

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates December 15, 2018, as “Wreaths Across America Day”;

(2) honors—

(A) the Wreaths Across America project;

(B) patriotic escort units, including—

(i) motorcycle units;

(ii) law enforcement units; and

(iii) first responder units;

(C) the trucking industry in the United States; and

(D) the volunteers and donors involved in this worthy tradition; and

(3) recognizes—

(A) the service of veterans and members of the Armed Forces; and

(B) the sacrifices that veterans, members of the Armed Forces, and the families of veterans and members of the Armed Forces have made, and continue to make, for the United States, a great nation.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am pleased to be joined by my colleague Senator ANGUS KING in sponsoring this resolution to designate December 15, 2018, as Wreaths Across America Day. Throughout human history, the evergreen wreath has been offered as a tribute to heroes. On December 15, we gather to offer this enduring symbol of valor and sacrifice to America’s heroes. In this season of giving, we pay tribute to those who have given us the most precious gift of all, our freedom.

Some who secured that gift did not return home. Some did return but have since passed on. Some remain missing but will never be forgotten. Many still live in honor among us.

We here at home must always respect their service. Often, we do this on those special days we set aside each year—Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and Veterans Day. Sometimes, we do this spontaneously because our hearts, rather than our calendars, tell us to. That is the origin of Wreaths Across America.

Twenty-six Christmases ago, Morrill and Karen Worcester took time during their busiest season to donate and deliver 5,000 wreaths from their company in Harrington, Maine, to Arlington National Cemetery to mark the graves of fallen heroes. The people of Maine are proud that this heartfelt expression of America’s gratitude began in our State, and I congratulate Karen and Morrill for being awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor Society’s Patriot Award this April, the highest award the Society can bestow to civilians.

In the years since, that heartfelt gesture became a national phenomenon and an American tradition. More than six million wreaths have been laid by tens of thousands of volunteers at more than 600 cemeteries, here and abroad, and even on ships at sea. This remarkable effort is made possible by trucking companies across the Nation who donate their services and by the generosity of thousands of volunteers and supporters. With the Patriot Guard escort, the convoy from Maine to Washington is greeted at every stop along the way by grateful citizens of all ages. On December 15—after months of hard work, careful planning, and generous

donations—wreaths will be laid where American heroes lie at rest.

This year, for the first time, more than 9,300 Maine-made balsam wreaths will mark the headstones of all American service members laid to rest at the Normandy American Cemetery in France. It has been nearly 75 years since our brave troops stormed those beaches to liberate Europe but they will never be forgotten.

Wreaths Across America honors our departed heroes, but it does even more. It tells our veterans that we honor their service. It tells our men and women in uniform today that we are grateful for their courage and devotion to duty. It tells the families of those serving our country that they are in our thoughts and prayers. And it tells the families of the fallen that we share their grief.

The mission of Wreaths Across America is: Remember, Honor, Teach. Thanks to the spirit of this Maine-made tradition, we remember and honor America’s veterans, while also teaching the generations to come of the sacrifices that have been made to secure a future of peace and liberty. May God bless these heroes, and may God bless America.

SENATE RESOLUTION 720—EX-PRESSING THE CONDOLENCES OF THE SENATE AND HONORING THE MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE SHOOTING AT MERCY HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CENTER IN CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, ON NOVEMBER 19, 2018

Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. DUCKWORTH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 720

Whereas on November 19, 2018, a gunman opened fire in the parking lot and lobby of Mercy Hospital and Medical Center in Chicago, Illinois;

Whereas the gunman took the lives of 3 individuals who had dedicated themselves to serving others as members of the law enforcement and medical communities;

Whereas Chicago Police Officer Samuel Jimenez, age 28, of the Second Police District, responded to the emergency call with bravery and made the ultimate sacrifice in an effort to protect the lives of others;

Whereas Chicago Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson said that—

(1) Officer Jimenez and the other officers who responded to the shooting “did what heroic officers always do—they ran toward the gunfire”; and

(2) the actions of Officer Jimenez and the other officers who responded to the shooting “saved a lot of lives”;

Whereas Officer Jimenez was—

(1) a dedicated law enforcement officer;

(2) a loving husband; and

(3) a loving father of 3 young children;

Whereas Officer Jimenez was the second police officer of the Chicago Police Department to be fatally shot in the line of duty in 2018, after Commander Paul R. Bauer, the commander of the 18th Police District, was fatally shot while attempting to apprehend an armed suspect on February 13;

Whereas Dr. Tamara O’Neal, age 38, a physician at Mercy Hospital and Medical Center,

was fatally shot by the gunman in the hospital parking lot;

Whereas Dr. O’Neal, a graduate of the University of Illinois College of Medicine, had worked in the emergency department at Mercy Hospital and Medical Center treating others and was devoted to her church and to charitable causes;

Whereas Dr. O’Neal was described by the director of the emergency department at Mercy Hospital and Medical Center as a “wonderful individual” who was “dedicated to caring for her community”;

Whereas Dayna Less, age 24, a pharmacist at Mercy Hospital and Medical Center, was fatally shot by the gunman;

Whereas Ms. Less, a graduate of Purdue University, had overcome health challenges as a youth and had decided to become a pharmacist to help serve the health needs of others;

Whereas Ms. Less, who was engaged to be married to her childhood sweetheart, was described by her father as “the strongest person I know”;

Whereas the city of Chicago suffers from our nation’s epidemic of gun violence, with nearly 2,700 people killed or injured by gunfire in Chicago in 2018;

Whereas the medical community in the United States works tirelessly every day to provide professional and dedicated care to individuals affected by gun violence across the nation;

Whereas the law enforcement community in the United States works tirelessly every day to respond to incidents of gun violence and protect others from harm at the risk of their own safety; and

Whereas the nation owes a debt of gratitude to members of the law enforcement and medical communities in Chicago and across the United States for the service they provide in helping others, including in the response to the shooting at Mercy Hospital and Medical Center on November 19, 2018: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) expresses sincere condolences to the families, friends, and loved ones of Officer Samuel Jimenez, Dr. Tamara O’Neal, and Dayna Less, the victims of the tragic shooting on November 19, 2018, at Mercy Hospital and Medical Center in Chicago, Illinois;

(2) honors the lives and memory of the victims, with gratitude for the service the victims provided as members of the law enforcement and medical communities;

(3) extends support to the individuals subjected to the trauma of the shooting;

(4) thanks the law enforcement officers, medical personnel, emergency responders, and Mercy Hospital and Medical Center workers who responded to the shooting with professionalism, dedication, and bravery; and

(5) stands in solidarity with the victims of senseless gun violence in Chicago and in communities across the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 721—DESIGNATING THE WEEK BEGINNING ON OCTOBER 21, 2018, AS “NATIONAL CHEMISTRY WEEK”

Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 721

Whereas chemistry is the science of basic units of matter and, consequently, plays a role in every aspect of human life;

Whereas chemistry has broad applications, including food science, soil science, water quality, energy, sustainability, medicine, and electronics;