

shall be in order except pursuant to a subsequent order of the House.

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

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

EXPRESSING SYMPATHY FOR SHOOTING VICTIMS IN BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 340), expressing sympathy to the victims, families, and friends of the tragic act of violence at the American Civic Association in Binghamton, New York.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 340

Whereas on Friday April 3, 2009, the Nation experienced an appalling misfortune when a gunman entered the American Civic Association in Binghamton, New York, and murdered 13 and wounded 4 innocent people;

Whereas the shooting resulted in the tragic loss of Lan Ho, Parveen Nin Ali, Li Guo, Dolores Yigal, Hong Xiu Mao, Marc Henry Bernard, Maria Sonia Bernard, Maria Zobniw, Jiang Ling, Hai Hong Zhong, Roberta King, Layla Khalil, and Almir O. Alves;

Whereas the attacker wounded Long Huyng, Shirley DeLucia, Sumi Lee, and Liqiao Chen;

Whereas this act of violence created numerous secondary victims, including over 40 people who were in the building at the time, as well as friends and family of the deceased who are struggling to cope with the impact of this tragic act;

Whereas many of the victims of this assault were residents of Binghamton, New York, in Broome County, New York, a close-knit, diverse community with a long history of welcoming people from all backgrounds, nationalities, and religions, as well as immigrants and visitors from abroad;

Whereas the American Civic Association in Binghamton, New York, has proudly served the community since 1935, assisting immigrants and refugees with counseling, resettlement, citizenship, family reunification, language skills, and other critical services that have played a vital role in the effort to secure the dreams of immigrants seeking legal citizenship;

Whereas the law enforcement agencies led by the City of Binghamton Police Department, with support from the Broome County Sheriff's Department, the New York State Police, and neighboring municipalities responded quickly, professionally, and heroically to the crime scene;

Whereas swift action by emergency medical responders addressed the needs of the

wounded and quickly transported them to hospitals;

Whereas the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and others provided swift and invaluable cooperation and resources to assist local efforts and provide additional services to help the community cope with this tragedy;

Whereas the United States State Department quickly offered, and is now providing, assistance with processing visas to expedite the travel of victims' family; and

Whereas, although the effects of this shooting will be felt for years to come, the Binghamton community will overcome this tragedy and re-emerge stronger than before and with renewed sense of unity, cooperation, and understanding: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses its heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of the victims of the April 3, 2009, shooting in Binghamton, New York;

(2) conveys its gratitude to the city, county, State, and Federal officials and agencies whose quick and comprehensive response helped save lives and start the long healing process; and

(3) honors the American Civic Association for the services it provides to assist people from across the world who seek the American dream.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I now yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, with House Resolution 340, this Chamber expresses its profound sympathy to the victims of the tragic attack at the American Civic Association in Binghamton, New York, on April 3. Our thoughts continue to be with the families, friends, and the people of Binghamton, and they remain in our prayers. Thirteen men and women were murdered in this attack and four were wounded, shaking the community and the entire Nation.

House Resolution 340 was introduced by our friend and colleague, Representative HINCHEY of New York, and is co-sponsored by over 50 Members of Congress.

Given the tragic events on which House Resolution 340 is based, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform moved quickly to consider a report on the bill, which brings us to today's consideration of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, we thank the American Civic Association for its continued service over the years as it has helped

immigrants and refugees with counseling, resettlement, citizenship, family reunification, language skills, and other critical services, playing a vital role in the effort to secure the dreams of immigrants seeking U.S. citizenship. We want them to know that they have our prayers and our heartfelt sympathies during this difficult time.

I would also like to commend the City of Binghamton Police Department, the Broome County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Police for their swift response to this attack. In addition, we thank the FBI, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office, and other Federal agencies for their assistance.

We were all deeply saddened to hear of this attack, and it is difficult for us to comprehend such an act of violence. We will feel its effect for years, but we can be sure that in time Binghamton will heal, emerging from this tragedy stronger and more united than ever before.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge the passage of this resolution expressing sympathy to the victims, families, and friends of the tragic act of violence at the American Civic Association in Binghamton, New York.

