

job is just not fair; and as Members of Congress, we should do something to fix it. That's why I'm a cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act. This bill would make it harder for employers to engage in discrimination against women in the form of unequal pay.

I urge my colleagues to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act so women in Delaware who do the same jobs for the same hours get the same paycheck as their male counterparts.

EQUAL PAY DAY

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, today is Equal Pay Day, a day to remind all Americans and all my colleagues here in Congress that discrimination and paycheck inequality still exists in the general workplace.

Nationally, women earn only 77 cents for every dollar a man earns. That income disparity must end now. And while women in my home State of California are paid 85 cents for every dollar paid to men, we must do more. To live in a country where women do not earn equal pay for equal work is sad and embarrassing.

What does equality look like, Mr. Speaker? Equality looks like the Civil Rights Act of 1964; equality looks like the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and equality needs to look like the Paycheck Fairness Act, which has yet to be passed.

I urge the Speaker to bring this much needed bill to the House floor as soon as possible.

To my constituents, please join me on Facebook tomorrow for a town hall meeting where I will be answering your questions about equality and what steps we should be taking to achieve equality for all. Please visit Facebook.com/RepLowenthal to join the conversation.

EQUAL PAY DAY

(Ms. LEE of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, today we rise in support of Equal Pay Day.

Equal Pay Day symbolizes when more than 3 months into the year women's wages finally catch up with what men were paid in the previous year.

It's unconscionable that women today continue to be blatantly discriminated against in the workforce in terms of their pay and the treatment that they receive.

In 2011, women working full time made only 77 cents to every dollar made by men over the course of a year. The landscape is even worse for women of color. In 2011, African American women earned 64 cents to every dollar earned by white males, and for Latinas

it was only 55 cents and 42 cents in my home State of California. On average, the wage gap costs women roughly \$11,000 annually, and at this rate the wage gap will not close until 2057. Can you imagine that, 2057?

We must support Congresswoman DELAURO's Paycheck Fairness Act. This addresses the serious economic disparities which women still face.

Women and their families cannot afford to continue paying the cost of our inaction in the face of injustice. I hope the Speaker will bring this bill to the floor right away.

EQUAL PAY DAY

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

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Today on April 9, we recognize Equal Pay Day, symbolizing the more than 3 months into this year that women have to work in order for their wages to finally catch up to what their male colleagues earned last year.

Nearly 50 years ago, President John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act to protect workers from gender-based discrimination.

Despite the hard work of countless folks to make pay equality a reality, women today still earn only 77 cents for every dollar earned by men doing the same kind of work. For women of color, the wage gap is even larger.

Clearly, as a Nation, we have more work to do. That's why I'm a proud cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would reinforce the Equal Pay Act by closing loopholes and protecting employees from unfair retaliation.

Twice now Democrats have passed this legislation in the House of Representatives only to have it blocked by Senate Republicans.

Equal pay is not a partisan issue. And it's not only a women's issue. This is about America's founding principles of justice for all.

Mr. Speaker, I urge you to bring this important legislation before the House for a full vote.

EQUAL PAY DAY

(Mr. BERA of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate Equal Pay Day as we mark the 50th anniversary of the Equal Pay Act.

In the last 50 years, women have gone into space and off to war. They've led Fortune 500 companies and served on the Supreme Court. They've been elected Speaker of the House and run for President; yet women still earn only 77 cents for every dollar a man earns.

In the Sacramento area, women lose approximately \$2.2 billion each year because of this pay gap. Now, that's unacceptable and as a father it's personal. I want my daughter to grow up in a

country where her gender is not a barrier to her success.

And the wage gap doesn't just hurt women; it hurts families, businesses, and communities. Women are now nearly half of our workforce, and oftentimes it's up to women to put food on the table and provide for their families. That's why I'm a proud cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act, one of the very first bills I chose to cosponsor.

It's time for us to finish what President Kennedy started 50 years ago and what women have been working to achieve for more than a century and make equal pay a reality for millions of Americans.

EQUAL PAY DAY

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

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Tuesday, April 9, as Equal Pay Day for women.

The Equal Pay Act, signed into law by President Kennedy in 1963, amended the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to prohibit sex-based wage discrimination between men and women who perform jobs that require substantially equal skill, effort, and responsibility.

In 1963, women were earning an average of 59 cents on the dollar compared to men. I rise because today on average women earn 77 cents for every dollar a man earns.

In 2013, a study by the United States Census Bureau in Columbus, Ohio, demonstrated that women are paid 81 cents for every dollar paid to men. This amounts to a yearly gap of some \$9,261 between men and women who work full time.

