

our movie screens, television shows, music and video games.

Congress should fund scientific research on the relationship between popular culture and gun violence, while ensuring that parents have access to the information they need to make informed decisions about what their families watch, listen to, and play.

Here is what I think neither the President, the Congress, nor state and local governments should not do to reduce gun violence.

We Should Not Arm Teachers because they are not trained to handle weapons; this is not what they signed up for.

We Must Not Surrender to NRA even though the gun lobby has long enjoyed tremendous influence over congressional Republicans and some Democrats.

Persons who live in fear of gun violence and mass shootings at schools, theaters, places of worship and work, and public spaces are not afraid of the NRA.

What they are afraid of is an AR-15 in the hands of a mentally unstable person.

Americans are a can-do people; we do not bemoan our problems and accept terrible outcomes.

We act to solve them.

We have made our cars and trucks and roads safer and reduced traffic fatalities.

We have virtually eradicated polio, small pox, and other debilitating and life-threatening diseases.

We respond immediately to natural disasters caused by hurricanes, earthquakes, tornados, floods, and man-made disasters caused by acts of terrorism.

When it comes to reducing or preventing gun violence, we must summon that same spirit of American resolve and know-how and get the job done.

We can do it; after all, we are Americans.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. ADRIAN SMITH**

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 208.

SRI LANKAN REMEMBRANCE DAY

**HON. BRAD SHERMAN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of the Day of Remembrance for Sri Lankan communities around the world. Remembrance Day is generally observed on May 18 or May 19, to remember and mark the sacrifices made by all those who died, irrespective of their ethnicity, in Sri Lanka's civil war.

For many, who have family and loved ones in Sri Lanka, there is still not closure, because those they lost are not accounted for.

The Sri Lankan government has acknowledged the receipt of at least 65,000 complaints of such disappearances.

Independent assessments provided by the human rights community estimate that be-

tween 60,000 and 100,000 individuals have disappeared since 1980.

The victims included human rights workers, those providing humanitarian assistance, journalists, critics of the government, community leaders, and many others. Abductions and enforced disappearances have been perpetrated by state and non-state actors.

The Tamil people have been disproportionately impacted by these crimes, and their families deserve to know the truth. All of the families deserve closure.

Despite some action, the Sri Lankan government has still made limited progress and more needs to be done.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. ROBERT AND MRS. RITA ROBBINS

**HON. BRETT GUTHRIE**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Robert and Mrs. Rita Robbins, who have dedicated their lives to caring for Kentuckians as surgeon and surgical nurse, respectively, at Hardin Memorial Hospital.

Dr. and Mrs. Robbins met when they were working together at Hardin Memorial Hospital, and fittingly were married in the hospital's chapel. They have become fixtures in the Hardin County community through their work at the hospital and beyond.

Dr. and Mrs. Robbins embody the definition of servant leadership, and I am proud to honor them.

MELANIE ALLEN

**HON. FRANCIS ROONEY**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Melanie Allen and her recent recognition of being named the 2018 Patriot League Scholar-Athlete of the Year. Ms. Allen, an extraordinary tennis player, is also a cadet at the United States Military Academy.

Melanie recently finished the season in West Point's No. 2 singles position where she had a record of 19-9 in singles matches and 21-3 in doubles matches, both of which boast as single-season personal bests. Not only is Melanie an excellent athlete, but she also holds a 3.65 GPA as a Psychology major.

I congratulate Melanie Allen on her recent recognition for, and her dedication to, both athletics and academics. I look forward to hearing of her successes in the armed forces and beyond in the years to come.

HONORING OFFICER FINBARR HARAN ON BEING NAMED OAK LAWN'S TOP COP OF 2018

**HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Officer Finbarr Haran of the Oak Lawn

Police Department for being named the village's Top Cop of 2018. The Oak Lawn Lion's Club bestows this award on a distinguished member of the force after being nominated by his or her peers and selected by a committee of police department leaders.

