

We need to reject the motion to recommit, and we need to enact H.R. 4324.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit. The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

HR. 4324

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

HR. 4325

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

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to surf legend and filmmaker Bruce Brown, who, at 80 years of age, died this week.

Bruce Brown challenged a generation of Americans to follow our dream and to find our perfect wave. He reached out to introduce us to the magic experience of being propelled by the power of nature on an ocean wave. Adventure and a rush of excitement was only as far away as a local beach.

Bruce Brown made movies about surfing. "Endless Summer" was his best known. But his films were more than entertainment. He spoke to our soul and our spirit of adventure. He inspired us to go for it, to take on towering waves, just as other Americans scaled the tallest mountain peaks and even journeyed to the Moon.

Isn't that what America was all about? Isn't that what America is all about?

My first surfboard was a large, single-fin Velzy. Dale Velzy owned a surf shop in San Clemente and financed Bruce Brown's first film, "Slippery When Wet."

The surf culture Bruce Brown helped get born is still here. Outsiders are intrigued by it. You know when you are part of it.

Bruce Brown showed us the way. A few days ago, he passed on and is paddling into the distant sunset. He followed his dream, he found his perfect

wave, and he rode it as far as it would take him.

HR. 4326

(Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, education is supposed to be the great equalizer, but instead of investing in our students, Republicans, through their tax scam, are attempting to widen that equality gap.

Young people want to pursue higher education, and Republicans want to punish them with higher taxes so we can give away benefits to millionaires and billionaires.

Students are gaining knowledge that can actually make a difference in this world, but the Republicans' tax plan will only serve to deter them from that goal.

It is right here in black and white. Republicans are trying to eliminate student loan interest deductions. They want to tax college endowments that provide scholarships and student aid. They are taxing graduate tuition benefits that would make graduate school unattainable for low- and middle-income students.

So this Republican attack on college and graduate students says loud and clear: Low income? No rich parents? Good luck. Pay up.

It is an absolute disgrace.

HR. 4327

(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, I rise today to honor the career of Clyde Glossner, who has served the Woodward Township in Clinton County as supervisor for nearly 50 years.

Supervisor Glossner, who is 84, will retire this year after 47 years of service. Next Tuesday, he will oversee his last board of supervisors meeting.

Supervisor Glossner has been a resident of the township his entire life. He is a member of the Forty and Eight organization and the Masons in Lock Haven.

He and his wife of 60 years, Wilma, were married in 1955 in First Evangelical United Brethren Church in Lock Haven. In September 1955, Clyde and Wilma purchased their home in Woodward Township. They still live there today, and they have three grown sons.

In his earlier years, Supervisor Glossner worked as a food inspector for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. He has shown his dedication to his neighbors through his years of public service, and the community will gather next Tuesday, December 19, at the Dunnstown Fire Hall to honor him.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Supervisor Glossner for a life of service, and I wish him well in his retirement.

HR. 4328

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, what is happening in Washington? With the holidays coming up, I would like to know why the Republican majority seems so intent on putting coal in the stockings of everyday Americans.

Last week, the House passed a continuing resolution that did little but move the threat of a government shutdown to just a few days before Christmas.

The Republican tax bill is a brazen attempt to put money in the pockets of the superwealthy and well-connected at the expense of seniors, our students, middle class families, and hardworking Americans.

The American people don't deserve this tax hike. It is a billionaires-first Republican tax scam, and they don't deserve a government that reels from shutdown crisis to crisis doing nothing but creating uncertainty in our country.

What we should be doing is fixing CHIP. The Children's Health Insurance Program provides real, permanent tax relief to those who need it most: our 9 million children, 250,000 in my district.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve better. They deserve better jobs, better wages, and a better future.

□ 1900

HR. 4329

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of tonight's Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, December 14, marks the 5-year anniversary of the horrific school shooting in the home community of Sandy Hook Elementary School.

That day shocked the Nation. Twenty schoolchildren and six educators—20 6-year-olds and 7-year-olds—were ripped from the community of Newtown and from the United States.

I remember that day. I was a newly elected Member of Congress learning about what it means to serve in this

august body. I was with about 40 or 50 of my colleagues learning about our duties when I started to get emails and text messages that something terrible had happened at home. By noon, I learned the worst. Dozens of children had been gunned down, in cold blood, along with their teachers.

I threw my things in the back of the car and I drove from Boston. I called my mother, I called my minister, and I prayed for wisdom and I prayed for guidance and the courage to face those families.

