamacare Premiums Are Rising, and Not By a Little."

Well, whose fault is this? Who should people across the country blame when they see these outrageous price increases that affect them at home? Well, I believe they should blame Senator REID and every Democrat in Congress who voted for ObamaCare and all of the expensive requirements, regulations, and restrictions.

So the question is, Is ObamaCare working? Let's use President Obama's