

brothers and sisters; and we stand with the American people who are demanding that this House take action to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people, to keep guns away from terrorists, to keep guns away from criminals, to keep guns away from domestic abusers, and to keep guns away from the dangerously mentally ill.

We need a vote on no fly, no buy. We need a vote on comprehensive background checks on every commercial sale of a gun. The time to act is now, Mr. Speaker, and action is not increasing voting to increase discrimination against our LGBT brothers and sisters and to make them more vulnerable to the gun violence that wracks this country. We need to act. The time is now.

REMEMBERING DAVID ELAHI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, early on Sunday, July 3, while most of us were resting up for our Independence Day weekends, Sergeant David Elahi was conducting highway safety patrol measures in Sterlington, Louisiana, a city which I represent.

That morning, a drunk driver struck and killed David while he was conducting a traffic stop. The driver injured two other officers as well. David was only 28 years old. Communities in Ouachita Parish and the surrounding areas are still reeling from David's death because, according to all accounts, he was just a great guy.

He was a family man who left behind a 2-year-old daughter and his fiancée, who is expecting a child in January. That shift was supposed to be David's last full-time shift for the Sterlington Police Department. He was planning to retire to take care of home, go back to a business that he had started, wanted to improve it, but he didn't get there.

I rise today because our Nation needs to know about David. They need to know that he was a model citizen pursuing the American Dream. He was proud of his family. He was proud of his church. He was proud of his home, and he was proud of the service he provided.

Last week was a dark week in our Nation. The deaths in my home State of Louisiana as well as those in Texas and Minnesota have once again thrust into the forefront a debate on the role our law enforcement officers play in policing our communities.

There have been calls to harm our police, and one man in Dallas did just that. For the first time in history, graphic scenes from our streets are being live-streamed on the Internet. People are reacting sometimes in violent ways. All loss of life is tragic. More violence is not the answer. When tragedies occur, we must fully investigate them and hold accountable any who acted wrongfully.

But even when bad things happen, we cannot let these events define who we are and react in ways that divide us. Most of us want the same things: to provide for our families, to better our communities, and to serve our God. The Bible tells us that patience is a virtue, and we must use that wisdom today as we seek answers to questions everyone in society is asking.

For me, personally, I believe the overwhelming majority of our police officers are just like David. They serve because they want to make a difference, they want to make their communities a better place. They are there and they serve simply because they care.

I would encourage everyone listening to take a deep breath and reflect on the services of David Elahi. I want you to think about how he served his community. I want you to think about his fiancée, his daughter, and the child who will never know him from this point on. I want to remember that family members of all our law enforcement officers share intimately in the cause of public safety that they want to provide.

I also want to think about those five officers in Dallas who lost their lives in the line of duty and how their fellow officers ran toward the gunfire while others ran away. That is what our officers do. That is why they keep us safe. No institution is perfect. People like David do not deserve to be vilified because they chose to serve and protect. People like those officers in Dallas didn't deserve to be marked for death because they were simply police officers. They did their duty, and they were killed because of it.

So thank a law enforcement officer today for what they do for you and for me. Thank their families for sharing in their sacrifice. Say a prayer for David, his family, and the Sterlington community, and say a prayer for all of those who wear the badge.

□ 1030

GIVE US A VOTE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, why is it that more than 80 percent of NRA members and over 80 percent of gun owners support background checks? Well, I will tell you why. It is because they are responsible gun owners; and responsible gun owners understand that there is nothing wrong with making sure that a prospective gun buyer isn't a terrorist, a criminal, a domestic abuser, or dangerously mentally ill.

The Supreme Court made that perfectly clear in *District of Columbia v. Heller*. The Court ruled that, while Americans have the right to keep and bear arms, there are no constitutional problems with laws prohibiting felons

and the dangerously mentally ill from carrying guns.

As a responsible gun owner myself, I will never give up my guns, and I will never ask law-abiding individuals without a history of dangerous mental illness to give up theirs. And, like other responsible gun owners, I understand that if gun violence continues unabated, then eventually we will see laws that place substantial and overly burdensome restrictions on our right to own guns.