I arrived in Newtown while families were being notified that their children who they had put on the bus that morning, thinking about Hanukkah or Christmas or thinking about the snow that was already on the ground, would never come home.

It is sad. It is sad and it is inexcusable that I stand here 5 years later. In that time, this Chamber, the people's House, has not taken up the people's business.

As of this fall, in fact, over 90 percent of Americans still support having universal background checks on all gun sales to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people. Over 90 percent of American households that have guns also support that commonsense legislation. Yet, in this House, we have not been given the opportunity to vote on that legislation. In those 5 years, 170,000 Americans have lost their lives to gun violence. Think about that: 170,000.

Newtown, like my hometown of Cheshire, is about 30,000 people. That is multiple Newtowns all day, every single one. Every single one of those Americans was a son or a daughter of someone and had friends and neighbors and loved ones. Again, in that time, this body has not acted.

Two weeks ago, I was in church in Danbury, Connecticut. I was at services with a congregation I try to get to every 6 months or so. I saw a couple of people I didn't expect to see. I saw the mother of one of the little girls who was killed 5 years ago. I saw the daughter of the principal. They were there for guidance, for wisdom, for courage to fight the battle that the American people are waging for this House to take action on.

The American people know the right thing to do. Our law enforcement know the right thing to do. The vast majority of responsible gun owners know the right thing to do. Yet, somehow, this body has failed to act.

But it is never too late. Now is the time for us to step up. Now is the time for us to shoulder our responsibilities so that no other community has to go through what Newtown has gone through. Although, in that time, we have now seen Las Vegas, we have seen Charleston, we have seen Orlando. There are killing fields now in America. That is not right. It doesn't need to be.

I am joined tonight by several of my colleagues who are passionate advo-

cates for gun sense and gun safety in America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY).

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague, Congresswoman ESTY, for leading this Special Order hour and for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I will never forget the Sandy Hook tragedy that happened 5 years ago tomorrow. It was like yesterday.

I was at Harvard University. I was seated next to Congresswoman ESTY when the news broke about the shooting in the district she had just been elected to serve.

The more we learned that day, the more devastating and heartbreaking the news became. Innocent children were taken away from their parents, from their brothers and sisters, and from their community.

I hoped and prayed that day that we would never see a tragedy like Sandy Hook. But, of course, our country continues to be unique in the number of people we have lost to mass shootings and gun violence.

As a Member of Congress, I cannot stand by and allow our communities to continue to be upturned by the loss of innocent lives. There are too many things we can do to address this epidemic.

We should allow Federal agencies to study gun violence as a public health crisis, because it is. We should keep guns out of the hands of individuals on the terrorist watch list and those convicted of hate crimes. We should close the gun show loopholes, Mr. Speaker, and reinstate the assault weapons ban.

You will note that none of the proposals I just mentioned would in any way infringe on the Second Amendment or limit the ability of Americans to protect themselves or their families. So there should be no reason why our Republican colleagues can't join us and pass sensible reforms that will save lives, like the lives we could have saved at Sandy Hook.

I hope and pray that this Congress has the courage to curb this epidemic of gun violence, because I don't want to continue to see the Sandy Hooks, the Charleston Nines, the Orlandos, or what we saw this year in cities like Las Vegas or small towns like Sutherland Springs.

One of the things we can do to honor the memory of the victims of those tragedies and all victims of gun violence is to make sure that no more families have to experience the same senseless loss.

Again, I thank my colleague and friend for being courageous and for standing up and fighting for better gun laws so that we can save lives. I thank her for being a champion and leading tonight's effort.

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON), my friend and the leader in our effort, who is an expert in guns. He has experienced more

than his share of gun violence as a decorated servicemember fighting our Nation's battles, and he has now led us for the last 5 years in our efforts for a safer, better society and a better world as the head of our Gun Violence Prevention Task Force.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and also for her leadership in regard to gun violence prevention and all the work that she has done and all of the effort she has put forward to try and bring some common sense to this issue.

The speaker before me said that she will never forget what happened at Sandy Hook and where she was when that tragedy took place. I don't think there are any of us who know what Sandy Hook was or were in Congress when Sandy Hook happened or care about this issue who will ever forget where we were.

For me, I was in my home State of California, in the Sacramento Valley, in a duck blind. I was duck hunting. Yes, I am a hunter. I am a gun owner. I carried a weapon in Vietnam during the Vietnam war. I strongly support the Second Amendment.

