

Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 303, a resolution calling upon the leadership of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to dismantle its kwan-li-so political prison labor camp system, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 949

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 949 intended to be proposed to H.R. 3055, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 2685. A bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to require that a consumer authorize the release of certain information; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Today, I am joined by Senator VAN HOLLEN in reintroducing the Consumer Credit Control Act, which gives consumers greater control over when and how their consumer reports are shared by consumer reporting agencies.

Our current consumer reporting system is backwards. Consumer reporting agencies collect extensive amounts of personal information on consumers, often without their knowledge, in order to compile consumer reports. These reports are then shared with financial institutions and others, typically without consent.

Following Equifax's failure in 2017 to secure troves of valuable personally identifiable information it collected on over 145 million Americans, it was evident that this system had to change. Indeed, the National Consumer Law Center's Chi Chi Wu stated in her October 2017 testimony before the House Financial Services Committee that the Equifax breach "means half of the US population and nearly three-quarters of the consumers with active credit reports are now at risk of identity theft due to one of the worst—if not the worst—breaches of consumer data in American history. These Americans are at risk of having false new credit accounts, phony tax returns, and even spurious medical bills incurred in their good names." To make matters worse, the risks of identity fraud may not dissipate over time. As Ed Mierzwinski, U.S. PIRG's federal Consumer Program Director, explains "unlike credit card numbers, your Social Security Number and Date of Birth don't change and may even grow more valuable over time, like gold in a bank vault. Much worse, they are the keys to "new account identity theft."

The Consumer Credit Control Act attempts to address these concerns and fix the current upside down system.

Our legislation, at no cost to the consumer, seeks to give Americans greater control over when and how their consumer reports are released when applying for new credit, a loan, or insurance. It also would require consumer reporting agencies to verify a consumer's identity and secure the consumer's permission before releasing consumer reports in instances that are particularly vulnerable to identity theft and fraud. Additionally, our legislation compels every consumer reporting agency to take appropriate steps to prevent unauthorized access to the consumer reports and personal information they maintain. These changes are designed to make it tougher for criminals to fraudulently open new credit or insurance accounts in other peoples names.

I urge our colleagues to cosponsor this commonsense legislative effort, and I thank Senator VAN HOLLEN, the National Consumer Law Center (on behalf of its low-income clients), U.S. PIRG, Americans for Financial Reform, the Center for Digital Democracy, Consumer Action, the Consumer Federation of America, Consumer Reports, Demos, the NAACP, the National Association of Consumer Advocates, the National Fair Housing Alliance, Public Citizen, Tennessee Citizen Action, and the Woodstock Institute for their support.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Ms. MCSALLY, Ms. ERNST, Mr. TILLIS, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina):

S. 2690. A bill to reduce mass violence, strengthen mental health collaboration in communities, improve school safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, 2 months ago, Texans were mourning the loss of 22 of our people killed in a senseless attack in El Paso, TX. Little did we know that we were just days away from another violent attack, this time in Midland and Odessa, which took seven lives.

Visiting these communities in the wake of these tragedies is tough—something I have, unfortunately, had experience with following the 2017 shooting in Sutherland Springs and, again, in 2018 in Santa Fe High School. There are no words to bring comfort to the families and the friends and the community members who were shaken to their very core by these sudden and unwarranted acts of violence.

But as I visited with the families and offered my condolences following each of these attacks, there was one common refrain, one common request: Please do something. Now, if I knew of a way to introduce and pass legislation that could stop these types of criminal acts from occurring, I guarantee we could pass it with 100 percent of the Senate and 435 Members of the House, and the President would sign it. But that, unfortunately, is not the human condition. Unfortunately, there is no quick fix, no simple answer. Instead,

we are left to look at the factors that led to these attacks and to try to do something to prevent the sequence of events from playing out again in the future.

