

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SCOTT DesJARLAIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, due to a family emergency, I was unable to be present for votes on May 21, 2018. Had I been present, I would have voted yes on H.R. 4830 (Roll no. 207); H.R. 4451 (Roll no. 208) and H.R. 3832 (Roll no. 209).

RECOGNIZING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF NAACP BREMERTON UNIT 1134

HON. DEREK KILMER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 75th Anniversary of NAACP Bremerton Unit 1134. I was pleased to celebrate this anniversary officially on Saturday, May 19, 2018 in Bremerton, Washington.

Mr. Speaker, according to the chief oral historian for the Washington State Legacy Project, in 1940 about 100 people of color lived in Bremerton. By 1944, more than 5,000 people of color moved to the region as part of a massive influx of patriots who came here to help the war effort. The town's population grew from 15,000 in 1940 to 75,000 in 1944.

That growth didn't come easily. And it only came because people like Lillian Walker and her husband James moved to the region from Illinois and helped form what became Unit 1134.

In 2009, Mrs. Walker, at 95 years old, told a historian: "I've always tried to treat people like I want to be treated. I don't care what color you are as long as you're a good person. I've never understood prejudice, and I've never put up with it. I always said, 'Well, you're either with me or against me. And if you're against me, that means we're going to have to fight!'"

And she fought.

Mr. Speaker, our nation still has work to do to achieve the dream that Dr. King spoke of not far from this Capitol. The fight for equality continues, and the NAACP—as it has done in Bremerton for 75 years—is leading the way. Anywhere in our country where there is inequality, the NAACP is there. The NAACP is leading the fight against discrimination at the polls. They are bridging the divide between people of color and our nation's police officers. They are pushing for better schools that give all our kids the skills they need to reach their dreams.

They're working to end gun violence. And they're pushing for more opportunities for more people in more places.

Mr. Speaker, Members of Congress, please join me in celebrating the 75th Anniversary of NAACP Bremerton Unit 1134.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAC THORNBERRY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, May 21, 2018, I was unable to be in Washington and missed Roll Call votes No. 207, To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the disapproval of any course of education for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs unless the educational institution providing the course permits individuals to attend or participate in courses pending payment by Department, and for other purposes; No. 208, To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a five-year extension to the homeless veterans reintegration programs and to provide clarification regarding eligibility for services under such programs; and No. 209, To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the executive director of a national network of State-based prescription monitoring programs under which Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers shall query such network, and for other purposes. Had I been present, I would have voted "Yes" on all three bills.

HONORING JEREMIAH ALLEN RUSSELL

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jeremiah Russell. Jeremiah is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 333, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jeremiah has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jeremiah has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jeremiah has become a member of the tribe Mic-O-Say. Jeremiah has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jeremiah acquired, assembled and installed outdoor park benches at Parkville Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jeremiah for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONDEMNING ASSAULT ON FAMILIES OF DISAPPEARED PERSONS DURING HUNGER STRIKE IN SINDH, PAKISTAN

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I express my grave concerns about the human rights situation in the Sindh province of Pakistan, with special reference to enforced disappearances of persons at the hands of Pakistani security agencies. Many of the disappeared persons are from the Jeay Sindh Mahaz (JSM), Jeay Sindh Mutehada Mahaz (JSMM), and Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz (JSQM). The disappeared persons also include teachers, intellectuals, writers, and publishers. Six of my House colleagues joined me in sending a letter to the State Department on this issue in August 2017. I also raised this issue on the floor of the House in October 2017, and this problem of enforced disappearances was discussed in a February 2018 hearing of the Asia Subcommittee at the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

I strongly condemn an incident that occurred this past weekend, when Pakistan's security forces assaulted the families of disappeared and missing persons who were on a hunger-strike in protest of these disappearances.

