

system stops more than 170 felons, 50 domestic abusers, and nearly 20 fugitives from buying a gun in the United States.

Since 2004, more than 2,000 suspects on the FBI's terrorist watch list have bought weapons in the United States. A gun in a home in the U.S. is 22 times more likely to be used to kill or injure in a domestic homicide, suicide, or unintentional shooting, instead of being used in self-defense.

From 2012 to 2013, at least 100 children were killed in unintentional shootings in the U.S.; almost 2 each week. Guns have killed more Americans in 12 years than AIDS, war, and illegal drug overdoses combined.

On average, 55 Americans kill themselves with firearms each day in this country. In States that require background checks for private handgun sales, there are 48 percent fewer firearm suicides, while the rates of suicide by other methods are nearly identical.

Suicides involving firearms are fatal at least 85 percent of the time in this country compared to the second most used attempted suicide level, which is pills. They are only successful 3 percent of the time.

Mr. Speaker, for those of us who have lost a family member to firearm gun violence, this is an issue that cannot be reconciled with the current majority opinion.

Twenty-eight years ago, my father took his life with a firearm. He had been under the care of a physician for 10 years to deal with depression. We still don't know how he got his gun. He is buried across the river, as a World War II vet, in Arlington.

Mr. Speaker, for those of us who respect the Second Amendment, but also expect the Congress to act rationally on this public health issue, we expect Congress to respect victims of gun violence.

For that reason, we demand, we ask respectfully, and we expect the Speaker and the majority to bring up for a vote two simple bills. We want a vote on the no fly, no buy bill, and we want a vote to close the loopholes on background checks. The victims of gun violence expect no less.

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CONFRONTING OUR CHANGING OCEANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, my constituents and I are blessed to live, to work, and to play in the paradise that is south Florida. And those of us who have fallen in love with south Florida all want our kids and our grandkids to enjoy the same positive experiences that define our unique community.

That sense of wanting to be able to pass down that south Florida lifestyle

to future generations is really what has motivated me to action on the threat my community faces from a changing ocean. Sea level rise has been occurring steadily along southeast Florida for the last hundred years, and we should be concerned about increasing coastal flooding and saltwater intrusion into our drinking water sources.

Meanwhile, new research at the University of Miami suggests that ocean acidification is not only slowing the growth of corals off our coast, but is actually causing the underlying reef structure to begin to dissolve. To counter the threats from changing ocean conditions, we must develop strategies to protect people's livelihoods and the coastal waters upon which south Florida's local economy depends.

One such strategy that could pay huge dividends is the restoration of the coral reefs off south Florida. This is actually, Mr. Speaker, the third-largest barrier reef in the entire world. Our reefs have been declining for 40 years, and recent coral disease outbreaks and bleaching events have proved to be devastating.

To save south Florida's reefs, I am introducing the Conserving Our Reefs and Livelihoods Act, or the CORAL Act. The CORAL Act would widen the scope of reef restoration and conservation research to include the impact of ocean acidification, warming seas, and invasive species on coral reefs. It would allow for the release of emergency response funds to study coral disease and bleaching events as they happen, instead of as a postmortem.

It would expand the focus of the law from simply focused on conservation, to gearing Federal agencies and their partners to play active roles in restoration and recovery. And it would promote innovative work toward understanding the genetic diversity of corals, so that researchers can captive-breed native corals that are specially adapted to current and future ocean conditions for use in restoration projects.

The environmental and economic benefits of coral reefs are strongly intertwined, and the CORAL Act would give everyone a place at the table to help develop consensus-based and scientifically rigorous conservation and restoration efforts—efforts that produce real results for Floridians.

Restored reefs will increase economic activity through better fishing, diving, recreation, and tourism; and healthy coral growth will allow reefs to keep pace with rising seas to limit the potentially devastating impacts of storm surge on our coasts in the future.

Mr. Speaker, having fled the oppressive Castro regime in Cuba with my parents decades ago, I know that south Florida is special because it serves as a place of hope for so many. We cannot allow changing ocean conditions to rob us of our livelihoods, of our lifestyle, of our identity as an optimistic community.