But I truly and passionately believe that, as a responsible gun owner, I have a responsibility, as does every responsible gun owner in the United States of America, to speak out to make sure that everyone who handles and owns a firearm does it safely and responsibly and that we do everything we can to make sure that people who shouldn't get their hands on firearms don't.

I know you can't stop everybody, but we should be doing everything we can to minimize the likelihood that someone who shouldn't have a firearm—a criminal, a domestic abuser, someone who is dangerously mentally ill—doesn't get their hands on firearms.

Last week, families who lost loved ones in the Sandy Hook massacre came here to Capitol Hill to share their grief and to call for action to deal with this terrible, terrible thing we call gun violence. This was a day after the House passed the dangerous Concealed Carry Reciprocity bill that would let criminals convicted of violent crimes carry loaded concealed guns in virtually every State in the country.

Instead of honoring the 20 precious little children and the 6 brave and dedicated educators who were slaughtered at Sandy Hook, the Republican leadership put the gun lobby ahead of State laws and ahead of gun violence prevention.

We have had 40 moments of silence since Sandy Hook. Forty moments of silence. Meanwhile, there have been 1,500 mass shootings since that awful day in December, 5 years ago.

64,000 people in the United States of America have been killed by someone using a gun. Last week, the families of those victims asked us one thing. They asked us to honor their loved ones with action, stop the gun lobby's reckless and profit-driven agenda, and stand up

for communities all across this country.

As I have said before, I am a gun owner. I have owned and used guns all of my life. I support the Second Amendment.

I am here tonight to call on the Republican leadership to come to the table. Let's move commonsense, bipartisan legislation that will keep us safe, keep our communities safe, and still honor the Second Amendment.

I care about the people in my district, as I know all of you care about the people in your districts. I have a son who is a deputy sheriff. I certainly don't want him to go out on a call and meet up with somebody who shouldn't have a gun. I have got grandchildren in my community. I certainly don't want them exposed to people who shouldn't have guns.

I am here tonight to call on the Republican leadership to do something about this. Let's move this commonsense, bipartisan legislation. We can start by expanding background checks to make it harder for criminals and the dangerously mentally ill to get their hands on guns. This should be the first line of defense. Congress should make that happen.

Ninety-two percent of the American people believe we should expand background checks. What is the harm in checking to ensure that someone is not a criminal or to ensure that someone is not dangerously mentally ill before we allow them to buy a gun and take it off into the community where they can possibly do some harm?

We put these ideas up before this leadership and there has been silence. No hearings on the bill, no votes on the bill.

Well, if the Republican leadership doesn't like our ideas about how to curb gun violence, then how about putting together a select committee of both Democrats and Republicans? Charge that select committee with working on the issue of gun violence prevention and to come up with some ideas that will keep our communities safe.

□ 1915

We owe it to the families of Sandy Hook and to all those who have lost someone to gun violence. We dishonor their memory when we do nothing, and that is what is happening under this leadership: we are doing nothing. That is shameful. We need to make sure that we do everything we can to help prevent gun violence.

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), ranking member of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations of the House Judiciary Committee and vice chair of the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding, and I thank her for her leadership. I am sure she is leading on this devastating

day and devastating loss in her district that she would much prefer not to do.

As I listened to my colleagues, each of us giving our own separate story of where we were the day of Sandy Hook, all I can say, and what I remember, is that I became breathless; I became unbelieving. It was a very painful day. It was a sickening day, horrifying, and I was questioning: Is this really happening, or did this really happen?

As a member of the Judiciary Committee, and as I have listened over the years of some of the more descriptive accounts of Sandy Hook, some of the stories of such bravery of the principal and teachers who lost their lives, or those who tried to intervene on this derailed gunman—who, by the way, killed his mother before he came to that school—there is nothing more that you can say. Breathless. Similar to the actions of former President Barack Obama.

I can distinctly remember him being before the national audience, the people of the United States, as I recall, in the White House, and wiping a tear, or tears, away from his eyes. I think the whole Nation, at that time, crumbled. A Commander in Chief, known for his strong, stoic leadership, could not comprehend what had happened to these children at Sandy Hook.

I think all of us believe this would be a galvanizing call to action. All of us took notice. We never expected Las Vegas with 50-plus killed in 2017, never expected Orlando in 2016 with 50 killed, or Virginia Tech that happened a few years before.

It amazes me that we are here in commemoration and not here in celebration of what we accomplished for those who yet live: the little ones who go every day to school, the college students, the people who go to clubs, the church-going people. What did we accomplish? Why are we being rebuffed?

