

Dawn Lafferty Hochsprung, principal, Mary Sherlach, school psychologist, Victoria Soto, first grade teacher, Lauren G. Rousseau, permanent substitute teacher, Rachel D'Avino and Anne Marie Murphy, teacher aides, and Charlotte Bacon, Daniel Barden, Olivia Engel, Josephine Gay, Madeleine Hsu, Catherine Hubbard, Chase Kowalski, Jesse

Lewis, Ana Marquez-Greene, Dylan Hockley, James Mattioli, Grace A. McDonnell, Emilie Parker, Jack Pinto, Noah Pozner, Caroline Previdi, Jessica Rekos, Benjamin Wheeler, Avielle Richman, and Allison Wyatt, students, Sandy Hook Elementary School, who were killed in the December 14 shootings in Newtown, CT.

## Statement on the Death of Senator Daniel K. Inouye *December 17, 2012*

Tonight our country has lost a true American hero with the passing of Senator Daniel Inouye. The second longest serving Senator in the history of the Chamber, Danny represented the people of Hawaii in Congress from the moment they joined the Union. In Washington, he worked to strengthen our military, forge bipartisan consensus, and hold those of us in Government accountable to the people we were elected to serve. But it was his incredible bravery during World

War II—including one heroic effort that cost him his arm, but earned him the Medal of Honor—that made Danny not just a colleague and a mentor, but someone revered by all of us lucky enough to know him. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Inouye family.

NOTE: The related proclamation of December 18 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

## The President's New Conference *December 19, 2012*

*The President.* Good morning, everybody. It's now been 5 days since the heartbreaking tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut, 3 days since we gathered as a nation to pray for the victims. And today a few more of the 20 small children and 6 educators who were taken from us will be laid to rest.

We may never know all the reasons why this tragedy happened. We do know that every day since, more Americans have died of gun violence. We know such violence has terrible consequences for our society. And if there is even one thing that we can do to prevent any of these events, we have a deep obligation—all of us—to try.

Over these past 5 days, a discussion has emerged as to what we might do not only to deter mass shootings in the future, but to reduce the epidemic of gun violence that plagues this country every single day. And it's encouraging that people of all different backgrounds and beliefs and political persuasions have been

willing to challenge some old assumptions and change longstanding positions.

That conversation has to continue, but this time, the words need to lead to action.

We know this is a complex issue that stirs deeply held passions and political divides. And as I said on Sunday night, there's no law or set of laws that can prevent every senseless act of violence in our society. We're going to need to work on making access to mental health care at least as easy as access to a gun. We're going to need to look more closely at a culture that all too often glorifies guns and violence. And any actions we must take must begin inside the home and inside our hearts.

But the fact that this problem is complex can no longer be an excuse for doing nothing. The fact that we can't prevent every act of violence doesn't mean we can't steadily reduce the violence and prevent the very worst violence.