

But here we are, back in D.C., with Democrats ready to work together to move commonsense gun safety measures. We just need a partner. We cannot ignore these problems because they are hard. We cannot stand by hoping the problem of gun violence will go away by itself. We cannot continue to shirk our duties as Representatives while those we represent are dying.

There are commonsense regulations for Congress to debate. The American people overwhelmingly support closing loopholes in the background check system for firearm sales. Democrats, Republicans, gun owners, even members of the NRA support background checks; but the Republican leadership will not debate expanded background checks.

The American people also support closing gun sale loopholes, which let dangerous individuals gain access to weapons without any review. Democratic and Republican lawmakers have introduced bills that would close gun sale loopholes, but the Republican leadership will not allow the House to debate closing these dangerous loopholes.

The American people support the no fly, no buy bill, which would prevent terror suspects—terror suspects on the FBI watch list—from purchasing weapons. This is the very least we can do. But, again, the Republican leadership will not bring up no fly, no buy for debate.

By not allowing these kinds of votes, or even these important debates, House leaders are failing the American people. We know that if we do nothing, if we don't even try, nothing will change. Our communities are hurting, and they demand action. It is time to answer that call.

Mr. Speaker, whether or not you support this legislation, the American people demand that you do your job and hold a vote on the commonsense gun legislation they overwhelmingly support. It is the least we can do.

105TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA ON TAIWAN

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, this Nation has many friends around the world, but almost no country has been a better friend to the United States than has been the Republic of China on Taiwan, or, as it is more commonly known, Taiwan.

I would like to recognize Taiwan in advance of the 105th anniversary of the founding of that great country. On October 10, the people of Taiwan will commemorate the founding of a nation which has much to be proud of in this year.

Over the past 50 years, Taiwan has undergone dramatic political, social, and economic changes, and is now the only democracy in the Chinese-speak-

ing world. This year, the people of Taiwan witnessed the third peaceful transition of power. This election was especially meaningful with the election of the first woman President, Dr. Tsai Ing-wen.

There are important common values and principles that fundamentally link the United States and Taiwan, including respect for human rights, freedom, and democracy. I commend President Tsai Ing-wen for refreshing Taiwan's commitment to renewing Taiwan's commitment to these values.

The Republic of China on Taiwan has become a trailblazer in the industrialized world with a vibrant and growing economy and a flourishing free people. Taiwan has surpassed India and Saudi Arabia to become the 10th largest trading partner of the United States. I cannot overemphasize how important this economic powerhouse and democratic ally is to the United States and to our trade relations.

While I have some very serious concerns regarding the Trans-Pacific Partnership, if the United States ends up finalizing this agreement, Taiwan should definitely be included.

In the early 1960s, my father was the mayor of Knoxville, and he met at that time a man named Nelson Nee. Mr. Nee was then head of the University of Tennessee's international students program, but he later became a very successful businessman in California importing products from Taiwan. The result of Mr. Nee and my father's efforts to bring students from Taiwan to UT has resulted in a very large UT alumni group in Taipei—an alumni group of several hundred. Also, we have a very large and active Taiwan group in Knoxville and east Tennessee.

I had the privilege of spending a week in Taiwan, along with Congressman PETE SESSIONS and former Congressman Sonny Callahan, about 15 years ago. At the end of that trip, I asked one of the officials to tell me how you say in Chinese, "Thank you for your friendship." I was told that you say, "Shieh shieh ni de yo yi."

I simply will end by saying to Taiwan once again, thank you for your friendship.

UNIVERSAL BACKGROUND CHECK AND NO FLY, NO BUY LEGISLA- TION

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

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I was proud to join our Nation's great civil rights leader, JOHN LEWIS, and so many of our outstanding colleagues that have spoken out on the issue of gun violence when we had our historic sit-in in the House in June.

Our request then and our request today are the same. I think it is really rather simple. We are asking to be allowed to vote on two commonsense bills to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people—a universal back-

ground check bill that will close loopholes and no fly, no buy legislation to prevent people who are on the FBI's terrorist watch list from buying guns. Imagine, the FBI has them on a watch list but they can still buy guns. Both proposals have overwhelming support of the American people and they have bipartisan support in Congress.

Background checks are supported by 9 out of 10 Americans, and they have been proven to be successful at keeping guns out of the wrong hands. Every day, background checks stop more than 170 felons, 50 domestic abusers, and 20 fugitives from buying guns. Where these loopholes have been closed in States, such as Connecticut, the numbers have dropped dramatically.

Today, under current law, up to 40 percent of gun sales are completed with no background checks whatsoever. In our great country, no background checks whatsoever. People can buy guns online the way you can go out and buy M&Ms. Meanwhile, the most common places where the American people go—to church, to school, to movie theaters—they are under siege.

This Congress, do you know what this Congress has done, for anyone who is listening in?

We have had 31 moments of silence.

Mr. Speaker, sympathy is not enough. In fact, it comes off as being hypocritical. As sincere as people have been when they bow their heads for less than a minute, it is not enough. We have an epidemic in our country, and we can do something about it. We have bipartisan legislation.

Now, meanwhile, bills have been brought to the floor without one cosponsor. But Mr. KING's and Mr. THOMPSON's legislation, H.R. 1217, has 186 cosponsors.

Now, why can't we vote on this? Why?

I think that there is a complicity with the NRA with all of these deaths around the country, the violence that has taken place, of innocent people—children, young people, adults—and then all of the aftermath of grieving. And the families that have lost someone, they have a mark on their soul. They will grieve the rest of their lives.

We are asking for a vote. If you don't agree with me, vote "no." But, Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility, and I think a high moral responsibility, to address this. We are asking that these two bills be brought to the floor. Law enforcement supports these bills. The American people support these bills. Mr. Speaker, I think it is about time that these bills be brought to the floor. We can save American lives. Imagine that. By adopting these two bills, we can save American lives.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY), someone who has been a leader on this issue.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, we need a vote. What will it take for this House, the people's House, to finally vote on commonsense, bipartisan legislation to save American lives?