

comfort in song. She never leaves anyone behind.

She had the privilege and honor of giving to President Barack Obama and adding to the song, "Yes We Can: Voices of a Grass Roots Movement." She has sung the national anthem at the BCS national championship football game, as well as making a lot of other contributions to American music. She is a supporter of music education for our children, the mother of a daughter, and, yes, a prominent American.

But I think what says the most about Yolanda Adams is that she never stops evangelizing and seeking to help those who are hopeless and in despair. She brings joy to those who seek it and believes that everyone is a child of God.

I'm grateful to know Yolanda Adams and to claim her as a constituent of the great city of Houston and the great State of Texas. But most of all, she is an American and a believer and understands the value of America's freedom to be able to worship. She continues to soldier on to save souls, and we're delighted to have been able to have her bless us this morning.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a great American artist. I wish to first thank Ms. Adams for her thoughtful, and inspirational prayer. As the representative of the 18th District of Texas I am proud to say that she is a constituent and represents what is best about the State of Texas.

As was reflected in her prayer, Yolanda Adams through her music, has taught us to embrace God's grace and mercy, and for those who will listen, to stand in the sunlight of joy as one looks toward the hopefulness of the future.

Yolanda Adams is an American Grammy and Dove-award winning Gospel music singer and radio show host. The oldest of six siblings, Yolanda Adams was raised in Houston, Texas. She graduated from Sterling High School in Houston in 1979.

After graduating from University of California Berkeley, she began a career as a school-teacher and part-time model in Houston, Texas. Eventually she gave up teaching to become a professional singer.

Her enormous talent attracted the attention of Thomas Whitfield and Sound of Gospel Records which signed her recording contract and released her first album, *Just As I Am* in 1987. In 1990, she released her second album, *Through The Storm*, released by Tribune Records.

Songs from the Heart, her album released through Verity Records, featured the inspirational "Only Believe," "Still I Rise," a song dedicated to Rosa Parks and inspired by Maya Angelou's poem of the same name.

"Fragile Heart," was dedicated to the memory of Yolanda's long time road manager who died in 1998. Her album "Mountain High . . . Valley Low" in 1999 extended her popularity and appeal outside the urban contemporary gospel arena. The album went Platinum in 2000 and won her a Grammy Award. Notable singles from the album include "Yeah," "Fragile Heart," and "Open My Heart."

In 2001, Yolanda Adams released a live album, *The Experience*, which won her a second Grammy Award for Best Contemporary

Soul Gospel Album. *Believe*, which included the hit "Never Give Up" was released in 2001. She would later go on to perform this song at "The Salute to Gospel Music" at the White House during President George W. Bush's administration. *Believe* was certified Gold in 2002. *The Divas Of Gospel*, with Albertina Walker, (Queen of Gospel), was also released in 2001.

Yolanda Adams recorded the song for the 2003 hit film, *Honey* titled "I Believe" and was also a judge for the 2nd Annual Independent Music Awards.

Yolanda Adams' song "Hold On" is included in a compilation in support of Barack Obama's campaign entitled "Yes We Can: Voices of a Grass Roots Movement".

Yolanda Adams performed the National Anthem at the 2009 BCS National Championship football game at Dolphin Stadium in Miami, Florida.

I want to thank Yolanda Adams for her bountiful contribution to American music, songs which have enriched our lives for a decade and cascade like the blessings from the heaven above.

Mr. Speaker, Yolanda Adams has sold 4.5 million albums since 1991 according to Soundscan. Although she is proud of that achievement, she has said that her greatest treasure is being a child of God.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain five further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

NATIONAL DAY OF SILENCE

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to call attention to the devastating impact that harassment and bullying have on LGBT students around our country. Bullying affects LGBT teens every day in emotional, psychological, and physical ways, and can even lead to suicide. Statistics show that 30 percent of LGBT youth attempt suicide near the age of 15.

While tomorrow has been designated as National Day of Silence, bullies do not stop when the calendar turns. We must all work together if we hope to deter and defeat bullying. I would like to take a moment of silence in honor of those who are harassed and those who have passed away due to this repeated and aggressive behavior.

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WHERE IS OUR COURAGE?

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

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, what happened on the floor of the other body yesterday is a shame and a disgrace. Leaders of this country must be head-

lights and not taillights. Leaders must lead.

More than 91 percent of the American people say they want us to put strong background checks in place before someone can buy a gun in this country. This is not about preserving Second Amendment rights; it is about saving lives.

How many more little babies, how many more little children, how many more American citizens must die of gun violence?

How many more funerals must we attend before we act?

The blood of the innocent is crying out to us. Where is our courage?

What happened to our heart?

When will we have the guts to do what is right?

We need to pass a strong gun bill, and pass it now.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all Members to refrain from improper references to the Senate.

SERVICEMEMBERS' TELEMEDICINE AND E-HEALTH PORTABILITY ACT

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, in the debate over the terrible acts of violence that have been committed upon innocent men, women, and children, there is frequently one common issue, that of mental health.

As we all know, the profiles of the perpetrators in many of the recent acts of mass violence had histories of mental health illness. Deaths from suicide as well obviously have significant mental health implications.

The access barriers to mental health services and the stigma associated with seeking help are significant. The safety of individuals living with these potentially disturbing behaviors, family members and surrounding communities, deserves a more robust mental health system responsive to these issues.

Now I'm proud to be the author of one of the only new laws in recent years to expand access to mental health services and reduce the stigma of seeking help. The STEP Act, or the Servicemembers' Telemedicine and E-Health Portability Act, expands access to care in a confidential manner, through telemedicine.

While the STEP Act serves only our Active Duty, Reserve and Guard, it provides a template that can be expanded to all those living with mental health issues.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DESERVE MORE

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

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise to associate myself with