Officer Haran serves the Oak Lawn community as one of the city's K-9 Officers alongside his partner Edo, a Belgian Malinois from the Czech Republic. Together, they have worked extensively with the Drug Enforcement Agency and have brought numerous criminals to justice. Over the years, the expansion of Oak Lawn's law enforcement agency has brought in the phenomenal men and women who now serve as the city's first responders. Officer Haran is shining example of the Oak Lawn Police Department and the officers that serve the Village of Oak Lawn.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Oak Lawn Police Officer Finbarr Haran. I congratulate him on his accomplishments and thank him for his service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. ADAM KINZINGER**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Mr. KINZINGER. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be present for votes yesterday, May 21, 2018, due to a delayed flight. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 207; YEA on Roll Call No. 208; and YEA on Roll Call No. 209.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for Roll Call votes 207, 208, and 209 on Monday, May 21, 2018. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AZERBAIJAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Republic of Azerbaijan on the 100th Anniversary of its independence, which occurred on May 28, 1918. On the adoption of its Declaration of Independence, what was then known as the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, became the first secular parliamentary democracy in the Muslim world.

Since that time, Azerbaijan suffered an invasion by the Bolsheviks which led to the establishment of a Soviet government and ended with the forced incorporation of Azerbaijan into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). As the Soviet Union collapsed, the people of Azerbaijan readied themselves for

yet another independence movement culminating in the restoration of their independence on August 30, 1991—the United States once again recognized Azerbaijan's independence on December 25, 1991. Since that Christmas Day over twenty-five years ago, the United States has supported the Republic of Azerbaijan's political independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders.

Mr. Speaker, Azerbaijan has not only been a friend to the United States in our times of need, most notably after September 11, 2001, when Azerbaijan gave us their unconditional assistance in bringing to justice those who carried out that cowardly attack, but also to our dear friend Israel. Azerbaijan and Israel recently celebrated twenty-five years of strong diplomatic relations. A relationship that has seen great growth in trade between the two nations and an ever increasing dedication to strengthening energy security in the region.

Mr. Speaker, I extend my sincerest congratulations to the people of Azerbaijan as they celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the establishment of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic.

HONORING CAPTAIN THEODORE MORAN ON BEING NAMED OAK LAWN'S TOP FIREFIGHTER OF 2018

**HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 22, 2018*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Captain Theodore Moran of the Oak Lawn Fire Department for being named the village's Top Firefighter of 2018. The Oak Lawn Lion's Club bestows this award on a distinguished member of the department after being nominated by his or her peers and selected by a committee of fire department leaders.

Captain Moran has distinguished himself on numerous occasions, putting his life on the line for residents of Oak Lawn. In 2014, he was awarded the Fire Department's Medal of Honor Award and he continues to serve the community with distinction. Captain Moran is a superb example of the Oak Lawn Fire Department's motto "The Desire to Serve—The Courage to Act—The Ability to Perform."

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Captain Theodore Moran of the Oak Lawn Fire Department. I congratulate him on his accomplishments and thank him for his service.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF FATHER THOMAS C. EISWEIRTH

**HON. TIM RYAN**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 22, 2018*

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and honor the retirement of Father Thomas C. Eisweirth as the pastor of Blessed Sacrament Parish in Warren, Ohio.

Fr. Eisweirth was ordained a priest in 1974 by Bishop James Malone. He grew up at St. Mary Parish in Conneaut, Ohio in Ashtabula County. Over the course of his ministry, he

has served in five other parishes in the Diocese of Youngstown and in other parishes throughout the region including Trumbull, Portage, Columbiana, and Mahoning Counties. In 2010, Bishop George Murry S.J. appointed Fr. Eisweirth as pastor of this parish. Now, after forty-four years in active ministry, he is retiring.