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the Sandy Hook families, of whom I met as well, what brave men and women. Here they are spending their time trying to be the soldiers of reason around gun safety. It is horrifying to admit that gun violence now seems to be a staple of American life.

The United States ranks number one in the world in terms of firearms per capita, with 88.8 guns per 100, and has the highest homicide by firearm rate in the developed world. The problem is so endemic that gun violence is now the third leading cause of death for children in the United States.

How many parents crumble themselves or fall over a casket of a dead child? We know in Chicago that children die by drive-by shootings through no fault of their own. Chicago has tough gun laws, and there is a mockery being made by those who oppose gun safety laws, but you recognize that the surrounding areas that Chicago is in the midst of—the States—they have no constraints of much, so the guns are transported into States like Illinois and cities like Chicago.

An average of 1,297 children die annually from gun-related injuries. And our colleague and friend, ROBIN KELLY, reminds us all the time of the gun violence that continues in cities like Chicago.

Guns are linked to roughly 33,000 deaths in the United States per year. About two-thirds of them are suicides.

According to the Pew Research Center, a majority of Americans across partisan lines support gun policy proposals, such as barring people with mental illness from buying guns, prohibiting gun purchases by people on Federal no-fly or watch lists, something we have been trying to pass forever—a reasonable response to the safety of Americans.

As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I cannot imagine why that would not be a unifying legislative initiative—and background checks for private gun sales and sales at gun shows and universal background checks.

There is always the rebuttal: "Guns don't kill, people do." But people with varying conditions take up guns because they are allowed to do so with unfettered gun purchases. It is well known—the percentage of membership of the NRA. That is why I was glad to listen to Chairman THOMPSON, who is a gun owner, a gun user, but how fortunate we are to have him lead the committee, because he can unabashedly, as a war veteran, combat war veteran, say that it doesn't make sense in America to be able to have unfettered gun use.

The majority must cut its close ties to the powerful gun lobby to facilitate useful gun control legislation necessary immediately. America has six times as many firearm homicides as Canada and nearly 16 times as many as Germany.

The United Nations data shows that America far and away leads other developed countries when it comes to gun-related homicides. America has 4.4 percent of the world's population, but almost half of the civilian-owned guns around the world.

In December 2012, a gunman walked into Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, and killed 20 children, 6 adults, and himself—someone who had killed his mother before he came. Since then, there have been at least 1,518 mass shootings, with at least 1,715 people killed, and 6,000 wounded.

Who would have ever imagined that a man would be at the top of a hotel and massively kill so many. Who would ever imagine that there is a law on the books that prevent the Centers for Disease Control and the NIH to study the impact of gun violence as a health crisis. This Congress has. Republicans have.

So, in spite of mass shootings, we have unfortunate opposition and downright obstructionism on getting good gun safety legislation on the floor of the House.

I am not a stranger to this. I come from Texas. There are a lot of guns in

Texas. And I would like to think that a majority of my fellow Texans handle their guns safely and understand the value of gun safety legislation.

But when I introduced the first city ordinance to hold parents responsible for children that got guns and shot each other, it was an uprising, a revolution. It was a packed chamber. People were wearing their colonial clothing, playing flutes, singing patriotic songs, and saying that we were stepping on the Second Amendment.

But medical doctors and parents who had lost children because those children had gotten guns and shot their sibling, they understood that it was a small measure to stop children from getting their parents' guns on a summer day, or after school, and injuring or killing their little brother or sister.

Is there any common sense?

So today, I join in honoring the Sandy Hook families, an honor that I know they did not wish to have. They would rather have their precious little ones.

As I close, I want to make two points:

There is no doubt that people are dying because of gun violence, that we exceed the rational civilized perspective of how many guns are in this country, and that our children are dying. Seven children and adolescents lose their lives to gun violence each day, 75 percent of which are under the age of 12 years old. A lot of these are through accidental shootings where children get guns.

I leave you with this perspective: a great nation. Yes, we send young people into war. That is one of the arguments: 18-year-olds have guns, yes, as they stand up for their country, in an organized, regularized manner to defend this Nation, and we thank them for their young patriotism.

But I venture to say, as I visit far-away places—war zones—young soldiers understand the difference of an AR-15 or an AK rifle in war, as opposed to being on the streets. And our officers, who are doing their duty, good officers, who are in the course of good police work, who have to do a stop, and they run into someone who now has been given latitude to the concealed carry reciprocity bill, to just carry a gun any way you want, and if you come to a State that has strict and positive gun safety laws, that officer has to be able to be judge and jury to determine whether your random license from somewhere else is credible.