To reduce gun violence, we don't need to stop law-abiding citizens who use guns for hunting, sport shooting, and personal protection from obtaining those firearms. We need to stop terrorists, criminals, domestic abusers, and those with a history of dangerous mental illness from getting guns.

Our first line of defense when it comes to making sure that guns don't fall into dangerous hands is to conduct a background check. And we know that, when used, background checks work.

Every day, background checks stop more than 170 felons, some 50 domestic abusers, and nearly 20 fugitives from buying a gun. But sadly, a gaping loophole allows those same felons, dangerously mentally ill, and domestic abusers to bypass a background check in 34 States. All they have to do is go online or go to a gun show. That is wrong; that is dangerous; and that loophole needs to be closed.

That is why it is long past time for the Republican leadership to allow a vote on H.R. 1217, my bipartisan, pro-Second Amendment bill to require a background check for all commercial gun sales. The bill bolsters the Second Amendment rights of lawful gun owners by making sure that the bad guys can't easily bypass background checks when trying to buy a gun.

Just as important for the safety and security of our country and our fellow Americans is H.R. 1076, bipartisan, pro-Second Amendment legislation to prohibit those who are on the FBI's terrorist watch list from being able to legally buy a firearm. We should be able to agree that suspected terrorists shouldn't be able to legally buy a gun or guns of their choosing.

As a responsible gun owner, I am fed up with those who are blindly opposed to background checks hiding behind bumper sticker slogans like: "Guns don't kill people; people kill people." Everyone knows that guns don't kill people, which is exactly why responsible gun owners and the overwhelming majority of the American people understand that it is important to run a background check to see if the person buying the gun is a danger to our community.

This debate isn't a choice between respecting the Second Amendment or reducing gun violence. As a responsible gun owner, I am tired of it being framed that way. It is about this Congress doing both.

The Supreme Court's *Heller* ruling provides people on both sides with an

opportunity to work within the confines of the Second Amendment to pass legislation that will reduce gun violence and keep our communities safe. Responsible gun owners across our country understand that. It is time for the Republican leadership in the House to understand it, too.

Mr. Speaker, give us a vote.

HONORING THE LIFE OF NICHOLAS "CORKY" DEMARCO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, on Friday afternoon, I was deeply saddened to hear about the passing of one of West Virginia's finest gentlemen, Nicholas "Corky" DeMarco.

A lifelong West Virginian, Corky was a leader in our State, in both private and public service. For those of you who did not have the privilege of knowing him, let me tell you a little bit about him.

I got to know Corky through our discussions about how West Virginia can benefit from our natural bounty. Under Governor Cecil Underwood, Corky served as the director of operations for the State and helped bring more jobs and industries to West Virginia.

Most recently, Corky served as the executive director of the West Virginia Oil and Natural Gas Association. During his time with the association, he more than tripled their membership and made significant contributions to the oil and gas industry in West Virginia.

His devotion to growing jobs in our State was strong, but his love for family came before anything else. For Corky, the most important thing in life was his family: his wife, Catherine; two grown sons, Matthew and Joey; and his stepson, Jason Milano.

I join all West Virginians in keeping Mr. DeMarco's family in our thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. Corky will be truly missed.

OPIOID ADDICTION

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, overuse of prescription pain medication is one of the leading causes of opioid addiction. When a patient has more narcotic pain medication than they need after a medical event, this excess medication can fall into the wrong hands.

Narcotic pain medication in the wrong hands often leads to addiction. In fact, the National Institute on Drug Abuse has found that 1 in 15 people who take nonmedical prescription pain relievers will try heroin.

Last year, the number of fatal overdoses from prescription painkillers increased by 16 percent—and 28 percent from heroin—in the United States. In West Virginia, the story is even worse. According to a recent study by the Trust for America's Health, the Mountain State has the highest rate of overdose deaths in the entire United States.

