

death among children and teens in Maryland. African-American children and teens in Maryland are five times as likely as their White peers to die by guns. In Maryland, African-Americans are 16 times as likely to die by gun homicide as White people.

In 2017, 53 percent of the guns recovered from Maryland crime scenes came from another State. Often, these guns used in crimes in Maryland are from States with more lenient gun control laws.

American women are 21 times more likely to be killed with a gun than women in other high-income countries; 4.5 million women in the United States have been threatened with a gun by their current or previous intimate partner. It has estimated that 900,000 American women have been shot or shot at by their current or previous intimate partner. When there is a gun present during a domestic violence situation, a woman's risk of being killed goes up 500 percent.

In Maryland, from 2013 to 2017, 48 women were fatally shot by an intimate partner. African-American women are 1.7 times more likely as White women to be fatally shot by a partner. These are women like Maryland resident, Timira Hopkins. Hopkins' relationship with her boyfriend was abusive, and he had made threats before. One night in 2014, Hopkins' boyfriend delivered on his threats, shooting Hopkins five times before killing himself. Incredibly, Hopkins survived, but the right side of her face is paralyzed, and she is deaf in one ear. In September of this year, Hopkins shared her story on NPR in the hopes she can help other survivors.

We need to do more for brave women like Timira Hopkins. We need to join her in the fight to protect people suffering domestic violence. This body understands the dangerous potential consequences of domestic violence perpetrators owning guns. That is why, in 1996, we passed the Lautenberg amendment, banning gun ownership for individuals convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence. However, without universal background checks, we can't effectively enforce this prohibition and keep guns out of the hands of violent abusers.

An estimated 22 percent of U.S. gun owners purchased their most recent firearm without a background check. When background checks are not required, domestic abusers get ahold of guns. In 2018, Sara Schmidt was murdered by her husband, who should have been prohibited from purchasing a firearm because of a domestic violence felony. Schmidt's husband purchased the gun he used to murder Sara from an online private seller, bypassing background check requirements.

Passing legislation to expand background checks to every gun sale, including those conducted online, at gun shows, and through private transfers, should be the top priority in Congress. Congress should also make sure that

background checks are fully completed before a gun sale is finally approved. There is no one answer which will fix America's gun violence epidemic. But we can't let the complexity of the problem paralyze us. We need to take steps forward.

The American people deserve action. They are demanding action. An overwhelming majority of Americans—97 percent—support expanding background checks. Congress must listen to the 97 percent of Americans and take action. We cannot wait any longer. While we wait, Americans are dying, and communities are traumatized by violence. We must do the right thing and take up the House legislation requiring universal and completed background checks for individuals seeking to purchase a gun. The time for action is now.

CONFIRMATION OF STEVEN J. MENASHI

Mr. VAN VOLLEN. Madam President, last week, I voted against Steven Menashi's nomination to serve on the Second Circuit, to the same seat once held by Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. Throughout his legal career, Menashi has shown himself to be hostile to women's rights, communities of color, and LGBT Americans.

I am disappointed that my colleagues have avoided passing important legislation and have solely focused on confirming many extremist judges. The Senate Republican leader has refused to allow votes on a host of important legislation, including bills to secure our elections from foreign interference, to strengthen background checks, and to reduce the rate of gun violence in our communities, and to provide a path to citizenship for DACA and TPS recipients. All of these bills deserve a vote, but they are all languishing in the Senate legislative graveyard.

Menashi has a record of bias and while at the Department of Education, has repeatedly supported policies that hurt students and borrowers. Alongside Secretary DeVos, Menashi, created an illegal scheme to deny debt relief to defrauded students, including Marylanders. Additionally, Menashi has worked hand-in-hand with Trump senior advisor Steven Miller to advance cruel policies that undermine American values.

The American people deserve better from the U.S. Senate. We should not have voted on and confirmed this nominee and instead should be working on legislation to improve the lives and ensure the safety of our constituents.

TRIBUTE TO LARRY WOOTEN

Mr. BURR. Madam President, Senator THOM TILLIS and I would like to recognize the distinguished service of a great North Carolinian. After a 25-year career with the North Carolina Farm Bureau, Larry Wooten is stepping aside as president at the end of this year.

President Wooten has been a steadfast advocate for agriculture and rural North Carolina.

Larry has worked tirelessly to advance initiatives that strengthen and improve our State's rural communities. He is an exemplary servant leader that has always encouraged others to "give back" to the organizations, the communities, and the State that have provided them with opportunities for growth and advancement. He is a founding member of the NC Rural Economic Development Center where he served on the board of directors and executive committee. He has also served with distinction on the American Farm Bureau Board of Directors, the NC Board of Agriculture, the Agricultural Consortium Board, and the Rural Prosperity Task Force. He has served as chair of the American Farm Bureau Foreign Trade Committee and on USDA's Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee, APAC.

Most significant, however, is the impact Wooten has had on North Carolina agriculture. In his role as president, he has been an effective voice for agribusiness and farmers—educating leaders and lawmakers about the State's largest economic sector and helping shape sound State and national policy for its future. A lifelong farmer from Pender County, North Carolina, Larry knows firsthand the positive impact of a sound agricultural education, research, and extension of that research onto his farm. Larry was a key influencer in the inclusion of NC State University's Plant Sciences Building in North Carolina's Connect NC Bond Referendum, as well as supporting the university's efforts to create new paths for more rural students to earn their NC State degree. Wooten, through his leadership of the Farm Bureau, has been a tireless supporter of NC A&T State University's Small Farms Initiative. All these efforts will create pathways for North Carolinians to have an oversized positive impact on farming and economic development in our state and nation.

Larry Wooten is a remarkable leader who put the wellbeing of our state and its citizens above his own. It is through the work of selfless leaders like Larry that North Carolina has become a state where the weak have an opportunity to grow strong, and the strong can grow great.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO THE HULMAN-GEORGE FAMILY

● Mr. BRAUN. Madam President, I rise today to celebrate and recognize the Hulman-George family for their accomplishments and success in business and their stewardship of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway for the last 75 years.

On November 4, 2019, principals of Hulman & Company announced the sale of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, among other assets of the