

that the Federal Government meets its responsibilities for women. I've worked on a hotline. I've been in a shelter. I know what it means to provide those services. I know that when a woman calls and she's being abused and she's seeking help, that that phone call needs to be answered.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, we've passed the Violence Against Women Act and we're running the risk that because of these cuts in this sequester—because of these senseless cuts—that phone call from that woman in the middle of the night calling a shelter or a program or a hotline, that call won't be answered.

Who's going to take responsibility when that abuse results in the death of a woman or her children because we've not done the right thing in this Congress? That's what's at stake. And that is real and it is harm, Mr. Speaker, to this Nation's women. And so we passed the Violence Against Women Act, but you can be sure that what we gave with one hand, we took away with the other hand beginning on March 1 because of these devastating cuts to domestic violence shelters and programs and hotline services, to the law enforcement officials who need to be trained about issues of domestic violence so that they don't endanger themselves and so that they provide the kind of law enforcement assistance that's needed in every community across this country.

Mr. Speaker, you sit on that hotline and know that you can't pick up a call because the other phone is going unanswered. Because the other phone is going unanswered because the Congress hasn't done what we need to do to protect women and children and their families.

The Department of Justice estimates that the cuts to the Violence Against Women Act is going to mean that 35,927—and I want you to hear, Mr. Speaker, every single one of them—35,927 victims will be prevented from gaining access to shelter and to legal assistance and to services for themselves and for their children, every single one of them vulnerable because Republicans in this Congress, Mr. Speaker, have not done their job. The cuts are going to mean that domestic violence training is going to be eliminated for 34,000 police officers, prosecutors, judges, and victim advocates. This really is shameful, Mr. Speaker.

And for women who work and who own small businesses, the sequester is going to be a handicap as well. And we know that women work. Some of us work not because we want to. We work because we have to because we're partners in our families with our spouses, with our partners taking care of our families, taking care of our children, because we're women living on our own, because we're women as caregivers to other members of our family. That's why we work. We create businesses; and, thankfully, we've had the support of the Federal Government for women-owned small businesses, a really fast-growing sector.

But these contracts are in jeopardy, Mr. Speaker. In fact, contracts that have been won by women-owned businesses dropped 5.5 percent in fiscal year 2011; and the damage that they are facing now, the harm our vulnerable women-owned businesses are facing is even more devastating. The gender gap may reflect stiffer competition over a shrinking pool of contract revenue, but it may get worse for women as women face difficulty in winning a greater share of contracts in an era of these devastating spending cuts.

And that's according to Bloomberg. It's not made up by this Congresswoman from Maryland. It is what is happening in our economy, Mr. Speaker. Thousands of public sector jobs are going to be lost. That's on top of jobs that have already been lost, Mr. Speaker. And since women are 50 percent more likely than men to be employed in the public sector, just like education, these jobs are going to be cut and lost needlessly.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to think that my colleagues in this Congress have the ability to exercise common sense and rationality; but these cuts don't reflect common sense at all. In fact, they don't reflect much thought, in my view. When you say across the board, that would be like in your own family budget, when you know you have to tighten up the budget, rather than looking at where you're doing your spending and going with a scalpel to cut that wasteful spending—in my household, I would probably cut the coffee expenditures—but we're not doing that. We say we cut coffee just like we cut the mortgage. We cut coffee just like we cut the groceries. We cut coffee just like we cut buying school clothing.

But this is what is happening with the Federal budget. We're taking an ax or hammer to the entire budget. We're not looking at every single line and making strategic and thoughtful and important choices about what needs to stay and what needs to go. That's the danger here. And for women, the impact is really substantial.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to close now, but I wish I were closing and saying I'll see you tomorrow. But, unfortunately, we won't be seeing each other tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, because when you gavel out this evening, Mr. Speaker, what you will know is that we've said sequester is going to go into effect. So what? Sequester is going to go into effect and we'll just come back next week and name a couple more buildings. But we won't deal with the real issues that are facing America's families, that are facing America's women.

And as I said before, I'm not particularly fond of the term, Mr. Speaker, "war on women." But as a woman, when I know that there's a threat of not getting a cervical exam or a breast exam, when I know that as a woman there's a threat of not receiving family planning services, when I know as a woman that my children won't be able

to go to a Head Start program or that if I have a child with a disability that that child won't receive the kind of education that he needs to get his or her fullest potential, when I know as a caregiver that a senior woman won't get Meals on Wheels, when I know that the important research that could lead to a cure for Alzheimer's isn't going to happen, Mr. Speaker, it may not be a war on women, but it feels like as women we are on the front line and we are taking all of the heavy-duty fire coming in.