My CORAL Act is only a start for south Florida, but it will help in understanding the impacts of ocean acidification, warming seas, coral disease, and invasive species on our reefs so that we can develop effective solutions, so that we can salvage our reefs, and so south Florida will continue to thrive as part of an ever-changing landscape and as an enduring source of hope and inspiration to people from around the world.

WE NEED COMMONSENSE GUN SAFETY LEGISLATION

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

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, Columbine is in my district, and I was in Congress when the terrible shooting in Columbine happened.

Who will forget that day, all those students marching out of the school with their hands held up so they could show the police that they weren't those terrible shooters.

Who can forget the terrible tragedy reflected in the mothers' faces when they saw that their children weren't those children that were bused to safety?

Who can forget the lingering aspects that Columbine has shown us, year after year, tragedy after tragedy?

I can't tell you the number of times I have repeated that horror in my own life, watching on TV when the Aurora shooting, just a few miles from my house, occurred. A masked man came in and, with an assault rifle and high-capacity magazine clips, shot so many people in just a few minutes.

Just a few weeks ago, when we saw, in Florida, one lone gunman with an assault rifle and high-capacity magazines just mowing down so many people who were having fun, who can forget the reflection in those mothers' faces?

But for every terrible tragedy that we have like that, we have thousands of more people who are killed on our streets, in our urban areas, and around our country, and who are killed in terrible domestic violence cases.

Just last week, when I was at home in Denver, just a few blocks from my husband's law office, a man walked into an office and shot a woman, and then turned the gun on himself. I can't tell you how I felt that day, when my husband sent me an email, seemingly out of the blue, that said: "Don't worry. I'm on lockdown. I'm okay."

This has become just routine in Americans' lives, and it is wrong. It is wrong. We can't continue like this as a country. We can't continue to have a moment of silence every time there is a mass murder, and to tut-tut every time we hear of someone like that woman who was shot in my district, and then do nothing.

This is why we had our sit-in before the July Fourth recess. And I will tell you what, those actions woke up my constituents. My office here in Washington, D.C., and my office in Denver,

Colorado, were inundated with phone calls from people saying: "What can we do? We so desperately want something to happen."

This is what I said then, and this is what I say now: We cannot stop until we pass commonsense gun safety legislation.

What does this mean? Well, for starters, you would think Congress, both sides of the aisle, both sides of the Capitol, could say, if you are on a terrorist watch list, you should not be able to buy a gun. Surely we can stipulate to that.

You would think that we would agree with the vast majority of American people, Democrats and Republicans, people all around the country, that people should have thorough and sufficient background checks before they can obtain a weapon.

You would surely think that we would allow the Federal Government to conduct research on gun safety so that we would know, as a matter of public health, what we need to do to keep our children safe in their schools, our children safe on their street corners, and in their school yards.

You would think, beyond that, that we could have a rational discussion, not marred by the very powerful gun lobbyists, saying: What can we do to make sure that somebody, for whatever reason they might have, doesn't get an assault weapon and walk into a theater and kill scores of people with a high-capacity magazine in just a few minutes? You would think we could do that, and I am hoping that we will do that. I am hoping that the tide has turned.

Today, we will take up mental health legislation that was developed in my committee, the Energy and Commerce Committee. It is a bipartisan bill. I worked hard with Chairman MURPHY and Chairman UPTON on this bill, and also with the Democrats on our side of the aisle, Congressman PALLONE and Congressman GREEN and others. It is a good bill, but it is just a first step.

We need to do a lot more with mental health in this country and, beyond that, we need to do a lot more on gun safety. Nobody should assume that this bill we are voting on today is a substitute for a rational, thorough, bipartisan conversation on gun safety.

I look forward to taking the terrible tragedies that we have seen the 20 years I have been in Congress and to dedicating commonsense gun safety legislation to all those lives that were lost.

PURSUE COMMONSENSE GUN VIOLENCE LEGISLATION

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, when I arrived home last night, I found this note; and I won't say the name of the family who sent it, but I will just briefly read a bit of the content.