As my colleague said: That is the Christmas gift that they are giving to the children of America, rather than the universal background check or the forbidding of individuals on a terrorist list carrying guns. That is not the gift that they are willing to give.

They are giving our children, under the twinkling of the lights, rather than the loving arms of safety and security—they are giving them bullets and automatic weapons and the right for people to go on the streets and kill in

churches, like that in Texas and that in South Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, I finish by saying that even the smallest of amendments, when we did the concealed weapons carry, the one that would disallow those with convictions of domestic violence and stalking, my Republican friends voted it down. Or an amendment that said that if you committed a hate crime, and convicted of such, my Republican friends voted it down.

So I am not giving up, and I thank the gentlewoman for having us come today. My celebration tonight is of the courage of families who suffered so much to continue their journey to stand up and be counted for what is right in America, and that is real gun safety legislation.

Mr. Speaker, on October 1, 2017 the deadliest mass shooting in the history of the United States occurred in Las Vegas, Nevada when, in a heinous act of terror and hatred, 58 persons were killed and 515 others were injured in a shooting at an outdoor concert near the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino in Las Vegas.

Until then, June 13, 2016 marked the deadliest mass shooting in the history of the United States in Orlando, Florida, when, in another heinous act of terror and hatred, 49 persons were killed at Pulse, a popular nightclub, meeting place, and sanctuary for Central Florida's vibrant and dynamic LGBTQ community; sadly, the Las Vegas mass shooting surpassed that dreadful shooting in numbers of dead and injured.

The horrifying events in Las Vegas mark the 273rd mass shooting in the U.S. in the 275 days that have passed so far in 2017, according to Gun Violence Archive.

Mass shootings are a near daily occurrence in America, but what happened in Las Vegas stands out: It was the deadliest such incident in U.S. history, with more than 58 killed and 515 injured.

Including that massacre, the four deadliest U.S. mass shootings have occurred over the past 10 years.

A mass shooting is defined by Gun Violence Archive as any incident in which four or more are shot and/or killed in a single event, at the same general time and location not including the shooter.

Recent U.S. mass shootings include:

1. Las Vegas, 2017: 50+ killed
2. Orlando, 2016: 50 killed
3. Virginia Tech, 2007: 32 killed
4. Sandy Hook, 2012: 27 killed
5. San Ysidro, 1984: 21 killed
6. San Bernadino, 2015: 14 killed
7. Edmond, 1986: 14 killed
8. Fort Hood, 2009: 13 killed
9. Columbine, 1999: 13 killed

There have been more than 11,600 deaths linked to gun violence so far in 2017, which is roughly equivalent to nearly four 9/11 attacks in terms of the total number killed on September 11, 2001.

Comparatively, more than 15 thousand were killed by gun violence in 2016, and there were 383 mass shootings.

It is horrifying to admit that gun violence now seems to be a staple of American life.

The United States ranks No. 1 in the world in terms of firearms per capita—with 88.8 guns per 100 people—and it has the highest

homicide-by-firearm rate in the developed world.

The problem is so endemic that gun violence is now the third leading cause of death for children in the U.S.

An average of 1,297 children die annually from gun-related injuries.

Guns are linked to roughly 33 thousand deaths in the U.S. per year; about two-thirds of them are suicides.

According to Pew Research Center, a majority of Americans (across partisan lines) support gun policy proposals such as barring people with mental illnesses from buying guns; prohibiting gun purchases by people on federal no-fly or watch lists; and background checks for private gun sales and sales at gun shows.

The majority must cut its close ties to the powerful gun lobby to facilitate useful gun control legislation necessary immediately.

America has six times as many firearm homicides as Canada, and nearly 16 times as many as Germany.

United Nations data shows that America far and away leads other developed countries when it comes to gun-related homicides.

America has 4.4 percent of the world's population, but almost half of the civilian-owned guns around the world.

In December 2012, a gunman walked into Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, and killed 20 children, six adults, and himself.

Since then, there have been at least 1,518 mass shootings, with at least 1,715 people killed and 6,089 wounded.

The fairly broad definition of "mass shooting" includes not only shootings in which four or more people were murdered, but shootings in which four or more people were shot at all (excluding the shooter).

Even under this broad definition, mass shootings make up a tiny portion of America's firearm deaths, which totaled more than 33,000 in 2014.

On average, there is more than one mass shooting for each day in America.

Whenever a mass shooting occurs, supporters of gun rights often argue that it is inappropriate to bring up political debates about gun control in the aftermath of a tragedy.

