

nationalists who were in the visitors' gallery. Until last Friday, the latest act of violence in the Capitol was the bombing of the second floor of the Capitol. Fortunately, no one was injured.

What makes this recent event more serious than past events is the sense of security and safety that was shattered by the gunman's weapon. Given the heightened security at the Capitol, I have to think that few of us expected to face the violent assault on the Capitol, much less the loss of two Capitol officers.

We must forever remember Officer Chestnut. This honorable man was dutifully providing directions for a man and his son when he was gunned down from behind by a sick and confused perpetrator. It is cruel irony that Officer Chestnut was summarily executed as he performed an act of kindness.

We forever remember Officer Gibson. Were it not for his gallantry, it is likely that we would be grieving the loss of a far greater number of lives. Officer Gibson's quick action protected not only the lives of the Majority Whip and his staff, but it also protected the multitude of innocents who were touring the Capitol and its grounds. Who knows what carnage would have unfolded had Officer Gibson not brought an end to the violence?

Authorizing the use of the Rotunda of the Capitol for the memorial services for these brave men is fitting because they truly are national heroes, and they deserve a hero's tribute. I am also honored that a plaque bearing the names of Officers Chestnut and Gibson will grace the walls of the Capitol, so we will forever remember their selfless acts of valor.

I offer my utmost sympathy to the families of our fallen heroes. Officer Chestnut was the consummate family man. He shared precious moments with his wife and his children, and he generously spent time with his father-in-law in the garden that the two maintained. Because of the terrible acts of one man, Officer Chestnut will not be able to enjoy his retirement by his wife's side, he will not be able to savor moments with his children and grandchildren, and he will not be able to till that garden he loved so dearly.

Detective Gibson was also a loving family man. A good husband and the father of three, Detective Gibson spent much time with his family. He took his children to their athletic events, played with the family dog, and gladly offered assistance to his neighbors. The fact that Detective Gibson has planned to vacation with his family the moment he left work last Friday is testament to his sense of family togetherness. Sadly, this vacation will never be taken, and Gibson's family will never again spend time with their beloved husband and father.

Mr. Speaker on behalf of myself, my family, the constituents of the 18th Congressional District in Texas and my staff, I offer my deepest sympathy and I leave you with the words of Isaiah 40:15, "Those that wait upon the Lord shall walk, run and not faint."

Given the loss felt by the families of our fallen officers, I feel that we must do what we can to provide assistance to these survivors. By paying for the funeral services, creating a survivor's gratuity to the widows of the two officers, and by urging the establishment of a Capitol Police Memorial Fund, we can acknowledge the courage of Officers Chestnut and Gibson in the best way possible, by helping their family members.

IN TRIBUTE

(Mr. WICKER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, I do not know if Detective John Gibson or Officer Jacob Chestnut ever met anyone from the 1st congressional district of Mississippi in the performances of their duties. But my constituents feel a kinship with these two slain heroes today.

They realize that these brave men gave their lives, not simply to defend hundreds of innocent people during last Friday's shootout but to protect and preserve 222 years of history and freedom symbolized by this majestic Capitol building.

The gunshots which rang out in these hallowed halls last week were heard around the Nation. E-mails and messages from my North Mississippi district reflect the same sorrow and shock other Members of Congress heard from the people they represent all across our great country this weekend.

This was not simply a shooting incident on a piece of fed property, it was an attack on the People's House, an attack on us all. This e-mail from constituents in Olive Branch, Mississippi is one example.

It reads, and I quote:

Congressman Wicker, please express the heartfelt condolences of the people of Mississippi to the families and friends of the two slain Capitol policemen. They served and died honorably and in the best traditions of all those who placed their lives on the line for the citizens of this country. We trust they will be given the finest remembrance available in accord with the wishes of their families.

The American people join us today in honoring Officer Chestnut and Detective Gibson. We lift them up as the role models and dedicated servants they were, professionals who took seriously their obligation to defend and protect the foundation of our democracy.

It is fitting that we honor these two men as heroes and that we make sure their sacrifice is never forgotten. Beyond the words we utter on the House floor and in memorial services, a more lasting tribute to them is to ensure that we carry on the orderly functions of government inside this building that they died to preserve.

It is important that we send a message to all those who would tear at the fabric of our democracy that we will not be deterred from keeping open this historic building which stands as the most visible symbol of freedom in the world.

I share the sentiment echoed in this chamber that we stand united in reassuring our citizens that our free and open government represented so powerfully by all that goes on in the U.S. Capitol will not be disrupted by the actions of one disturbed individual.

Never again will we take for granted the job our law enforcement officers do in and around the Capitol. They come

to work each day prepared to give their lives in service to our country.

Last week, for the first time in history, two of these brave officers made the ultimate sacrifice. They saved lives in the process. We share the grief their families feel because they were part of all of our families, and they will remain so.

Mr. Speaker, the people of the 1st congressional district of Mississippi join me in saluting the bravery and courage of Officer Chestnut and Detective Gibson.

IN TRIBUTE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and to express my sympathy and that of Michigan's 1st congressional district to the families of our two fallen officers of the Capitol Police Department, Detective John Michael Gibson and Officer Joseph Jacob Chestnut.

They are our officers because those of us who were and those of us who are in law enforcement know that Detective Gibson and Officer Chestnut are our fellow officers. When a law enforcement officer was injured or killed, each of us who have been there are injured in a personal way.

As an Escanaba City police officer and later as a Michigan State Police trooper, unfortunately, too often, I felt and I have witnessed the outrage, the mourning, the sadness like that that has been expressed here in the Nation's Capitol and all across this great country.

It happens all too often, Mr. Speaker. Every other day a law enforcement officer dies in the line of duty here in America, every other day. Today we salute Detective Gibson and Officer Chestnut. In response to their death, there has been calls for a visitor's center or to move the security perimeter farther away from the Capitol, farther to protect our brave law enforcement officers.

Mr. Speaker, I really wish it was that easy. I wish we could just pass a law that here in America we could say no more law enforcement officers would have to be killed or to be injured in the line of duty. But it just does not work that way Mr. Speaker.

If we ask Officer Chestnut or Detective Gibson, I am sure they would tell you that, in law enforcement officers, we rely on that personal contact with the public that we serve. We need that permanent contact to do our job. We need that contact.

You see, while Officer Chestnut probably really never had a chance, Detective Gibson knew what he had to do. He had to protect employees. He had to protect the visitors. He had to protect the Nation's Capitol.

He knew what the job demanded. They both understood their job. They