straw-purchased gun. He was an extraordinary police officer. When he was shot, he had a gun on him. He shot back at the armed gunmen who were trying to rob him, and so did his father, who was standing nearby, also a retired police sergeant. But Officer Wortham was killed. He died in front of his parents' house on May 19, 2010. I attended his funeral.

Thomas Wortham's sister Sandra spoke at that hearing. It was powerful. This is what she said:

> My brother carried a gun. My father carried a gun. But the fact that my brother and father were armed that night did not prevent my brother from being killed. We need to do more to keep guns out of the wrong hands in the first place. I don't think that makes us anti-gun; I think it makes us pro-decent, law abiding people.

Sandra Wortham is right. I hope my colleagues will hear her words.

Some say it is impossible to stop bad guys from getting guns; they are just going to get them. It is true that there are a lot of loopholes in the law to get them today, like the gun show loophole and the Internet loopholes in the background check system. I don't question the possibility that those loopholes are there. It is also true that the gun lobby is working hard every day to further weaken the laws on the books and to strike them down in court. But we can stop the gun lobby from gutting the laws on the books, and we can close those loopholes if lawmakers just have the courage and political will.

Our goal should be to keep guns out of the hands of bad guys, not to take them away from people who use them in a responsible and legal way. I grew up in downstate Illinois. Owning shotguns and rifles is just part of life. Taking your son or in some cases even your daughter out hunting is normal. It is what people do. I have been out duck hunting in Stuttgart, AR, with my former colleague, Mark Pryor. We had a good time. Everybody there knew that a gun was a dangerous weapon that had to be handled carefully. We filed the necessary permits and licenses to be out there hunting on that day and followed a long list of requirements that limited our right to go shooting ducks, migrating ducks in that area. We did it because it was the law and law-abiding people pay attention to the law.

But what are we going to do now to respect those law-abiding people but still get serious about stopping these guns that end up in the hands of felons and mentally unstable people? Are we going to shrug our shoulders? Are Members of Congress going to put out the standard press release after a mass shooting? Or are we going to rise to this challenge on this occasion and do something? What a breakthrough it would be if we could save these innocent lives.

I cannot imagine that classroom in that community college in Oregon where that crazy gunman, loaded and armed, went up to each of those students and asked if they were Christians. If they said yes, he told them: You are on your way to Heaven, and then he shot them dead. I cannot imagine that moment. I certainly cannot imagine if in that classroom was someone I loved, someone I knew, someone I cared about, and they were the victim of that kind of mental instability.

So are we going to shrug our shoulders, remember the victims in our thoughts and prayers and do nothing? Is that what it has come to? We are better than that. We can easily pass laws to protect domestic violence victims by keeping the guns out of the hands of their abusers. All it takes is will. We could easily hold gun dealers accountable for guns that they purposefully misplace into the hands of criminals. All it takes is the will. We can easily adopt technology to stop criminals from stealing guns and stop kids from using them accidentally. All it takes is will. We can easily create a better background check system and pass better laws to stop straw purchasing and illegal gun trafficking. All it takes is will. We can stop the gun lobby from gutting the laws on the books, and we can close these loopholes if lawmakers just have the courage and the political will.

As President Obama said, our thoughts and prayers are not enough. Stopping this violence requires courage and political will. I hope the Congress can rise to this challenge. I am not giving up. I have seen too many lives cut short, too many families and communities devastated by this violence. I am going to do all I can to bring down the number of shootings in America.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, imagine a successful and popular program that saves our special natural places, such as parks, recreation areas, wildlife refuges, and forests. Imagine further that this is accomplished not with tax dollars, but with royalties paid by companies that extract oil or minerals from our public lands. What is not to love about a program like that? Now imagine that some in Congress want to kill or weaken that program. In fact, its charter just expired on October 1.

For 50 years, a bipartisan commitment has promoted the preservation of our national parks, forests, and refuges and the vistas that are so iconic in our national identity. But today we find ourselves yet again in the midst of a made-in-Washington crisis that devalues this history of shared commitment, replacing it with the misplaced ire of those who do not understand its profound, community-driven impact on the land and on our economy.

On September 30, the authorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, LWCF, America's most successful conservation and recreation program, was allowed to expire. Founded on the principle of balancing the depletion of certain natural resources by conserving other resources, the fund uses revenues from royalties of offshore oil and gas extraction to support the conservation of our land and water, a symmetry that conservation advocates have praised. More to the point, the fund is supported at no cost to taxpayers. Similarly, congressional inaction allowed the Historic Preservation Fund—also a budget-neutral program with longstanding bipartisan support—to lapse. Together, these twin programs represent key commitments to protecting our Nation's historic resources and lands for future generations.

For 50 years, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has supported the creation of parks and refuges, but it has also filled in plots of land at risk of loss through development in our national parks to create a seamless park system that is easier and more cost-effective to manage. It has provided resources to local communities to achieve otherwise cost-prohibitive conservation projects in small towns. It supports community playgrounds and maintains trails, while fostering and protecting our innate appreciation of the world around us, and it accomplishes all of this while being a boon to local economies.

In Vermont more than $123 million in LWCF grants have supported hundreds projects over the last five decades, and the benefits can be seen across every county in the Green Mountain State. These grants back an economy of outdoor recreation supporting 35,000 jobs, generating $187 million in state tax revenue and $2.5 billion in retail sales in Vermont alone, according to the Outdoor Industry Association. On top of this, an estimated 545,000 people hunt, fish, and enjoy the wildlife of the Green Mountain State every year—a stunning number that nearly matches our State's entire population.

In addition to local recreation projects, the LWCF in Vermont has supported the creation of our State's only national park, the Marsh Billings Rockefeller National Historical Park. It has helped to add 100,000 acres to the