

lives at alarming rates. Someone must speak for them.

Someone must tell the story of everyday gun violence that plagues our communities from Chicago to Key West.

Too often, this House focuses on the mass shooting tragedies in this Nation that have become more and more common since our Republican colleagues allowed the assault weapons ban to expire in 2004. We hold moments of silence. My colleagues run to their tweets with their thoughts and prayers to justify their continued and negligent inaction. But we forget gun violence happens every day in every community.

We cannot forget about those who died alone from gun violence in city parks, in road rage incidents, and in their own homes, entrapped by depression and despair. They, too, deserve to be remembered. Their lives and stories should also challenge us to actions so we can say “not one more” and then actually do something to prevent another death, another funeral, and another life forever altered.

Madam Speaker, I am proud that this House finally acted. After the American people sent a historic wave of new Members to Congress, Members who understand that commonsense gun safety reform saves lives, we voted to enact bipartisan universal background check legislation that is supported by more than 90 percent of Americans and 70 percent of NRA members.

We also voted to close the Charleston loophole, a clear gap in our laws that allowed a known white supremacist to legally purchase a weapon and use it to steal the lives of nine people seeking to better know their God.

We know this is a problem. We passed legislation to close this loophole, and yet the Senate, controlled by Republicans, have still done nothing. My good colleagues in the Senate continue to do nothing while people die every day in every State and in every community. Still they do nothing. They refuse to act. Still they offer hollow thoughts and prayers while rushing to the bank with pockets full of NRA donations.

□ 0945

Perhaps that is the problem, Madam Speaker. Perhaps it is the money.

The American people should know that the President got \$30 million from the NRA in his 2016 campaign. What are they buying?

The American people deserve to know that the Senate majority leader has taken more than \$1 million from the NRA over his career. What were they investing in?

The American people deserve to know that too many in the GOP are bought and sold by the NRA or too often afraid of them to grow a spine and stand up for their constituents.

It is a sad fact that just 8—that is right, just 8—of 198 Members, or a mere 4 percent of the House Republican Con-

ference, had the courage to stand with gun violence victims and 90 percent of Americans. I thank those courageous eight Republicans for voting to save lives.

Madam Speaker, to my colleagues still too afraid or too owned by the NRA to act, I say good luck next year. They had their chance, and they failed miserably. They are on the wrong side of history.

Next year, the American people will not forget.

RECOGNIZING THOMAS J. HAAS

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

Mr. HUIZENGA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the career of a friend, public servant, and caring educator: Grand Valley State University President Thomas J. Haas.

As a retired U.S. Coast Guard captain who also holds a Ph.D., President Haas has devoted his life of service to our country and, most recently, to west Michigan and the students of Grand Valley State University.

Having been appointed the university's fourth president in 2006, he successfully laid a foundation for a culture that nurtures innovation and excellence. Under his leadership, enrollment has soared to over 25,000 students, while 46 undergraduate and graduate programs have also been added and the university expanded with 2.5 million square feet of new buildings.

“T. Haas,” as he is affectionately called by students, and his wife, Marcia, will forever be cherished and adored by the Grand Valley community. Together, they have passionately dedicated themselves to putting students first.

The now-famous selfie with T. Haas, as it is known, it is a clear example of the way they treated every student like their own.

President Haas is the epitome of the phrase “Laker for a Lifetime.” It has been an honor to work with him in support of Grand Valley, its students, and all of west Michigan.

While his time as president may be coming to an end, his legacy and impact will forever live on.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN).

RECOGNIZING LUIS ALVAREZ

Mr. ZELDIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lou Alvarez, an incredible patriot, Long Islander, and 9/11 first responder who inspired so many just last week in front of the House Judiciary Committee in support of the Never Forget the Heroes Act, which will reauthorize and fully fund the 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund.

After his appearance in D.C., Lou rushed home for his 69th round of chemo. Let me repeat that: After coming all the way down to Washington to beg for the benefits that he and so many others were promised, Lou Alvarez had to rush home for his 69th round of chemo.

Unfortunately, when he got home, things did not go as expected. This morning, I am sad to report, Lou is in hospice, watching us here on the House floor.

Lou is one of the many first responders who raced to Ground Zero on September 11 without a second thought, who, in the weeks following, worked 12-hour shifts on the pile, aiding in the rescue and cleanup efforts.

Lou, like so many of his fellow first responders, was diagnosed with one of the thousands of cancers attributed to the inhalation of toxic air and debris at Ground Zero.

We have lost more 9/11 first responders since 9/11 than we lost people on 9/11 itself. We must fully fund and reauthorize the 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund.

Last Tuesday, like so many times before, Lou once again made the trip to Washington to testify in front of the committee, begging Congress to fully fund the compensation fund.

It wasn't his first time to D.C., not by a long shot. It wasn't his second or third time. Unfortunately, it may have been his last.

The wait has been a disgrace to these first responders, to their families, and to our Nation.

This isn't just a New York issue, and I thank BILL HUIZENGA for staying around for Lou. This isn't a Democratic or Republican Party platform or a political football.

This is a responsibility that we all shoulder as Americans, first and foremost. This is the spirit of our country. It is who we are as a people.

Last Wednesday, following Lou's testimony, the Never Forget the Heroes Act passed committee unanimously. This floor and the Senate need to pass it to make this bill law right away.

I would like to sign off today the way Lou signs off nearly everything he writes, the way he lives his life each and every day, until his very last. Lou Alvarez says, “Still here, still breathing, still fighting.”

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 50 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1000

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HECK) at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

Very Reverend Canon Martin Shaw, Historic African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, offered the following prayer:

Almighty and Eternal God, we pause this morning to express our gratitude.