The family members of Sindhi victims of enforced disappearances (mainly their daughters and wives, as male members are being held by the security forces or have moved underground or remain silent as they fear the security agencies) and their friends have launched a peaceful nonviolent protest for their release. The daughters and wives of the disappeared persons were engaged in a 72-hour hunger strike in front of the Press Club at Karachi that began May 20. During this nonviolent protest, Pakistani security forces or their agents assaulted two daughters of the disappeared Hidayat Lohar (an elementary school headmaster who was taken away in April 2017 in front of school children) and two daughters of Khadim Arijo (a civil servant missing since April 2017). Security forces also reportedly detained about five of the nonviolent activists, though it seems they have been released.

It is crucial that Pakistan immediately cease these and other related human rights violations in the Sindh province. Pakistani security personnel and others involved in the enforced disappearances should be held accountable. I urge the U.S. State Department and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, as well as our ambassador in Pakistan, to take up this issue with the civilian and military leadership of Pakistan. Our ambassador to Pakistan must receive guarantees from the Pakistani government regarding the protection of human rights defenders and of those who advocate for Sindh's missing persons. It will be even more significant to set up a bipartisan fact finding mission to probe enforced disappearances and related killings in Sindh.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

GUN VIOLENCE

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 21, 2018

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my Congressional Black Caucus Colleagues to speak forcefully for this Congress to listen to the children of this nation who are crying out to us for help asking that we save them from gun violence.

On Friday, May 18, 2018, the community of Santa Fe, Texas joined Parkland, Florida—as the place where gun violence took the lives of children and teachers who were at school.

Our hearts still ache with sadness and disbelief for the families and loved ones of the 8 students and 2 teachers who were sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, wives and mother, who lost their lives in this senseless, horrific act of domestic terrorism.

Enough is enough.

It is safe to say that America is sick and tired of being sick and tired of gun violence.

Congress has studied the issue of gun violence and we know the answers to reducing deaths and injuries, but what we lack is the will in this body to act.

Here are the top 6 actions the President and the Congress can and must take now to protect our communities:

Require universal background checks to keep guns out of dangerous hands;

Extend the waiting period to purchase or transfer dangerous weapons like the AR-15 pending completion of background checks to 7 days;

Raise the minimum age to purchase or transfer dangerous weapons like the AR-15, high-capacity magazines, ammunitions, and silencers from 18 to 21 years of age;

Ban military-style assault weapons;

Limit high-capacity magazines; and

Increase access to mental health services.

Provide the tools that gun owners need to maintain control over legally obtained.

We can take action without infringing on the 2nd Amendment rights of Americans.

We need to make it harder for criminals to obtain guns by strengthening the background check system.

We need to ensure that mental health professionals know their options for reporting threats of violence—even as we acknowledge that someone with a mental illness is far more likely to be the victim of a violent crime than the perpetrator.

We must also make safe gun storage a priority.

As the founder and Co-Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, a senior Member of the Judiciary Committee, and the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security, I have listened far too often to the testimony of individuals who have survived tragedies or lost loved ones as a result of gun violence.

In the words of President Obama after the 2013 Sandy Hook Elementary shooting, "We're going to have to come together and take meaningful action to prevent more tragedies like this, regardless of the politics."

While it is certainly true that violent crime and homicide rates in this country have been declining in recent years, they are still far above those in other industrialized nations.

There exists a culture of violence in America; a subculture that with today's technologically advanced weaponry is far more dangerous to public safety than ever before.

At no point in our nation's history has a single human been more capable of inflicting massive death and misery, and our society is producing more individuals who seek to employ such means to carry out their ill intentions.

Far too often, the tool of choice for would-be killers are military-style assault weapons with high-capacity magazines.

Every day, on average, 92 Americans are victims of gun violence, resulting in more than 33,000 deaths annually.

In raising this issue, we recognize and respect other cultures that exist in America; law-abiding citizens who are responsible in their ownership of firearms.

Many of these citizens are responsible with respect to the lethal capacity of their firearms, opting not to obtain assault weapons or to equip assault weapons with 30, so, 75, or 100-round magazines.