Equal work? It's simple. It deserves equal pay.

I'm proud that the first piece of legislation that President Obama signed into law during his first term was the Lilly Ledbetter Act. I rise for all the Lilly Ledbetters in hopes that one day the wage of workers in this country will be equal regardless of gender.

□ 1940

GUN LEGISLATION: A PATHWAY TO SAVING LIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, thank you so very much for the opportunity to discuss with my colleagues a

pending action in the United States Congress and a plea for civility and fairness.

As I do that, let me acknowledge Equal Pay Day and my support, as I've done over the years, of Congresswoman DeLAURO's continued acknowledgment and recognizing of the need to finally put an end to disparities in pay for women. That's what America is all about, and I'm delighted to join my colleagues who have already spoken to the idea of ensuring that we have equal pay. I hope we can pass that legislation.

I also want to raise an issue and offer my concern and expression, if you will, of comfort to the students at Lone Star College. Part of Lone Star College is in my congressional district, and I share that with one of my colleagues in Texas. I just wanted to say to all of the parents and to my colleagues: I have children who have finished college. We support our children, all of our children, going to a safe place and being safe and having the ability to be educated in a safe place. So I express great sympathy. We are not sure of the status or whether or not there has been any loss of life. We know that there are persons who are critical, and we are wishing and hoping for their safety.

We do want to determine the facts, and our law enforcement was there expeditiously. Allow me to acknowledge the Lone Star Police, the police in the surrounding area, the Harris County Sheriff's Department, and the first responders who were there as well.

Today, however, I want to acknowledge that we have a pending crisis, and that is that we have the need to pass sensible gun legislation. Why do I call it a "crisis"? It is because we are moving toward a day that has been designated by the leadership in the Senate that we would be able to vote on sensible gun legislation. Remember, I've said "sensible" gun legislation. So, today, I rise to the floor of the House because I think it is crucial—I think it is imperative—that we find that common path to save lives. That's what it really is about. It is a pathway to be able to save lives.

I am delighted to have one of my distinguished colleagues on the floor. She is the former speaker of the Ohio House, the distinguished Congresswoman from Columbus, Ohio, who will share her thoughts about the pending vote that is coming up this Thursday.

Let me just cite for you that we have heard the commitments and sermons and passion after each tragedy. I remember Columbine. I was here, Mr. Speaker, for Columbine. In fact, I was appointed to a school safety select committee to talk about school safety at that time. Obviously, a lot of us were here for Aurora, Virginia Tech, I was here for that as well and then, of course, Newtown and then cases in between. Many of us are here for the tragedies that we see when we go home.

Just this past weekend in Sugar Land, Texas, an individual who was

mentally challenged was shot dead in his house when he came out of his bedroom, Mr. Speaker, pointing a gun at law enforcement officers. Many of you know the tragedy that we face in Texas, which we are still mourning. Two prosecutors and a prosecutor's wife—district attorneys in Texas—were shot dead. Individuals were shot dead by someone who should not have had a gun. Tragically, the individual was released and should not have been released; but more importantly, they were able to get a gun through what we understand might have been a straw purchase—somebody else purchasing the gun for them. So I believe we are no longer at the point when we can have sermons or we can mourn and yet not do something.

Let me thank—I think "applaud" is not the appropriate terminology—those parents who flew in Air Force One from Newtown, Connecticut. You can imagine that they are hurting. Tears came to my eyes as I saw them deplane, come down out of Air Force One, knowing that they are still hurting. I heard a quote that said: For some of us, it's months. For those parents, it's one day at a time.

To imagine little ones—5 and 6 years old—whose bodies were riddled, and they are here in the hallways of Congress to be able to ask us: Can we do the right thing that is for the American people?

And I want to answer today a question that I raised: Can we stop the filibuster? Can we resolve the fact that sensible gun legislation does not violate the Second Amendment?

In fact, we protect the Second Amendment. No one has challenged the Second Amendment, and no one has challenged permits for concealed weapons that are in many States. With the tragedy that occurred in Arizona in which someone was using an automatic weapon and had multiple rounds and for those who say, you see, if the good guys had a gun—and in that instance the good guy had a gun and was probably going to shoot the wrong people if someone had not intervened—what we need to do, in essence, is to ensure that we find common ground and do sensible things.

What do I think are sensible things?