For example, former Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal, a strong supporter of gun rights, criticized former President Barack Obama for "trying to score cheap political points" when Obama mentioned gun control after a mass shooting in Charleston, South Carolina.

But if this argument is followed to its logical end, then it will never be the right time to discuss mass shootings.

Under the broader definition of mass shootings, America has nearly one mass shooting a day.

So if Congress is forced to wait for a time when there is not a mass shooting to talk gun control, Congress could find itself waiting for a very long time.

States with more guns have more gun deaths.

Within the United States, a wide array of empirical evidence indicates that more guns in a community leads to more homicide.

Higher populations, more stress, more immigrants, and more mental illness does not correlate with more gun deaths.

States with tighter gun control laws have fewer gun-related deaths.

A 2016 review of 130 studies in 10 countries, published in *Epidemiologic Reviews*, found that new legal restrictions on owning and purchasing guns tended to be followed by a drop in gun violence—a strong indicator that restricting access to guns can save lives.

The good news is that all firearm homicides, like all homicides and crime, have declined over the past two decades—although that may have changed in 2015 and 2016, with a recent rise in murders nationwide.

There is still active debate among criminal justice experts about why this crime drop is occurring—but one theory that researchers have widely debunked is the idea that more guns have deterred crime—in fact, the opposite may be true, based on research compiled by the Harvard School of Public Health's Injury Control Center.

Although America's political debate about guns tends to focus on grisly mass shootings and murders, a majority of gun-related deaths in the U.S. are suicides.

Research that shows greater access to guns dramatically increases the risk of suicide.

The states with the most guns report the most suicides.

Perhaps the reason access to guns so strongly contributes to suicides is that guns are much deadlier than alternatives like cutting and poison.

Reducing access to guns can be so important to preventing suicides: stalling an attempt or making it less likely to result in death makes a huge difference—it opens the opportunity for someone to help or for the suicidal person to reach out to someone to help.

That is why limiting access to lethal means is so powerful.

Since police shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, on August 9, 2014, police have killed at least 2,902 people as of May 2017.

Given that states with more guns tend to have more homicides, it is not too surprising that, as a study in the *American Journal of Public Health* found, states with more guns also have more cops die in the line of duty.

Researchers looked at federal data for firearm ownership and homicides of police officers across the U.S. over 15 years.

They found that states with more gun ownership had more cops killed in homicides: Every 10 percent increase in firearm ownership correlated with 10 additional officers killed in homicides over the 15-year study period.

The findings could help explain why U.S. police officers appear to kill more people than cops in other developed countries.

For police officers, the higher rates of guns and gun violence in America means they not only will encounter more guns and violence, but they can expect to encounter more guns and deadly violence, making them more likely to anticipate and perceive a threat and use deadly force as a result.

Over the past 20 years, Americans have clearly shifted from supporting gun control measures to greater support of “protecting the right of Americans to own guns.”

This shift has happened even as major mass shootings, such as the attacks on Columbine High School and Sandy Hook Elementary School, have received more press attention.

Although mass shootings are often viewed as some of the worst acts of gun violence, they seem to have little effect on public opinion about gun rights.

That helps explain why Americans' support for the right to own guns appears to be rising over the past 20 years even as more of these mass shootings make it to the news.

Although Americans say they want to protect the right to bear arms, they are very much supportive of many gun policy proposals—including some fairly contentious ideas, such as more background checks on private and gun show sales and banning semi-automatic and assault-style weapons.

This type of contradiction is not exclusive to gun policy issues.

For example, although most Americans in the past said they do not support Obamacare, but most of them also said they like the specific policies in the health-care law.

On average, 7 children and adolescents lose their lives to gun violence each day, 75 percent of which are under the age of 12 years old.

So many people die annually from gun violence in the United States that the death toll between 1968 and 2011 eclipses the total lives lost in all the armed conflicts in the history of the United States.

On June 7, 2015, a gunman shot and killed nine people at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church Charleston, South Carolina, one of the oldest and largest black congregations in the South.

On November 11, 2009, at Fort Hood, near Killeen, Texas, a gunman shot and killed 13 people, and wounded 30 others.

On August 5, 2012 in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, a gunman shot and killed six people, and injured three others, at the Sikh Temple of Oak Creek.

On July 7, 2015 in Chattanooga, Tennessee a gunman shot and killed five people, including two U.S. Marines and a Naval Officer, and shot and injured two others at a recruiting center and U.S. Naval Reserve Center.