Here is what I think the Congress can and must do to reduce gun violence without abridging the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding Americans.

Extend the waiting period to purchase or transfer dangerous weapons like the AR-15 pending completion of background checks to 7 days.

That is why I have introduced H.R. 4268, the "Gun Safety, Not Sorry Act."

Raise the minimum age to purchase or transfer dangerous weapons like the AR-15, high-capacity magazines, ammunitions, and silencers from 18 to 21 years of age.

That is why I have introduced H.R. 5088, the "No Mass Atrocities with Guns Act" ("No MAGA Act").

Reinstate and strengthen the federal ban on assault weapons.

I am an original co-sponsor of H.R. 3947, legislation that will reinstates the assault weapons ban that has been introduced by my colleague, Congressman DAVID CICILLINE of Rhode Island.

Reinstate a federal ban on bump stocks and high-capacity magazines holding more than ten rounds and allowing a shooter to inflict mass damage in a short period of time without reloading will save lives.

I will soon be introducing the "Stop Abuse, Violence, and Ending Lives Act of 2018," legislation to ban the sale and possession of bump stocks.

Require a background check for every gun sale, while respecting reasonable exceptions for cases such as gifts between family members and temporary loans for sporting purposes.

I am an original co-sponsor of H.R. 4240, the "Public Safety and Second Amendment Rights Protection Act of 2017," legislation that requires universal background checks and closes the gun show loophole that has been introduced by my colleague, Congressman MIKE THOMPSON of California.

It is estimated that four out of ten gun buyers do not go through a background check when purchasing a firearm because federal law only requires these checks when someone buys a gun from a federally licensed dealer.

That would be like allowing four out of ten people to choose if they would like to go through airport security.

This loophole allows felons, domestic abusers, and those prohibited because of mental illness to easily bypass the criminal background check system and buy firearms at gun shows, through private sellers, over the internet or out of the trunks of cars.

Strengthen the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) database to ensure it is up to date by requiring federal and state agencies to transfer important records to the database expeditiously since without the information, the reliability of a background check is questionable.

Pass legislation aimed specifically at cracking down on illegal gun trafficking and straw-purchasing which often puts guns in the hands of people who are prohibited from having them.

Straw-purchasing is when a prohibited buyer has someone with no criminal history walk into a gun store, pass a background check and purchase a gun with the purpose of giving it to the prohibited buyer.

Restore funding for public safety and law enforcement initiatives aimed at reducing gun violence.

Congress should fund law enforcement's efforts to reduce gun violence, while supporting federal research into causes of gun violence.

There is no reason the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) or the National Institute of Health (NIH) should be prohibited from researching the causes of gun violence.

That is why I have co-sponsored H.R. 1832, legislation that authorizes the appropriation of funds to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for conducting or supporting research on firearms safety or gun violence prevention.

I have also co-sponsored H.R. 1478, the Gun Violence Research Act, which repeals the provision that in practice prohibits the Department of Health and Human Services from sponsoring research on gun violence.

And there is no reason for the restrictions federal law places on our law enforcement officers' ability to track and combat the spread of illegal guns.

Close the holes in our mental-health system and make sure that care is available for those who need it.

Congress must improve prevention, early intervention, and treatment of mental illness while working to eliminate the stigma associated with mental illness.

Access to mental health services should be improved, the shortage of mental health professionals should be addressed, and funding should be made available for those programs that have proven to be effective.

That is why I have co-sponsored H.R. 1982, the "Mental Health Access and Gun Violence Prevention Act," legislation that authorizes the Department of Justice, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Social Security Administration to: (1) increase access to mental health care treatment and services, and (2) promote reporting of mental health information to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

Help local communities get unwanted and illegal guns out of the hands of those who should not have them.

Congress should help support and develop local programs that get unwanted guns off our streets, such as gun buy-back programs that proved so effective in Australia.

Finally, we must address our culture's glorification of violence seen and heard through