For immigrants in the Binghamton area, the American Civic Association, located on Front Street, is a representation of their ongoing pursuit of the American dream as newcomers from around the world learn English and the skills necessary to obtain United States citizenship. But on April 3, the American Civic Association—a welcoming place serving 60 to 100 people per day—became a killing zone. On that dreadful day, a deranged man, whose own dream of immigrating from Vietnam to America had now come to nothing but despair and senseless turmoil, ended the dreams of one aspiring citizen after another by opening fire on unsuspecting employees, volunteers, and hopeful immigrants, resulting in the loss of 14 lives, including the shooter, and four wounded people.

As we remember the victims, we also commend the efforts of the first responders—local police, fire, emergency medical crews, city and county officials, and the community as a whole—for their rapid and cohesive response to this unfortunate tragedy. In addition, we commend the United States Department of State for quickly offering assistance with processing visas to expedite the travel of the victims' families so they could arrange for the burial of their loved ones.

The memory of this senseless event will not soon be forgotten. However, the strength and determination of the Binghamton community as well as the citizens of New York will help the healing process.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ARCURI).

Mr. ARCURI. I thank my good friend for yielding.

Over the past several weeks, many of you have seen the images and read the news about the tragic shooting in Binghamton, New York, on April 3, 2009. Thirteen innocent people lost their lives at the American Civic Association building due to senseless violence.

While I don't represent the City of Binghamton, I represent the suburbs in the area around Binghamton and know many people that work and live in the Binghamton area. I want to take this time to again offer my deepest condolences to the families and friends of those who lost their lives on that day and offer my sincerest gratitude to the local officials and first responders on the ground whose immediate action then prevented further loss of life. And their continued leadership now has allowed for the Binghamton community to start the healing process.

I want to especially mention the Broome County Executive, Barbara Fiala; Binghamton Mayor, Matt Ryan; Binghamton Police Chief, Joe Zikuski; and Broome County Emergency Services Director, Brett Chelis, who led the team of hundreds of first responders consisting of police, fire, rescue and medical staff. To the staff at the local hospitals that cared for the victims of this tragedy and worked tirelessly to save lives, I sincerely say thank you.

I want to say how thankful I am—and I know that so many in the Binghamton community are—to my colleague, Congressman MAURICE HINCHEY. Congressman HINCHEY answered the call at the first sign of trouble and was in his district working with his people to make sure all that could be done was being done throughout the crisis.

I again give my continued full support to all those involved, and ask that we learn from such a tragedy and do all that we can to ensure that an incident like that never happens again.

□ 1230

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I want to say in closing for myself that this is an experience that no Member of Congress wishes to face. However, at the same time, I must confess admiration not only for the law enforcement authorities and the medical staff and families who have been affected in this case but also, and I think especially from our standpoint here in the House, the way in which Representative MAURICE HINCHEY, faced with this disaster, this terrible tragedy in his district, flew back to his district, rolled up his sleeves, opened his heart to the people that he cares about and represents here in Congress every day, and began the very dif-

ficult work of helping his community in Binghamton heal from these wounds.

And I just want to say there are occasions that are forced upon us unwillingly that really show, I think, in a greater depth and a more meaningful extent the true content of our character, and seeing the way the community in Binghamton came together in this tragedy to comfort those who were victimized and to bring some peace to those families, the way the law enforcement community and the nurses and docs in taking care of those families came together, and seeing how Mr. HINCHEY sprang to action and addressed the tragedy himself was a shining example, I think, of the strength of the United States and of our core communities. And I just think that if there is any silver lining that one can gain from this tragedy, it is just that: The way this community has responded to a senseless, senseless tragedy and the way they have provided comfort to people in their own communities is truly admirable.

I think, as Members of Congress here on both sides of the aisle have acknowledged here, the way that MAURICE HINCHEY had weighed into the process was truly, I think, exemplary for all of us, unwanted admittedly but certainly extremely admirable under the circumstances. And we will pay special attention to this tragedy going forward.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY), the lead sponsor of this resolution.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the opportunity to speak about this important issue, and I very much appreciate everything that has been said here by Members focusing attention on this critical issue.

I rise today as a representative of the 22nd Congressional District in the State of New York, which includes that wonderful, magnificent City of Binghamton.