Sensible things include universal background checks. I know there are some discussions about family exchanges and one-to-one exchanges among family members. Let me just say, Mr. Speaker, I'm open to reasonable discussions, but we've got to close the gun show loopholes; we've got to close people opening up their trunks on a highway and giving them to someone who is going to wind up shooting in a robbery; or going into an old man's house just like happened in my community last night—shooting an 83-year-old and taking his car—or the incidence, as I indicated, of this individual with mental health concerns; or the bloody killing of a mother's daughter and her granddaughter by what I

would say is a crazed ex-husband, who did not need to have a gun.

So isn't it reasonable to think that universal background checks would weed out those who did not need to have them?

We're not going to knock on your door and take any guns from families, but we do hope that you will secure them. I hope that I'll be able to get a vote on H.R. 65, a bill that was taken after an ordinance that I passed in the city of Houston, as a member of the city council—because we have legislative authority—and, in fact, legislation that's the law of the land in Texas, and that is to hold people responsible for not locking up their guns.

I would be happy to yield for a moment to the distinguished gentlelady from Ohio. I just want to pause on that a moment. Let's think about storing guns. I want to thank her for her legislative prowess. We are so proud that she has already come here ready to go, because anybody who was the minority leader of the Ohio House, if you will, is already ready to go. She is already taking charge on women's issues, and she is taking charge on economic issues. I am very proud to yield to the gentlelady at this time.

Mrs. BEATTY. Thank you to my colleague, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE. It is an honor for me to join you.

As I stand here today on this floor and think that we have the opportunity to pass legislation that makes sense on gun laws, and as I stand here on this floor and realize that the gun debate is heating up and that we are considering that we would filibuster and protect those who don't want us to make a decision, it does not make sense to me. We are asking for sensible gun laws. We are asking for laws that can help save lives. Whether it's in Congresswoman JACKSON LEE's district in Texas, whether it's in Newtown, Connecticut, or in my Third Congressional District in Ohio, it's for us to take this opportunity to stand together and save lives.

We stand on this floor, and we salute so many good things, so many changes. So the question now for me is: Why? Why can't we come together? The things we're asking for: to close the loopholes. The things we're asking for: to make sure that someone doesn't have an assault weapon in his home that can shoot 30 rounds of ammunition in 30 seconds.

□ 1950

I support the Second Amendment, but I don't think that our forefathers meant for us to do what we are doing today. I don't think that they envisioned that innocent children, babies, would be assassinated, if you will, by someone who had one of these assault weapons. I think today as Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle, that we understand that we are about saving lives, that we are here to protect the innocent, that we took an oath to serve.

So as I reflect back on where I was when that incident happened in Newtown, I was sitting with colleagues on both sides of the aisle at Harvard University in training, where we were talking about working together, where we were talking about how we can make this wonderful America better. So now as I reflect today, let's use those same things that we were being trained on to make this America better. Let's make it better by voting an up-or-down vote. Let's make it better in the spirit of saving lives.

So I proudly join you as we ask all of our colleagues to come together and do what's right: sensible gun laws, background checks, closing the loopholes. That's what we are asking for. For me it is quite simple. The answer is: let's vote.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentlelady for bringing a sense of passion to this debate. So many of us can remember where we were and how incredulous it was when we heard the news coming, and first we thought this is not real. We couldn't be hearing it accurately. Maybe we were hearing the tragedy of six adults, that already was innocent teachers and principals, but we couldn't imagine you were talking about a classroom, that someone would open the door in a recovery mode and see the carnage that one had to be able to look at. Not to be any more graphic, but so much so that, as I understand it, many could not view the situation.

And so I thought it was imperative to come from Houston today, and before I got on the airplane I stopped at the Konia Learning Center for K-6, and I listened to babes talk about knowing Sandy Hook, raising their hands and about wanting to stop gun violence, and understanding that guns in the hands of teachers would not be the way to go. Having little ones in the fifth and sixth grades explain how fearful they would be to have guns with teachers, not because it was the idea that our teachers are not ones that are loving, but we know what happens with human nature and accidents, guns being taken out of drawers or purses or pockets and what can happen.

Yes, I believe we can have common agreement on increasing school resource officers, however school districts would like to use them. We have very fine police departments for many of the school districts that I represent; and do you know what those chiefs of police told me in an earlier hearing that I had in my district, not one of them, university chiefs of police or school district chiefs of police, wanted to arm school personnel and teachers in the classroom to be able to protect our children. Those were the chiefs of police. I didn't put words in their mouths, and they wanted it to be known that they are the responsible ones for security, not to be able to arm those who in essence would be responsible for shooting a gun, making a decision when to shoot, and then not making a decision right and causing havoc,

causing themselves to be shot, or causing someone else to be shot.