Fr. Eisweirth always gives the most touching sermons. He has a way of connecting deep spiritual principles to our everyday lives. He truly embodies the mission of the parish to be a Blessed Sacrament for the people of Warren, Howland, and the entire world. He is an excellent priest and a phenomenal pastor. I will miss his immense wisdom, and I will keep him in my prayers. I wish him every blessing as he begins a new journey in retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 22, 2018*

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, due to my mother's health, I was unable to vote on Roll Call votes 207, 208, and 209. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 207; YEA on Roll Call No. 208; and YEA on Roll Call No. 209.

HONORING VICTORIA "VICKI" TOUCHSTONE—REFUGEE EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR AWARD

**HON. JUAN VARGAS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 22, 2018*

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Victoria "Vicki" Touchstone who has been named the 2018 National Wildlife Refuge System Employee of the Year.

Vicki Touchstone is a Refuge Planner for the San Diego National Wildlife Complex. The wildlife refuge protects endangered, threatened, migratory, and native species in their natural habitats during a growing urbanization of the coast. The refuge is located at the south end of San Diego and is surrounded by the cities of National City, Chula Vista, San Diego, Imperial Beach and Coronado which fall in my congressional district. In her role, she has developed important projects that have assisted and protected the wildlife populations that call the 51st Congressional District their home. In addition, she's created programs that have provided created greater public access for the community.

She has dedicated 16 years of her career to the San Diego National Wildlife Complex, completing multiple habitat restoration projects, drafted and finalized four major Comprehensive Corporations Plans for four different refuges and expanded public access.

I am told that at home she has created an oasis for turtle and tortoises that were rescued from the San Diego Turtle and Tortoise Society right in her backyard and takes her personal vacations at the annual California Trails and Greenways Conference. Her dedication to protecting wildlife in San Diego is astounding.

I would like to recognize Vicki Touchstone for her dedication to protect wildlife in my dis-

trict, congratulate her being recognized as the 2018 National Wildlife Refuge System Employee of the Year and for all the work she has done to preserving wildlife in the 51st District of California.

COMMENDING LOCAL 2018 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES FOR THEIR DECISION TO ENLIST IN THE UNITED STATES MARINES AND OUR COMMUNITY SALUTES OF FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA FOR HOSTING THE INAUGURAL HIGH SCHOOL ENLISTEE RECOGNITION CEREMONY

**HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 22, 2018*

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 10 Fairfax, Virginia area high school seniors who plan to enlist in the United States Marines after graduation. These students have excelled in their academic and extracurricular activities, and I offer my sincere congratulations upon their high school graduation.

I commend these student leaders for their selflessness and courageous decision to serve their country as members of the United States Marines:

David Kha; Luke Kim; Ismael Shehat; Zachary Torres; Alex Cundith; Jasper Allison; Joshua Adkins; Ian Framstad; Robero Fuentes; Jenish KC.

These students will be honored by the Our Community Salutes Fairfax Chapter of Our Community Salutes at their Inaugural Military Enlistee Recognition Ceremony on Tuesday, May 22, 2018 in Sterling, VA.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking these young men and women and their families for their dedication to serving this great Nation. We owe them and the many Americans who have served and will serve a debt of gratitude.

SHARING STUDENTS' 'MARCH FOR OUR LIVES' REMARKS

**HON. STENY H. HOYER**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 22, 2018*

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, on May 9, I came to the Floor and spoke about the March For Our Lives on March 24 and the nine extraordinarily poised students in Morristown, New Jersey, who spoke at the rally there, which I attended. I include in the RECORD remarks by Benjamin Douglas. I hope my colleagues will read them and internalize the sense of fear in which our nation's students are living every day—and our responsibility as Members of Congress to do something to address this crisis of gun violence.

MARCH FOR OUR LIVES REMARKS BY BENJAMIN DOUGLAS

Mass shootings have been becoming a more and more common part of our society for years now. By the time I became aware of this, many ordinary people had already begun to work toward change. One such person was a close friend of mine who took part