Now, less than 4 weeks ago, this proud community suffered a devastating tragedy. On the morning of Friday, April 3, 2009, a single gunman entered the offices of the American Civic Association and there murdered 13 innocent people and seriously wounded four more. I am here today on behalf of Congress to offer our formal condolences, to honor the victims of this tragedy, and to express gratitude to the heroes who responded.

With this resolution, we remember those who were lost that day, offer our condolences to their families, express our hopes that those wounded and touched by this tragedy are on the path to recovery, and thank all those who responded. I want to thank Chairman TOWNS and Ranking Member ISSA for their support in allowing this resolution to come to the floor. I also want to express my appreciation to our Speaker and to our majority leader who assisted us with this resolution.

Binghamton, New York, is a close-knit, diverse community with a long history of welcoming people from all backgrounds, all nationalities and religions, as well as immigrants and visitors from anywhere abroad. It's a place where those looking for a better life are welcomed with open arms and where being a part of a community means being part of a family.

The American Civic Association performs no small role in this process. This organization, the American Civic Association, has proudly served the community since 1935. It offers immigrants and refugees critical services such as counseling, language education, and family reunification in order to help people realize their own American dreams. Their noble work is lauded in the community and supported by people from all political parties and all backgrounds.

The 13 individuals who lost their lives that day ranged from the age of 22 to 72 and included a mother of three, a newly-wedded bride, a student, a teacher, and many others, all of whom were hardworking individuals who had the same goal of being able to offer a better life for their children, their families. I would like to take a moment to pay respect to those 13 victims:

Parveen Ali, Almir Alves, Maria Sonia Bernard, Marc Henry Bernard, Li Guo, Lan Ho, Layla Khalil, Roberta King, Jiang Ling, Hong Xiu Mao, Dolores Yigal, Hai Hong Zhong, Maria K. Zobniw.

Shirley DeLucia was among the four who were wounded. She showed her bravery that day by placing the 911 call after being shot in the abdomen.

I would like to thank those who showed swift and decisive action that morning. First and most importantly, I would also like to offer my utmost gratitude to the law enforcement agencies who responded so quickly and professionally to this major event. The City of Binghamton Police, led by Chief Joseph Zikuski, worked in conjunction with the Broome County Sheriff's Department, the New York State Police, and other neighboring municipalities to heroically address the critical needs of the city and the people.

I would also like to make mention of the help afforded us by our Federal agencies, notably the Department of Justice for its swift action during the immediate situation and to the State Department and the Bureau of Customs and Immigration for their assistance during the difficult aftermath. I would like to thank Binghamton Mayor, Matthew Ryan, and Governor Paterson for their efforts in organizing local and State resources in a very effective and efficient way. I would also like to thank the White House for its direct response and particularly Vice President BIDEN for reaching out and helping to coordinate agencies on the Federal level.

Many lives were lost that day, but many more could have been lost were

it not for the brave and effective actions of our men and women in uniform. They deserve our highest level of respect and gratitude.

While we must continue with our daily lives, let us not forget those who have had their lives permanently altered by this event, and let us also use this tragedy as a daily reminder of how fragile life is and how to make the most of the time that we have.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I simply urge our colleagues to join Mr. HINCHHEY in supporting this resolution.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 340, a resolution that expresses sympathy to the victims, families and friends of the tragic act of violence at the American Civic Association in Binghamton, NY.

My heart goes out not only to the victims and families of this senseless tragedy but to the entire city of Binghamton, New York. I am deeply saddened by the violence that has afflicted that community and that together, the citizens can regain a sense of safety and hope. I would also like to thank and commend the first responders and all of law enforcement who responded to the crime scene and who continue to help the community cope with this tragedy. Binghamton, New York has a long history of welcoming people from all backgrounds, nationalities, and religions, as well as immigrants and visitors from abroad and the American Civic Association in Binghamton has been at the heart of these efforts. For over 80 years, the American Civic Association has served its community assisting immigrants and refugees with counseling, resettlement, citizenship, family reunification, language skills, and other critical services that have played a vital role in the effort to pursue the dreams of immigrants seeking legal citizenship.

Many of those who sought a haven in the Association had escaped the violence of war and tyranny in their home countries to create a better life in the United States. It is a sad irony that instead, they found tragedy.