As a matter of fact, at a press conference I had on the anniversary Martin Luther King was assassinated on April 4 in my district, because we had been having these gun informational press conferences to raise the understanding, we have been working with a group by the name of Moms Demanding Action, thousands of moms across America, we were with them on Thursday, and then we were at the Light-house Church this past Sunday when Moms Demanding Action went to the pulpit, honored and recognized Pastor Henderson to talk about Moms Demanding Action to prevent gun violence.

But this little school that I went to, I said to them that I would come and give their message on the floor of the House, that I would tell the President that I was in this school where these children are so bright, private school that it was, alongside a public school, these children spoke well about their fear of gun violence, the gun violence that they see around them and that they want to be in a place where they are safe, and guns they feel do not make them safe.

So I got motivated, and I thank the Senators for informing me, a letter that I received March 22, 2013, from Senator PAUL, Senator CRUZ, and Senator MIKE LEE, and they have now grown to 13 Senators. I know they have good hearts, but the language that I want to read specifically says:

We will oppose a motion to proceed to any legislation that will serve as a vehicle for any additional gun restrictions.

You see, that's wrong in and of itself because we're talking about sensible gun legislation. I don't want to restrict anything. I would like to take that word out of the vocabulary of sensible gun legislation, because I will not restrict you from getting a gun if you pass a background check. I will not restrict you from having guns in your home, but I will hold you responsible for guns that are not locked up. I will not restrict you from hunting. I will not restrict you as a sportsperson. I will not restrict you for a legitimate concealed weapons permit, but I will restrict that dastardly person who went to the door of a Colorado corrections chief and shot him dead because he had a gun that he should not have because we don't enforce, which we should, but add to the idea of preventing straw purchases for that individual for getting a gun because someone purchased the gun for him. Mr. Speaker, that can be blocked.

And the idea of storage, my friends, I'm talking about gun locks. Maybe somebody has a gun lock manufacturing company in their district. Just think what would happen if folks have to lock up their guns, at least the ones that are classic, the AR-15s or the assault weapons that you already have. No one is coming to get those. But the guns that the young man had in New-

town, if only they had been locked up. Many people don't speak of it, but I think she deserves to be mentioned, his mother, who I know had to be a loving mother. I know she cared. She recognized the disturbed individual that he was, and maybe it might have gone another way. Maybe there should have been some other response to his situation, but all you can say is that mother was trying. But look at her, dead in her bed. Guns that were open to someone who was challenged.

So, Mr. Speaker, I can't imagine why we would ignore some of the numbers that I'm getting ready to share with you. But before I do that, let me raise again, if I can highlight what simple legislation that we're asking for: require universal background checks to keep guns out of dangerous hands. Let me be very clear: dangerous hands.

Ban military-style assault weapons.

Limit high-capacity magazines. That was the kind of magazine that was used tragically in Arizona. The individual could keep shooting and shooting, and the only way he was stopped was when he had to reload. Just imagine, 15 rounds, 20 rounds, no reloading. And the individual in Newtown, 155 rounds in 5 minutes before he stopped, taking the lives of so many.

Let me share with you these statistics that impact urban loss of life, rural loss of life, just the enormous tragedy. Take the incident of a rogue cop in California that wound up with weapons of war until he was finally caught, how many people he killed and how many more he could have killed. He had assault-type weapons.

If you speak to the law enforcement community, particularly right after Newtown, people became gunned up to the extent that when I spoke to my law enforcement, they indicated to me that they couldn't even find any guns, that people had bought guns so, so much.

Let me share with you some of these numbers about gun violence. First of all, the number of persons killed by guns since Newtown, 440 in the United States. I'm sure that number is down since the time these statistics were presented: 103 in Texas, 21 in Houston, 57 this month alone; 48,000 people killed annually in the United States. If I might remind you, over 1 million persons, Americans, have been killed by guns since John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr., were assassinated.

□ 2000

So let me remind you of that list. John F. Kennedy, assassinated by a gun in 1963; Bobby Kennedy, assassinated by a gun in 1968; Martin Luther King, assassinated by a gun in 1968; and Ronald Reagan, attempted assassination in his first term, and the critical and devastating injury to his press secretary, Mr. Brady, who has committed himself to gun safety, again, not to take your guns away.

I thank you, Mr. Brady. We have had an opportunity to work together. I thank you for what was done, and certainly your legacy of commitment. I thank that legacy.

Then, of course, let me thank Mr. Bloomberg, who is one that has shown his passion, so much so that he has received criticism. Thank you, Mayor Bloomberg. Thank you for standing up and saying that those who would stop gun legislation that is sensible, that they have to have their story told to those around the country and those in their district, for we're not asking for anything. We're just asking for fairness, just an up-or-down vote.