And so I would urge you, Mr. Speaker, and I would urge my Republican colleagues to do as my colleague from Texas said: get back to work. Come back to work and let's do the business of the American people. Let's take up a truly fair and balanced approach to our Nation's fiscal problems. Let's make certain that we preserve and protect a social safety net for so many of our vulnerable families.

□ 1350

Let's make certain that we make the investments we need to make in education, in research and development, in small business so that we really can grow our economy, so that we, Mr. Speaker, together can create growth, but create growth by making great investments.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will close by just saying to you that I want to work with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, but it does take two to tango. Unless we do that, women in this country are going to face the devastating impact of these budget cuts that go into effect on March 1.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

VIOLENT MEDIA ROLE IN MASS SHOOTINGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STOCKMAN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WOLF. Today, I rise as the father of five and the grandfather of 16—many of whom are of the age to play video games—to express my deep concerns about the lack of discussion on mental health issues and violent media and the role they play in mass shootings.

As we continue to seek ways to end mass violence, in addition to gun safety, we must address the impacts of mental illness and, of equal importance, violent video games, movies, and TV.

I have supported legislation that would keep guns from getting into the wrong hands. I voted for the Brady Bill in 1993, safety lock requirements, and provisions that help police conduct effective background checks. My father was a Philadelphia policeman.

As chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee that funds the Justice Department, I have increased funding for the national background check

system to keep firearms out of the hands of the mentally ill and violent criminals. In fact, my bill provided more than double the funding requested by both the President's and the Senate's budget plan.

In January, I wrote to ask Attorney General Holder to use existing funds to immediately improve the Nation's background check system. In addition, I asked the Obama administration to create a national center for campus public safety, which has strong support from lawmakers on both sides of the aisle and the Virginia Tech Family Outreach Foundation, a group of families and victims of the shooting at Virginia Tech. In fact, the idea for my bill to create the national center for campus public safety came from the Virginia Tech families and lead cosponsor, Congressman BOBBY SCOTT from the State of Virginia. I'm expecting a response from the Justice Department soon. The shooter in the Virginia Tech massacre lived in my congressional district, and a number of the victims were from my district. I have met with their families, and I understand they are hurting.

Dealing with mental illness has to be part of the solution. I have long advocated for measures that prevent health insurers from placing discriminatory restrictions on mental health and addiction treatments. I continue to remain hopeful that the nearly 20 million Americans who suffer from mental illness receive the treatment they need.

Mr. Speaker, though, I was disappointed that President Obama did not seize the opportunity to address, in depth, the role of mental health and media violence as factors of mass violence during his State of the Union address. To only focus on guns, on just one piece of a very large and complicated puzzle, is simply irresponsible.

The President said that the victims of mass shootings, including Congresswoman Gabby Giffords, the college students at Virginia Tech, the children at Sandy Hook, the high school students at Columbine, and the movie-goers in Aurora, all deserve a vote for gun control proposals. How can he, in good conscience, call for that but not acknowledge the fact that each one of these shooters in these events was mentally disturbed? How could he not acknowledge the role that violent media played in some of their lives?

The President is failing the American people and the families of the victims by remaining frustratingly silent on these crucial issues and ignoring the other central factors related to mass violence of this kind.

As I mentioned, in a number of tragic shootings, there has been a pattern of the shooters playing or even imitating violent video games.

Let's begin with Anders Breivik, the Norwegian who shot 69 people at a youth camp in 2011. Forbes Magazine reported that Anders used the video game "Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2" as a simulator to help him practice shooting people. Anders said:

I just bought "Modern Warfare 2," the game. It is probably the best military simulator out there, and it's one of the hottest games this year.

He goes on to say:

I see "Modern Warfare 2" more as a part of my training-simulation than anything else. You can more or less completely simulate actual operations.

And who can forget that day at Columbine High School when Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold murdered 13 classmates and wounded 23 others before turning the guns on themselves? The Simon Wiesenthal Center, which tracks Internet hate groups, found in its archives a copy of Harris' Web site with a version of the first-person shooter video game "Doom" that he had customized. In Harris' version, there are two shooters, each with extra weapons and unlimited ammunition, and the other people in the game cannot fight back.

For a class project, Harris and Klebold made a videotape that was similar to their customized version of "Doom." In the video, Harris and Klebold dress in trench coats, carry guns, and kill school athletes. They acted out their videotape performance in real life less than a year later.

An investigator at the Wiesenthal Center said Harris and Klebold were "playing out their game in God mode."

In another videotape, Harris referred to a sawed-off shotgun as "Arlene," a favorite character in the "Doom" video game. Harris said, "It's gonna be like (expletive) Doom."

And now we have a report this month from the Hartford Courant that says that Sandy Hook shooter Adam Lanza may have been imitating violent video games as well. The Courant reports:

During a search of the Lanza home after the deadly school shootings, police found thousands of dollars' worth of graphically violent video games.