On December 2, 2015 in San Bernardino, California, two gunmen killed 14 people and injured 21 others at the Inland Regional Center.

On December 14, 2012, a gunman murdered 26 persons, including 20 children and 6 school administrators and teachers, at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Connecticut.

On August 8, 2015, a gunman brutally murdered his ex-girlfriend and her six children and husband in one of the most notorious cases of domestic violence in the history of Houston, Texas.

On April 16, 2007, a gunman killed 32 persons and injured 17 others at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia.

Mass shootings occur more frequently in states that do not require background checks for all gun sales.

Analyses of mass shootings in the United States between 2009 and 2015 document that the majority of the mass shootings occur in venues where the carrying of firearm is not restricted.

In states that require background checks for all handgun sales, including guns offered in unlicensed sales online and at gun shows, there are 52 percent fewer mass shootings.

Congress must take action to prevent other incidents such as the recent act of terror and hatred in Las Vegas, Nevada that resulted in the tragic loss of 58 innocent lives.

We extend our deepest sympathies to all those affected by this tragedy and recognize

the skill and heroism of the law enforcement officers and first responders who came to the aid of others.

We commend the efforts of those who are working to care for the injured and investigate this horrific incident.

We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to the families of the fallen, and to all those affected in the community of Las Vegas and in the United States.

And I pledge to continue to work to reduce gun violence and prevent mass shooting.

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, as we have heard so eloquently from my colleagues, everyone agrees that we should keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people. But, in fact, this House and this administration have been moving in the opposite direction.

Just last week, hundreds of Americans whose loved ones had been killed by guns in the last few years came to Washington for a long-planned memorial vigil, a national vigil, to honor those whose lives had been taken from us from gun violence. On that very day, this House decided to call up an offensive dangerous piece of legislation on concealed carry permits.

This bill will make it easier for domestic violence abusers to pursue their victims across State lines carrying loaded concealed weapons into States that do not allow that, overriding the choices of States like mine in Connecticut that have strict laws to protect domestic violence victims, who are five times more likely to be killed if there is a gun in the household.

That is why my State has taken action to protect women and children from death by gun from domestic abusers. But now my State—if this law gets passed by the Senate and signed by the President—my State's choices will be overridden. The law enforcement in my State will be at greater risk.

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That is not protecting the American people. That is putting them at risk.

Recently, the administration decided to take the names of all fugitives. One of the categories of those who are not permitted legally to own weapons are people who are fugitives from justice. It seems like a fairly sensible rule, just like it is a sensible rule to not have those who are believed to be terrorists to legally purchase guns.

Yet, this administration recently took tens of thousands of names of people who have been on the National Instant Criminal Background Check System as prohibited from purchasing a gun legally. Because of their criminal history, the fact that they are fugitives from justice, tens of thousands of those names have been taken out of the records. They have been sent back to the States, saying they should look at them again.

In so doing, how long is it going to be before one of those dangerous people buys a gun because the name is no longer in the system?

And who knows if it is going to be your child or your child or your loved

one or your neighbor. That is not what we are sent here to do.

The families of Newtown have persevered. Despite all odds, they have found the courage to get up every day. Some are pursuing brain research to figure out how to encourage empathy. Some have written beautiful music, composed poetry. Some have started programs in schools to teach children how to be kind to each other. Some have stepped forward as extraordinary citizen activists and come to Washington and pound the halls, the marbled halls of State capitols around the country. They are true American heroes fighting for what they believe in and a better society.

And some, in some ways I think the bravest among them, have chosen to bring new children into this world—the sort of optimism and courage that I can't fathom if my child at 6 or 7 years old had been gunned down in those classrooms in the Sandy Hook Elementary School. But if they can have that resolve and that courage and that faith in this country, so can we.

A good and a great nation takes care of its citizens. A good and a great nation responds to the cries of the people. A good and a great nation, above all, protects its children.

Madam Speaker, we have the opportunity to do that. Thoughts and prayers and moments of silence are not enough. The American people deserve action. When I get on a plane tomorrow to fly back to Connecticut to attend memorial services on the 5-year anniversary of those tragic and shocking murders of children in Sandy Hook Elementary School, I would like to be able to tell them that we are doing our job and our duty in this House by taking action and honoring their memories with truly taking action to protect them.

I want to thank my colleagues for joining me here tonight.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from the State of Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), my colleague.

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues who are here this evening. I also want to thank my colleague, Congresswoman ESTY, for her indomitable efforts and work in making sure that we focus our time and our attention to the prevention of gun violence.