Let me share with you these numbers that I think are devastating. In 1 year, on average, almost 100,000 people in America are shot or killed with a gun. In 1 year, 31,000—and this is from the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence—31,593 people died from gun violence and 66,769 people survived gun injuries; 12,179 people murdered; 44,466 people shot in an attack; 18,223 people who killed themselves; 3,031 people who survived a suicide attempt with a gun.

Let me just stop for a moment. How tragic it is that someone would think that the only way out of their misery is by a gun. And it is well known by these statistics that if a gun is near you, if you are near a gun, if you are near a gun, then that leaves you more open to using that gun for violence against others or violence against yourself.

If you make it easy, rather than giving these people mental health services—which I think should go hand in hand with sensible gun legislation, and that's why I'm supporting a number of initiatives and cosponsored initiatives by CAROLYN MCCARTHY, because it is important to find a balance and to be able to work on issues that would balance the needs of our community and mental health services, but also the needs of our community in being protected from gun violence.

I want to restore the Centers for Disease Control's ability that was taken away a few Congresses ago by people who really don't understand sensible gun legislation. They stopped the Centers for Disease Control from doing the research and gathering the statistics on what violence does to America, what the medical cost is, what the psychological cost is. We want to reinstate that so that we can make important decisions.

When I was with these children, one of the things that comes up in the idea of teen violence or the loss of life is that teens pick up guns 87 percent when they are bullied or when they feel someone has hurt them, said words to them, because the gun is accessible. They bring the gun to school, they have a gun, or they engage in gang violence.

Don't separate gang violence and say it's just a bunch of gangbangers. It's gangbangers who are kids who have guns. And the young man that I brought to the State of the Union was a redeemed gangbanger, was shot at 15. He's here today, at 21, 22, about to get married, and shuns guns. But guns were accessible to him. He was already

shot at in a drive-by. And then after he's shot at in a drive-by, then there was a point when they got him.

Don't condemn the gangbangers. They've got guns that are trafficked, that are not enforced, that are straw purchased, and they come into places even that have strong gun laws. Why? Because we don't have sensible gun legislation.

And yes, I'm going to agree with my friends on the other side of the aisle, my Republican friends. Let's enforce the gun laws that we have. Who would run away from that? That's a sensible proposition.

Put a resolution on the floor of the House. Let's enforce the gun laws that we have. But join me in voting for universal gun background checks to close the gun show loopholes.

I mentioned this idea of suicide, and let me just finish on this enormous, terrible number. How many of us have read articles, have seen over the last couple of days tragedies that have occurred that have been publicized nationally?

All I can say is, you have a person who is disturbed, who has given up on life, who doesn't have a connection to faith, cannot find their faith leader, cannot get a hug from their family member, and all they think they can do is commit suicide, and they've got a gun.

I venture to say there's probably very limited numbers of those who take a knife and stab themselves. And yes, there are pills. But they have a gun because nobody was there to stop them, they weren't able to get mental health services and they've got a gun. 592 people were killed unintentionally, and 8,610 were shot unintentionally but survived.

There was one time in Houston where every time school was out, little ones, 2 years old, 3 years old, 4 years old, teenagers, accidentally shooting themselves, playing with a gun, taking the gun from under the mattress. Guns not stored.

That's why we passed that legislation in Texas to hold adults responsible for a child that gets a gun and injures themselves, kills somebody, or kills themselves. That's the least we can do for our children.

Over 1 million have been killed with guns in the United States since 1968 when Dr. Martin Luther King and Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated.

And then U.S. homicide rates are 6.9 times higher than rates in 22 other populous, high-income countries combined, despite similar nonlethal crime and violence rates. The firearm homicide rate in the United States is 19.5 times higher.

Mr. Speaker, we're not gaining anything by being gunned up. Among the 23 populous, high-income countries, 80 percent of all firearm deaths occurred in the United States.

On Thursday, not only should we get a vote, not only should there be no filibuster, but we should win that vote.

Win it in the name of somebody in your congressional district that died unfairly because someone who should not have had the gun had it. And I can venture to tell you that background checks will have a sizable impact.

Now, somebody said in 1994, when we passed the assault weapons ban, that it didn't do anything. Oh, there's a big debate. There's a tit for tat. But it is documented that the numbers of killings by assault weapons went down. Of course you can find other ways to kill people, but the utilization of assault weapons went down. That's a victory. That's a victory.

When I had this listening session with my little ones at the Konia Learning Academy, we had pictures of these weapons. Do you know that these little ones that were pre-K could point out that these were machine guns? Little ones. What are we doing to our kids?