Following the shooting in Sutherland Springs, we quickly learned some disturbing facts about the shooter and how he obtained his weapons. He had a history of violence and a criminal conviction that should have prevented him from ever purchasing a firearm. But this information was never uploaded into the background check system run by the FBI. As a result, the shooter was able to purchase four firearms, three of which were used in the attack. He shouldn't have been able to do that.

Every time something like this happens, it is only natural to say: What if? What if those convictions had been uploaded? What if he wasn't able to purchase those firearms? Could we have stopped this terrible loss of life?

My goal then, as it is now, is to do everything I can to make sure those questions don't have to be asked again.

Ten days after the Sutherland Springs shooting, I introduced a piece of legislation called Fix NICS—Fix the National Instant Criminal Background Check System—to fill the gaps in our background check system and ensure that government agencies submit relevant evidence. We worked hard on it over a long period of time, and it passed with more than 70 Senate bipartisan cosponsors.

What is the result of the Fix NICS bill we passed in the wake of Sutherland Springs? We now know that the Federal Government has increased its record submissions to the background check system by 400 percent—a 400-percent increase in the background check system. That means if somebody is dishonorably discharged from the military, if somebody has been convicted of domestic violence, violated a protective order, or convicted of any felony, the background check system is much more likely to have that derogatory information in it, and the seller will not sell that firearm. Because of this legislation, our Federal background databases are becoming stronger and better by the day and preventing more criminals from getting their hands on deadly weapons that are already prohibited by existing law.

But it is time once again to revisit the way we might reduce the loss of life, the way we might be able to reduce these mass violence episodes from occurring in our country in the future. Today, I am introducing the Restoring, Enhancing, Strengthening, and Promoting Our Nation's Safety Efforts—or the RESPONSE Act, as we call it. Just as Fix NICS did, this bill addresses specific problems to try to prevent attacks and make our communities safer.

First, this legislation takes aim at unlicensed firearms dealers who are breaking the existing law. Shortly after the Midland-Odessa shooting, we learned that the shooter failed a background check when he attempted to

buy a gun from a licensed dealer. He then managed to circumvent the process by purchasing his weapon from somebody who appears to have been in the business of manufacturing and selling guns but who is not a registered firearms dealer. By not registering as a dealer, the seller was able to skirt the legal requirement and sell a weapon to the shooter without conducting the necessary background check.

So to prevent unlicensed dealers from continuing to break the law, the RESPONSE Act creates a nationwide task force to investigate and prosecute those individuals. The task force will focus on those who are illegally selling firearms, as well as those attempting to buy firearms who provide false statements as part of the background check.

While preventing unlicensed dealers from selling weapons without appropriate background checks is an important way to reduce violence, it is only one factor. I think we have to admit there isn't one single solution. It is multifactorial. There are multiple things we can and should do.

The second major piece of this legislation improves the quality and availability of mental health care. I asked the Odessa police chief following the shooting in Midland-Odessa: What is it you think we might have been able to do? He said: Well, we need better access to mental health diagnoses and treatment.

We clearly need to do more to identify and support struggling individuals who could pose a danger to themselves and to others. We know for a fact that the majority of gun deaths are suicides, self-inflicted. While mental illness is not the prevailing cause of mass violence, enhanced mental health resources, I believe, are critical to saving lives. The RESPONSE Act includes a range of measures, such as expanding mental health crisis intervention teams, improving coordination between mental health providers and law enforcement, and bolstering the mental health workforce.

Importantly, this bill expands something called assisted outpatient treatment programs, or AOTs. This is something we passed as part of the 21st Century Cures Act, my Mental Health and Safe Communities Act to help focus on, as a priority, pilot projects of these assisted outpatient treatment programs. Here we seek to expand them further based on the proven success. AOTs, or assisted outpatient treatment, provide families of individuals with mental illness an opportunity to get treatment for their loved one in their community rather than in an institution. Making mental health resources more accessible will serve our most vulnerable friends and neighbors in countless ways and, I believe, make our communities safer.