This issue is above party politics. It is a plague that all Americans must come together to solve. That is why, in February, I introduced H.R. 4499, the Promoting Responsible Opioid Prescribing Act. This bipartisan bill strikes a harmful provision of ObamaCare that places unnecessary pressure on doctors and hospitals to prescribe narcotic pain medication.

This concern was brought to my attention while meeting with doctors and other healthcare professionals in Charleston, West Virginia, who are active in our State's medical society. I thank them for bringing this to my attention. It is a perfect example of how government works well. You bring an issue to your Congressman's attention, and he takes action to solve it.

This was their idea. I thank them for bringing it to our attention. I encourage everyone to bring the ideas you have to help fight back against the opioid epidemic to your local Congressman.

I am proud to say that, less than a week ago, the Department of Health and Human Services announced they are implementing the important policy changes contained in my bill. Almost word for word, the new rules are exactly what my bill says need to be done.

Since I first introduced the PROP Act in February, I have been calling on Congress to pass my bill. This bipartisan legislation has 27 Republican cosponsors and 16 Democratic cosponsors. My bill puts doctors, not the Federal Government, in control of opioid-prescribing decisions. This change in policy is an important fight against opioid abuse.

I want to thank the 43 cosponsors in the House and the 8 cosponsors in the Senate in our successful effort to pass this bill's policies through regulation and help put an end to opioid abuse.

LET'S PUT AN END TO GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, our Nation has been repeatedly confronted by senseless and tragic acts of gun violence; and now our country grieves with yet more heartache following the shocking and horrific attack in Dallas last week, an attack that took place during a peaceful protest where citizens were exercising their basic rights as Americans, as Dallas police officers supported and protected this fundamentally American right.

As President Obama said: "There is no possible justification for these kinds of attacks or any violence against law enforcement."

This event added to an already heartbreaking week, after the deaths of Philando Castile in Minnesota and Alton Sterling in Louisiana. Today, I am thinking of their families, friends,

and loved ones, as I am of the 49 lost at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando just a month ago.

I believe that law-abiding citizens have a constitutional right to own firearms, whether for sport or personal protection; but I also know that responsible personal freedom and public safety are not mutually exclusive.

Shootings have become unacceptably commonplace in our country, and Congress has a responsibility to do more to keep guns out of the hands of criminals, domestic abusers, and the dangerously mentally ill. In fact, recent polls show that support for universal background checks hovers around 90 percent.

No other developed country in the world has the same rate of gun violence as the United States. According to United Nations data, the gun homicide rate in our country is more than 7 times that of Sweden, 6 times that of Canada, and, unbelievably, 21 times that of Australia.

As President Obama stated, following the shooting in Oregon: "We are the only advanced country on Earth that sees these kinds of mass shootings every few months."

I agree with Dallas Police Chief David Brown when he said that police departments cannot be expected to solve our Nation's gun violence problem by themselves. As policymakers, we must be doing more. We should all be inspired by Chief Brown's commitment and willingness to work through personal heartbreak toward a more just and violence-free society.

Chief Brown's urgency is echoed in letters I have received from young people in my district. Headlines in our communities and those that make national news do not go unnoticed by our Nation's youngest citizens, children who are growing up with heightened fear, some even afraid to go to school.

Abbey, age 13, from Gardner, Massachusetts, wrote to me: "Every single day at school, I am scared an armed intruder will come in," going on to say that "the amount of gun violence in our country is piling up, and we need to stop it."

Andrew, a high school freshman from Dracut, wrote: "I have been noticing there are more shootings lately, maybe because I am getting old and paying more attention to what is happening around me than I did before." Imagine, at 14, he is feeling old as he watches our news.

Miriam, from Acton, wrote: "I am only 17 years old, so this current climate of fear and violence is all I have ever known. However, I know that this amount and frequency of bloodshed is not and should not be normal."

As a mother, grandmother, and American citizen, it is unconscionable that our children and grandchildren are growing up in a world where they see mass shooting after mass shooting, met only by a moment of silence on this floor.

Mr. Speaker, in Congress, we have a moral responsibility to pursue change.