They should call it a carrot because they've never seen one. With the violence on TV, we want to talk about that, and violence around them, and the gun talk and the killings on national TV, what do you expect?

Wouldn't it be nice if the headlines came out on Thursday, the Senate makes the first step, sensible gun legislation? Wouldn't that be good? That we came together and we did something that spoke to the anguish and pain?

I was here for 9/11, a memory that none of us will ever forget. And the one thing that I will compare to what is happening with these families is the 9/11 families. The Congress felt compelled, after its own mourning and the loss in the Pentagon and the loss in Pennsylvania, we just felt compelled that we had to do something, that the pain of these families scattered all over America, we had to answer them.

We obviously suffered. I remember standing on the steps singing God Bless America. But we put away any opposition to issues that had to be addressed. We put forward a Patriot Act at that time that was bipartisan. We worked in the Judiciary Committee. We handled the privacy issues, because we felt that this was a time for America to shine.

□ 2010

Well, I believe this is the time for America to shine. Gun violence impacts society in countless ways: medical costs, in the cost of the criminal justice system, and security precautions such as metal detectors and reductions in quality of life because of fear of gun violence. These impacts are estimated to cost U.S. citizens—Mr. Speaker, you've got to get up out of your chair on this one—estimated to cost—with a smile on my face, because you stand up and I need to sit down because it's just knocking me down—a hundred billion dollars. And that was 2000. And so it's soaring in medical costs, in fear, in security.

What are we going to do about the enormity of gun violence? Where there are more guns, there are more deaths. An estimated 41 percent of gun-related

homicides and 94 percent of gun-related suicides would not have occurred in the same circumstances had no guns been present. Higher household gun ownership correlates with higher rates of homicides, suicides, and unintentional shootings.

Mr. Speaker, we have within our power to be able to move forward on sensible gun legislation. I will be asking my colleagues to join me in a letter to send to my friends on the other side of this body to be able to listen to our voices as fellow legislators. And then, as well, Mr. Speaker, I hope the voices of America will ring. I know that my phone will ring for those who are saying, They're snatching our guns away. And I'm going to have a smile on my face because they have a right to express themselves.

But right now we need to put aside our individual political futures, because I believe that when you do the right thing, your future will be bright. And some child will say, Look at America. Look at the red, white, and blue. Look at the country that stands for values that we all are created equal. They didn't come to take away guns. They came to enforce good laws. They came to ensure that guns are not exploited, that loopholes are not walked through and become open caves, and that people are safer in their schools, their homes, their places of worship.

Just think about that. A pulpit. Ministers in my State have been shot dead by guns of disturbed members—because they have guns. And let's make, Mr. Speaker, the mental health system a parallel effort to be able to ensure the safety of us all.

Mr. Speaker, I am hopeful that this brief discussion—and if I may, how much time is there remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman has 27 minutes remaining.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Thank you very much.

I'm so glad the Speaker was responding on that hundred billion dollars. It probably got him out of his chair. I think we're allowed to say those kinds of things on the floor.

I will have a few more points that I do want to make. The number of a hundred billion dollars is certainly a lot, but I want to spend some time on this issue of gun trafficking and to speak about how gun trafficking can be something that we can find ways to come together.

Gun trafficking is dastardly because in jurisdictions like Washington, D.C., strong gun laws; New York, strong gun laws; the State of Connecticut, strong gun laws; and now Colorado, strong gun laws. And my heart goes out to them for the loss that they experienced with the shooting of their head of corrections in a terrible manner, being shot on his doorstep. Also, the district attorney and his wife that were so loved and the other district attorney that was so loved that was shot here in Texas. That comes out of criminals

with guns that they should not have. And so forcing a review of our gun laws to stop gun trafficking and to pass legislation that stands in the gap and that speaks to straw purchases—using someone else—and holding people very responsible for doing that is a smart way to go.

The Mayors Against Illegal Guns have a very important point, and that is, when you pass the universal background check as a systematic way to stop felons, domestic abusers, and the seriously mentally ill, that's the answer to people that say it doesn't make a difference. Criminals and other prohibited purchasers can avoid background checks by buying firearms from unlicensed private sellers. That's the back of the trunk. That's the gun shows. Often at gun shows are anonymous online transactions.

If my recollection is correct, the shooter at Aurora got his guns online. How tragic. And in the course of those shootings, we know that little ones lost their lives in that theater. What a terrible thing to come out for a joyous occasion, an exciting night, fiction but fun, and you lose your life and you never get home.