Third, the RESPONSE Act seeks to increase the safety of our students. I have heard from countless parents—no doubt, the Presiding Officer has too—

that parents literally are in fear of sending their children to school, not knowing whether they may be victimized by one of these senseless attacks, especially in the aftermath of Santa Fe and Parkland High School. Parents are rightfully concerned about sending their kids to school, and they should not have to live with that.

The RESPONSE Act includes provisions to help identify students whose behavior indicates a threat of violence and then provide the student with the appropriate services they may need not to be a danger to themselves or others. By promoting best practices within our schools, as well as internet safety policies, we can help protect both students and school faculty and provide parents with a little peace of mind.

Finally, because so often these shooters advertise on social media or cry out for attention to law enforcement or other people ahead of time, this legislation includes provisions to ensure law enforcement can receive timely information about potential threats made online. Online providers and platforms have the ability to share information with law enforcement today during emergencies. And in the fight against child abuse, the RESPONSE Act would expand the scope of information they can share to include information about potential acts of mass violence or self-harm or hate crimes or acts of domestic terrorism.

The RESPONSE Act has been endorsed already by a number of law enforcement and mental health organizations, including the National Council for Behavioral Health, National Alliance on Mental Illness, the National District Attorneys Association, Fraternal Order of Police, and a number of others.

I am glad to say it also has received support already—even though we are only introducing it today—from a number of our colleagues here: Senators MCSALLY, TILLIS, ERNST, CAPITO, and Senator TIM SCOTT. I hope we can work together to build a big bipartisan list of cosponsors as other Senators have the opportunity to review this legislation—again, using the Fix NICS bill as a model of how we can build consensus and get something done that will save lives.

There is no quick fix, as I said, but there are commonsense measures we can take to reduce mass violence and protect the American people. As Texans continue to grieve in the aftermath of these attacks, I am committed to upholding my promise that I made to their families and friends to do something—to do what we can to prevent more communities from facing this sort of heartbreak.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 374—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF OCTOBER 23, 2019, AS A NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE OF THE TRAGIC TERRORIST BOMBING OF THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS BARRACKS IN BEIRUT, LEBANON, IN 1983

Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. JONES, Mr. CRUZ, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. COONS, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. CASEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

S. RES. 374

Whereas, in 1982, the United States deployed members of the Armed Forces to Lebanon as part of a multinational peacekeeping force;

Whereas, early on the morning of October 23, 1983, a truck packed with explosives detonated outside of a building at Beirut International Airport that served as quarters for several hundred members of the Armed Forces deployed as part of the peacekeeping force;

Whereas 241 members of the Armed Forces were killed in the blast;

Whereas the members of the Armed Forces killed included 220 Marines, members of the Battalion Landing Team, 1st Battalion, 8th Marines Regiment, which made October 23, 1983, the deadliest day for the Marine Corps since the Battle of Iwo Jima in February and March 1945 during World War II;

Whereas, in addition to the Marine Corps casualties, 18 Navy sailors and 3 Army soldiers were killed, and more than 100 other members of the Armed Forces were injured;

Whereas members of the Armed Forces from 39 States and Puerto Rico died while serving in Beirut, Lebanon, from 1982 to 1984;

Whereas, on the same day as the bombing of the Marine Corps barracks, another suicide bomber killed 58 French paratroopers housed at another building in Beirut; and

Whereas it is fitting and proper to recognize the events of October 23, 1983, and the members of the Armed Forces of the United States who died in Beirut on that day through the establishment of a national day of remembrance on October 23, 2019: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of a national day of remembrance on October 23, 2019, for members of the Armed Forces of the United States who were killed or injured by the terrorist attack on the United States Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, on October 23, 1983; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to support and participate in appropriate ceremonies, programs, and other activities in observance of such a national day of remembrance.

SENATE RESOLUTION 375—RECOGNIZING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WARSAW UPRISING

Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 375

Whereas October 2, 2019, marks the 75th anniversary of the tragic conclusion to the