In the midst of tragedy, I respectfully remind my colleagues that we will continue to be vigilant against these cowardly acts of violence and that our condolences are with the victims and their friends and families. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 340.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SYMPATHY FOR ALABAMA SHOOTING VICTIMS

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 341) expressing heartfelt sympathy for the victims and families of the shootings in Geneva and Coffee Counties in Alabama, on March 10, 2009.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 341

Whereas the communities of Geneva and Coffee Counties in Alabama have endured a tragic event in southeast Alabama that resulted in the loss of 10 lives and injuries to several others;

Whereas, on March 10, 2009, a man fired at members of his family and other innocent bystanders throughout several towns in Geneva and Coffee Counties in Alabama;

Whereas the result of this shooting spree resulted in the deaths of Bruce Maloy, Lisa McLendon, Andrea Myers, Corrine Gracy Myers, Sonya Smith, James Starling, James White, Virginia White, Dean Wise, and Tracy Wise;

Whereas State Trooper Mike Gillis, Greg McCullough, Ella Meyers, and Jeffrey Nelson, were wounded as a result of the shootings;

Whereas the first responders, State Troopers of the Dothan Troopers Post, officers of the Geneva Police Department, officers of the Geneva County Sheriff's Department, and an officer of the Conservation and Natural Resources department pursued and eventually found the gunman deceased; and

Whereas the grieving and celebration of the lives of those lost in this senseless tragedy will be with the communities of Geneva and Coffee Counties for months and years to come: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses its heartfelt sympathy for the victims and families of the shootings in Geneva and Coffee Counties in Alabama on March 10, 2009; and

(2) conveys its gratitude to the city and county officials, and all the police, fire, sheriff, and emergency medical teams who responded swiftly to the scene and helped prevent further violence.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I solemnly join my colleagues in the consideration of House Resolution 341, which expresses our heartfelt sympathy for the victims and families of the shootings in Geneva and Coffee Counties of Alabama on March 10, 2009.

House Resolution 341 was introduced by our colleague Congressman BOBBY BRIGHT of Alabama on April 21, 2009, and was considered by and reported from the Oversight Committee on April 23, 2009, by voice vote. This measure has the support and cosponsorship of 58 Members of Congress.

On March 10, 2009, the people of Geneva and Coffee Counties in southeast Alabama suffered senseless shootings that resulted in the loss of 10 lives and a number of injuries. On that tragic day, the reckless killings began at the shooter's, Michael McLendon, residence in Kinston, Alabama, where he killed his own mother and in addition set the house on fire. The shooter then drove a dozen miles southeast to Samson in Geneva County, where he gunned down six more victims, including four members of his own family. The victims of this senseless act included James Alford White; Tracy Michelle Wise; Dean James Wise; and 74-year-old Virginia E. White, the shooter's own grandmother. Also killed were the wife and daughter of local sheriff's deputy Joshua Myers, Andrea Myers and Corinne Myers, who was only 18 months old.

The shooter continued on his rampage, killing three more people. These random and innocent victims were James Irvin Starling, Sonja Smith, and Bruce Wilson Malloy.

The rampage ended another 12 miles farther east in Geneva at the metals plant where, with a valiant attempt to end the rampage, the State troopers of the Dothan Post, the police department, and county sheriff's department and an officer of the Conservation and Natural Resources Department were among the first to respond and help resolve the situation. After a gun battle with police, Mr. McLendon took his own life.

The memory, the pain, and the grief of this reckless killing spree will remain with the victims in the communities of Geneva and Coffee, Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, with this bill we have the opportunity to acknowledge the lives lost and the courage and resolve of the many law enforcement officials and community members that helped end the situation. I would like to thank the gentleman from Alabama for introducing and ushering through this House such a thoughtful and considerate measure which can only express the heartfelt sympathy we all feel on behalf of those Americans that were impacted by this tragic event.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I urge my fellow colleagues to support the adoption of House Resolution 341.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge the passage of this resolution recognizing the tragedy that befell the communities of Geneva and Coffee Counties, Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution seeks to take a moment to reflect on the impact one man's senseless acts of violence can have on a community, a State, and a Nation.

On the afternoon of March 10, 2009, the worst killing rampage in Alabama's history began as a disturbed