I heard something today that I thought was important. Parents who sent their children to school that morning in Newtown were sending their children to school—it was December 14—with the expectation for celebrating holidays like Hanukkah and Christmas. They were looking forward to hugs and toys. They were looking forward to family dinners. They were looking forward to picking those children up at the end of the day. Mr. Speaker, they did not get a chance to do that.

And so when you have background checks, certainly in the instance of Newtown, a different set of circumstances, both dealing with mental illness and the access to guns. But I tell you what it will do with background checks. It will lessen the horror of those involved in criminal activities.

The private sale loophole undermines the background check system by allowing millions of buyers to avoid background checks simply by going to private sellers. We've got to fix that. And we've got to hold the data. We've got to make sure that our law enforcement can check a national data system so that those who would perpetrate violence cannot go from State to State.

I know that I wanted to pass similar legislation on DNA data for child predators so that a person cannot go from State to State. Now we have the technology and we have the ability to protect rights. But if you are involved in criminal activity and you're in the database on guns, your rights are lessened because we have to save lives.

The Internet has created a vast marketplace for guns, where millions of buyers and sellers can easily identify one another and conduct firearms transactions with no supervision whatsoever. Nearly 12 years ago, the U.S.

Department of Justice estimated that there were 80 online auction sites and approximately 4,000 other sites of gun sales. No control whatsoever. The private sellers are literally involved in—maybe not to their own choosing—those guns getting out into the arena and being utilized by others to do harm.

So this is a time when we don't need a filibuster. What we need is a debate on the pros and cons of sensible gun legislation and, finally, a vote that would move us to respond to the pain of so many Americans.

Why shouldn't this be a Democratic and Republican effort? Once the Senate votes on something that has substance to it, why shouldn't our Speaker, Mr. BOEHNER, also put it on the floor and not block it? The reason is because there was regular order on the Senate side. It went through committee.

But in the instance of Republicans, listen to a 2010 survey by Republican pollster Frank Luntz, who found that 82 percent of U.S. gun owners, including 74 percent of NRA members, support criminal background checks for all gun sales. What more do we want? What are we saying here? That we can't come together on a nonwatered-down gun background check?

Let me speak to why I think that's so important. We have officers around here. This is like a little city. We have our Capitol Police. They wear the uniform. They're here to protect. Law enforcement officers all over America—school law enforcement officers, county and city, villages, departments of public safety, highway patrol, drug enforcement, ATF, FBI, men and women in the United States military—are here to protect. My friends from the Texas Air National Guard, my friends from the National Guard, they're here to protect.

□ 2020

What happens when they lose their lives through some untoward violence that's not on a battlefield somewhere, but right here in their own hometown? What happens when an officer has fallen because someone who shouldn't have a gun illegally has a gun, and we've done nothing about it?

Close the gun show loopholes, stop the gun trafficking, and, most of all, get us universal access to gun checks and background checks. Everybody should be required.

I know that we can't see these clearly, but there is a whole load of guns, and it says handguns offered by a private seller in Tennessee, handguns licensed by a licensed dealer—not checking anybody, though. You got the money, you can just show up. I remember walking into a gun show and seeing children walking around unaccompanied. I believe they should not be able to walk around at a gun show unaccompanied. Long guns being sold by a private seller in Columbus, Ohio. This is what's happening all over America. Probably right, as I'm standing on the floor of the House, that is

what's happening. That's why I support Mayor Bloomberg and his commitment to this whole idea of sensible gun legislation. There are currently 18 million assault weapons in circulation, and I don't think most of them are in the hands of the United States military.

I am just going to add these points and come to a close, Mr. Speaker, because this is what pushes the wrong direction; this parts us away from each other. We can't be friends. We can't talk about sensible legislation. And I hate to say it, I don't know how much carnage we have to see. I don't know how much we have to see, how many sirens we have to hear for those of us who live in urban areas, police cars running after ambulances because there's been someone that's been shot.

What I would say to you is listen to the voice of a victim that I met just a couple of days ago. I just want to put this myth out. She was a teacher coming home late at night and somebody came up and said, get out of the car. She didn't know what to do. She didn't get out of the car. She bent down, and that person shot her in the legs. I asked the question, if she had a gun, does she think that she would be able to do better. She said, no, I was too scared; I wouldn't know what to do.

My friends, don't fool yourself that having a gun is going to make it better for you. We've got to lessen criminals having guns; we've got to have background checks; we've got to close the gun show loopholes and people selling guns out of the back of their trunks on a highway somewhere outside of a gun show.