"Dear Congresswoman DeLauro, thank you for standing up for gun legislation. My three kids and I traveled from Westport, Connecticut, to D.C. today to support all those who are taking a stand. I hope my children remember that our government will speak up for those who can't and protect those it serves."

Stand up and protect. That is the oath of office that we take. That is what our job is. And I rise today to urge my colleagues across the aisle to pursue commonsense gun violence legislation.

We need to vote, to vote on legislation that makes an impact on the epidemic of gun violence in this country. The people of this great Nation are demanding a vote, and we have a moral obligation and a responsibility to take action.

We need to move a no fly, no buy bill, one that actually prevents potential terrorists from getting dangerous weapons, and 85 percent of the American public supports this legislation.

When we were elected to serve, we were charged with the responsibility, the responsibility to give constituents, our constituents, a voice in Washington, D.C. They are crying out for action, and if we do not provide that action, what were we sent here to do?

I say very frankly to the American public, if we are not addressing this need, send us home. Send us home.

But our work cannot stop just with no fly, no buy. We need to address the issue of universal background checks. I would go a step further. I would ban assault weapons. I think we need to hold gun manufacturers accountable for crimes committed with their guns.

I believe we need additional mental health resources, and to fund mental health programs sufficiently so that people get the help that they need. And we need to conduct research on gun violence.

For each of us, it is personal. In every community in this country the effects of gun violence have left scars, scars that are never going to heal. Again, in my State, in Connecticut, we know how devastating this can be.

After the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary, we lost six incredible, caring adults and 20 beautiful children, and we said, never again. Yet, since Sandy Hook there have been hundreds of gun deaths in Connecticut, brothers, sisters, children, babies.

The same story is true across our country, on the streets of our cities every day, in movie theaters, in churches, in nightclubs, in safe havens. The massacre in Orlando was one of the deadliest shootings in American history. Forty-nine people at the Pulse were killed; wounded, 53.

I would just like to take a moment to remember just one of them, Kimberly Morris, though her friends called her K.J. She was from Connecticut and she worked at the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando. She had recently moved from Hawaii to Orlando to help care for her mother and her grandmother.

□ 1100

Friends said she always wore a smile.

A former basketball teammate of K.J.'s from Post University in Waterbury, Connecticut, said that K.J. was "the sweetest person—I don't think I've ever seen her upset. What I would say is that she had a happy soul."

She was only 37 when she was murdered at Pulse nightclub. Her death and the deaths of the other 48 people who were killed in this atrocious hate crime have left a void that cannot be filled for their families, for their friends, for the LGBT community, and for the American people.

The victims' families do not get a break from grief, so we will not take a break until we get a bill—a bill with concrete, enforceable measures that will stop the killings. We must bring comprehensive, commonsense gun violence prevention measures to the floor of this people's House and reject measures that fall short of the standards this country deserves. It is the very least that we can do for the families who suffer grief that most of us will never understand. That is what our job is. That is what you elected us to do, to protect people, to protect the American people.

Not one more death, not one more empty moment of silence followed by inaction. The American people deserve concrete gun violence legislation. They deserve to know that their elected officials are standing up for them and protecting them.

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask that you talk to the Speaker of the whole House, PAUL RYAN, and let him know that we are not going away and this subject on gun violence is not going away. We have had too many people killed, too many people maimed, and too many people traumatized to not take up a vote on two commonsense pieces of legislation.

The first one is no fly, no buy. No fly, no buy. If you are on the terrorist watch list, you can't get a gun. The second is universal background checks to make sure that people with dangerous mental instability, domestic violence, and felons can't get a gun.

These are two very simple and straightforward bipartisan pieces of legislation. They have got to come up for a vote. We are not going to go away. We have had too many killings.

Like DIANA DEGETTE, I represent the Denver area. We are no stranger to mass shootings.

I am going to read the names of the kids and the teacher killed at Columbine and the names of the people killed in the Aurora movie theater so that their deaths are not in vain and