Madam Speaker, I rise to honor and to commemorate the victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, 5 years ago. We lost 20 beautiful innocent children and 6 wonderful caring adults. While the grief and pain of the families who lost a loved one at Sandy Hook endures, we can all find hope and strength in the resilience of Newtown, and, together, we must honor their loss with action.

Tonight, I want to share an essay from "Bullets into Bells: Poets and Citizens Respond to Gun Violence." Abbey Clements, a teacher at Sandy Hook, wrote the following: "154 shots.

They heard them all. I thought they were folding chairs falling. We huddled into the coats and backpacks. Some of them cried. Some of them laughed—how could they know? And if they knew, how could they believe? We shared a water bottle, a blue one, passing it around. Little arms poking out to take it. We waited. We had to believe the police were who they said they were. I opened the door. They scattered. A few in my outstretched arms. We ran. We were lucky. Surviving is a gift and a burden. What do you do with that?

"For me, as soon as I could, I started to fight. I fight to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people. I fight to keep guns locked up and away from curious toddlers and depressed teens. I fight against arming teachers, and I fight to keep guns out of college dorms and classrooms. Lockdowns, active-shooter drills, and backpacks that morph into shields aren't the answer.

"Parents shouldn't have to worry about whether or not their kids will make it home from school. A year or two after the tragedy, one mom told me that, every day after school, she left a gift for her daughter sitting on her bed—a celebration for making it home."

Those are the words of Abbey Clements, a teacher at Sandy Hook.

It is our job to make sure that those children get home safe from school. We have the ability to do that in this institution. What we need is the will to do it.

Again, I thank my colleague, Congresswoman ESTY, for her leadership in this effort.

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut for her stirring words. Abbey Clements is an extraordinary woman, and her daughter, Sarah, is now a college student here in Washington and is helping take up that charge of being one of the citizen activists and one of the citizen leaders who understands that democracies empower and charge us to correct that which is wrong.

What is happening in this country is wrong. These are not tragedies from above. These are not natural disasters. These are man-made tragedies and man-made deaths, and it is up to us to do better.

Again, I want to thank my colleagues for joining me here this evening. I will take their wishes, their words, their energy, their passion, and their commitment to action back with me to Newtown tomorrow evening.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LETTER SUPPORTING SPECIAL COUNSEL ROBERT S. MUELLER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. HANDEL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Madam Speaker, for the past several days, there has been an organized attempt to discredit and undermine the work of Special Counsel Robert Mueller. I rise today to speak on behalf of many Members of Congress who believe Special Counsel Mueller is doing a great job.

At this time, I am circulating a letter, and other Members of Congress are joining me. This is a letter of support for Special Counsel Mueller urging that he not be interfered with and that he is allowed to continue this very important investigation in the interest of the security of our country.

I will be circulating this letter for another 24 hours. However, at this time, I would like to read the contents of the letter into the RECORD. This, again, is a letter in support of Special Counsel Mueller. The letter is addressed to the Honorable Rod J. Rosenstein, Deputy Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice.

The letter reads as follows:

Dear Deputy Attorney General,

We write to express our support for the work of Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller, III, and to urge you to ensure that he be allowed to continue his investigation—unfettered by political influence or threats to his authority—to its natural and appropriate conclusion based on the law, the facts, and the evidence.

The Special Counsel is Conducting a Methodical Investigation, Yielding Results.

It is unimaginable that Republicans would seek to intervene, discredit, obstruct, or terminate the special counsel's investigation. Thus far, from every public indication, it appears that Mr. Mueller is conducting a thorough and methodical investigation. He and his investigators have not sought, and instead avoided, the public spotlight. His team has not leaked or hinted at criminal allegations for which they have yet to develop charges. Furthermore, the charges that have been filed to date have been sufficiently strong and well founded as to elicit guilty pleas from President Donald Trump's former National Security Advisor, Lieutenant General Michael Flynn, and a former policy adviser to Donald Trump's Presidential campaign, George Papadopoulos.

The Appointment of a Special Counsel Was Necessary and Proper.

As you know, pursuant to U.S. Department of Justice Order Number 3915-2017, which you issued on May 17, 2017, Mr. Mueller was appointed to serve as special counsel and authorized to conduct an investigation into matters, "including any links and/or coordination between the Russian Government and individuals associated with the campaign of President Donald Trump; and any matters that arose or may arise directly from the investigation; and any other matters within the scope of 28 CFR 600.4(a)," which includes "authority to investigate and prosecute Federal crimes committed in the course of, and