More guns don't lead to more murders. This is myth number one. A survey by researchers at the Harvard University School of Public Health found strong statistical support for the idea that even if you control for poverty levels, more people die from gun homicides in areas of higher rates of gun ownership. You've got a gun, you may be in jeopardy.

The Second Amendment prohibits strict gun control. We all know that that is not supported by the Supreme Court and that we're not talking about taking guns away. We're talking about regulating guns. As many people have said, we regulate insurance. We ask you to have a registration and a driver's license for a car—that can be a deadly weapon—and we have you register it. And we have you have, if you will, a license.

State-level gun controls haven't worked. Scholars Richard Florida and Charlotta Mellander recently studied State-to-State variations in gun homicides. They found that firearm deaths are significantly lower in States with stricter gun control legislation.

Myth number four: we only need better enforcement of the law; we don't need new laws. We passed several laws. Yes, we need enforcement; but it is well known that you need to keep guns out of the hands of those who would do harm, and you need to have universal

background checks in order to stop the criminals from getting guns, and you need to work on the mental health services so that those individuals cannot have guns. In some States they have that. We're not blanketing everyone; but in certain instances we need to be able to protect those individuals, protect their families from the crazed person, the violent abuser, the domestic abuser who goes and violates a restraining order and has a gun—because they just bought the gun because there's no background check. And you can't check if they have a restraining order.

Sensible gun regulation is prohibitively unpopular. We've already heard of the large percentages from Republican pollster, Mr. Luntz, about the percentage of individuals—Republicans, all Americans, NRA members—who believe in universal background checks, not arming parents and arming, if you will, the teachers who are there to have a pencil and a pen and a chart and to talk about reading, writing, and arithmetic.

So I am humbled today to have the opportunity to speak to my colleagues, but I am humbled by the fact that we live in a democracy. There is something called a "filibuster"; it's a procedure that's used—not in this body—simply we've got a bunch of Members on the floor that talk, talk, talk, one after another. But we don't have the procedure; the Senate does. As I indicated, initially three of our friends, and now 13, I would ask them—and I would ask the minority leader—I would ask them not to engage.

I would ask the other body to work with us. I would ask the other body to hear our cry. I would ask the other body to think of those who as we speak are being shot by a gun in America by someone who shouldn't have it. I'm asking them to think of the little children from one end of America to the other who were shot with a gun.

For us Washingtonians—and I say that because I am in Washington a lot of the time here in the United States Congress—remember the sniper of a few years ago, the frightening atmosphere of a sniper, a young man and his father; guns they should not have had; killing innocent people along the highways and byways of this region. The sniper.

That's what my message is today, that we have no time—no time—for a filibuster. We may have time for prayers. We may have time for encouragement. We have time for common sense. We still have time for a vote that will pass. And we have time for the House to take up sensible gun legislation.

We still have time to save the lives of little babies. We still have time to save an innocent woman who may be subject to domestic violence. We still have time. We still have time to stop the gang-banger. We still have time to stop the criminal that may have come into your house or come into a bank or accost you on the street. We still have

time to keep the guns out of their hands. We still have time.

Who is going to answer the cry to stop the filibuster and stop the foolishness? I ask my colleagues: If it is not us, then who? If it is not now, then when? In the memory of John F. Kennedy, President of the United States of America; in the memory of his brother, Bobby Kennedy, former Attorney General of the United States of America; Martin Luther King, in his memory, a man of peace and nonviolence; and President Ronald Reagan, who lived, if it is not in the common sense of those leaders of our Nation and the needs of the children and families across America, then whose voices will we heed?

There is still time for commonsense legislation, and I might say that we should demand, stand up for a vote on this Thursday. I hope our voices—not mine, but our voices—are heard.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing this time to debate on the floor of the House, and I yield back the balance of my time.

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, March 22, 2013.

DEAR SENATE MAJORITY LEADER HARRY REID, We, the undersigned, intend to oppose any legislation that would infringe on the American people's constitutional right to bear arms, or on their ability to exercise this right without being subjected to government surveillance.

The Second Amendment to the Constitution protects citizens' right to self-defense. It speaks to history's lesson that government cannot be in all places at all times, and history's warning about the oppression of a government that tries.

We will oppose the motion to proceed to any legislation that will serve as a vehicle for any additional gun restrictions.

RAND PAUL, M.D.,
TED CRUZ,
MIKE LEE.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. CASTOR of Florida (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of a death in the family.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week.

Mr. CULBERSON (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of illness.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REFERRED

A concurrent resolution of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. Con. Res. 10. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for an event to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha; to the Committee on House Administration

A BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on March 22, 2013, she