

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I recognize National Police Week; however, every day I am aware that officers protect and serve, put their lives on the line each day they serve, and some give their lives for that service.

I also recognize what officers realize, that their sacrifice and service is for everybody: people they know and don't know, and people who love them and people who hate them.

That is a big part of why our officers should be recognized, because no matter who it is, no matter what the danger is, police are trained to and police do what we naturally don't do as civilians: they run towards the danger, not away from it.

As a former prosecutor, I worked with many law enforcement officers that I will never forget. More importantly, there are victims and victims' family members who will never forget the service of police, including the family of Azahel Cruz, a 6-year-old that was killed in a drive-by shooting.

The case went unsolved for 5 years; however, due to the dogged determination of Officer Tom Larkin and DA Investigator Peter Austin, witnesses were found, evidence was presented, I proved the case at trial, and a murderer was convicted and removed from the streets for good.

Police work will never replace the life of Azahel, but that service and the service and sacrifice of our officers is exactly why we recognize our police officers this week.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MELISSA RAMIREZ

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

Mr. KIHUEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember the life of Melissa Ramirez. Melissa attended the Route 91 festival in Las Vegas on October 1.

Melissa loved her family more than anything in the world. She always made sure to take trips home over the weekends while she was studying at California State University to get her bachelor's degree in business administration.

After she graduated from college in 2014, Melissa began working as a member specialist for an auto insurer, where she continued to work until her life tragically ended at the Route 91 festival.

Melissa loved country music, but loved the Philadelphia Eagles more. She enjoyed watching sporting events and supporting each of her favorite teams.

Melissa was known for being a hard worker, deeply loving her family, and making sure to always enjoy life.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my condolences to Melissa Ramirez' family and friends. Please note that the city of Las Vegas, the State of Nevada, and the whole country grieve with you.

THREAT ASSESSMENT AND PROTECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, imagine if someone came up and introduced himself to you and said: "Hi, I am Nick. I am a school shooter." According to those who knew him, Nikolas Cruz, the deranged Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School murderer, was known to do just that.

He attacked a neighbor's car. He shot their animals. He was known to vandalize and steal property. He made alarming social media posts and was expelled from school. There were multiple reports to local police and the FBI, and many other egregious red flags waving long before 17 innocent lives were taken and another 17 wounded on February 14, 2018. In the 7 years leading up to the shooting, police visited Cruz' home 39 times—incredibly.

Mr. Speaker, the Parkland shooting should have never happened. Every warning sign was there. They were not missed. Officials just failed to connect the dots.

I wish that I could say that this failure is unique to Parkland, but, sadly, it is not. Nearly 20 years ago, high school junior Brooks Brown came across a website where a fellow classmate threatened to kill him and his family. Brown's parents alerted the local police, who were already aware of concerning behaviors from that website's author and another involved student.

Within only a few months, these same students, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, would murder 13 and wound 24 Columbine High School students in what has been called the first modern mass shooting. Again, the red flags were detected, but the appropriate steps were not taken.

This is not a new phenomenon. In 1966, Charles Whitman sought help from a psychiatrist at the University of Texas for "overwhelming periods of hostility," including wanting to, "go up in the tower . . . and start shooting people." Six months later, he would carry out his sick fantasy exactly as he described: 16 dead and 31 wounded.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, this list goes on and on: the Pulse nightclub, the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, the Boston Marathon, the Washington Navy Yard, the attack on Congresswoman Gabby Giffords in Tucson, Sandy Hook Elementary School, the Aurora theater, Virginia Tech, the Norwegian summer camp, West Nickel Mines Amish school, the Charleston church massacre, the attack on Republican Members of Congress at baseball practice, and even the YouTube and Tennessee Waffle House shooting just a few weeks ago.

Mr. Speaker, all of these horrifying events on this nonexhaustive list have

something in common: every single one of these attacks was carried out after someone close to the killer observed and reported concerning behavior to the authorities.

The good news is there is something that we can do to fix this. These killers were under law enforcement's watch, but a proactive threat management structure, in large part, does not exist in the culture and fabric of contemporary law enforcement today.

For starters, our local law enforcement is simply undertrained, understaffed, underequipped, and have no integrated system in place to effectively identify and address these types of threats. The lack of information-sharing capabilities between the local, State, and Federal law enforcement, school officials, mental health professionals, social services, and other community-based organizations prevent these key players from implementing an effective intervention strategy directed at those who are on the pathway to violence.

For decades, there has been an effective system in place, pioneered by the Secret Service, that has successfully worked to protect our Presidents and other public figures. I believe that it is time to take a page out of the Secret Service's playbook and address this critical national security issue by implementing their established and proven threat management process for identifying, investigating, evaluating, and mitigating threats as a critical means to protecting our communities.

Currently, threat assessment and protective intelligence is used as a method for gathering and evaluating information about a person who may have the motive, intention, and capability to mount an attack against public figures. The Secret Service will gauge a potential threat, assess the vulnerability of the targeted individuals, and guide an intervention when necessary. This proactive process leaves no stone unturned.

This approach is entirely different from what the FBI and local law enforcement currently use because it compiles information from a variety of comprehensive sources to build out a threat assessment, and it works. Since the 1981 attempted assassination of President Reagan, nobody has even come close.

If this system works to protect the life of the President, elected officials, foreign dignitaries, and even celebrities, why couldn't this also work to protect our children and local communities?

Whether it is a shooting, a stabbing, a weaponized vehicle, or a bombing, mass casualty events are occurring more and more frequently at home and abroad. It is more important now than ever that we act.

Incorporating threat assessment and protective intelligence into all facets of law enforcement will save lives. If we can properly recognize the warnings and act, we can prevent targeted violence. It is time that we put an end to