The paper goes on to say:

And detectives working the scene of the massacre are exploring whether Adam Lanza might have been emulating the shooting range or a video game scenario as he moved from room to room at Sandy Hook, spewing bullets, law enforcement sources have told the Courant.

Then he goes on to say, Mr. Speaker:

Before he killed his mother and set off for Sandy Hook Elementary, Adam Lanza destroyed the hard drive on his computer, which probably kept some of the records of the games he played and who he played with. He also may have destroyed any chance to see if he had a manifesto or had written down anything indicating that he planned the shootings or why he chose the elementary school.

Let me repeat, Adam Lanza may have been emulating a video game shooter or scenario as he went room to room at Sandy Hook. What parent cannot see this problem?

This week, I had the opportunity to meet with a few elementary school principals from my congressional district. During the course of our discussion, the issue of media violence, particularly violent video games, came up.

One principal said that when children misbehave in school and he asks them why, they will frequently say that they saw it in a video game. Another principal with him said the problem with video games is that, when young children are playing violent ones where they shoot or kill other characters, there are no repercussions or punishment, and usually the characters will even come back to life. This gives children and adolescents whose brains are still developing no sense of reality. He also said that video games desensitize kids to violence.

How can we continue to ignore what common sense is telling us? Just take one look at the movie trailers and how violent they are. Some of the video games on the market today like "Call of Duty" and "Halo" all give points for killing another character. Players are rewarded for shooting people. The level of violence in "Grand Theft Auto" is astonishing.

□ 1400

Players drive around, shoot people, including police officers, pick up prostitutes, and then kill them. There is a racial element to it also.

Soon after the Newtown shooting, I asked the National Science Foundation to pull together experts from across the country to look at the impact of all three contributors to mass violence. These experts include Dr. Brad Bushman from Ohio State University, along with several other scholars from top-tier universities across the Nation, including Johns Hopkins; Georgetown; Columbia University; University of Pennsylvania; Penn State; Carnegie Mellon; and the University of California, Berkeley. And we will have the list at the end of this statement. Earlier this month, the NSF released a report compiled by these experts whose names, as I said, will appear at the end of the statement.

It draws on reliable evidence and a number of theories to explain youth violence that have emerged from decades of research, including research supported by the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the National Research Council, and other Federal agencies.

According to the report, violent video games increase aggressive thoughts, angry feelings, psychological arousal and aggressive behavior, and decrease helping behavior and feelings of empathy for others. The report compiled by these experts shows that rating systems have not kept up with the increasingly violent content of popular media, and there is no standard rating system in the U.S. across varying media platforms.

Dr. Bushman, who holds the Margaret Hall and Robert Randal Rinehart chair at Ohio State University and is widely respected in his field, offers a solution to this issue. There could be a universal rating system on all media, with universal symbols that are easy for parents to understand. The Pan European Game Information system, for

example, has five age-based ratings: 3-plus, 7-plus, 12-plus, 16-plus, and 18-plus; and six well-recognizable symbols for potentially objectionable material: violence, sex, drugs, discrimination, fear, and gambling.

The current rating system is confusing to parents. For example, there is R for movies, TV-MA for TV, and FV for fantasy violence in video games.

Another possible idea, which is something that I have long advocated for, is to put warning labels on violent video games. The report also quotes:

More research is also needed on what types of individuals are most strongly affected by violent video games. Many of the spree shooters have been described as "social outcasts." Are such individuals more likely to behave aggressively after playing a violent video game? Are such individuals more likely to play violent games alone?

A copy of the National Science Foundation report can be found on my Web site at www.wolf.house.gov. Let me say that again, because parents might want to look at this, and hopefully the Members of the body on both sides will look at it, and hopefully members of the administration will look at it. A copy will appear at www.wolf.house.gov. And these are the views of these experts.

I am not naive enough to think that video game violence is the only issue here. We need to have an honest discussion about media violence, TV, movies, and video games. We need to have an honest discussion about mental health. And we need to have an honest discussion about guns.

It is easy for the President to go after the NRA. He doesn't support the NRA, and the NRA doesn't support him. But will the President of the United States ever, ever ask the entertainment industry to get involved or will he continue to be silent?

While media violence is not the only factor of mass violence, it is one of the easiest factors to change and it needs to be addressed, in addition to looking at access to firearms and mental health.

Don't we owe it to all the victims who have been killed to look at everything?

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

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ADJOURNMENT

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, March 4, 2013, at noon for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

558. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Tomatoes Grown in Florida; Decreased Assessment Rate [Doc. No.: AMS-FV-12-0051; FV12-966-1 IR] received February 22, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

559. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the annual report on operations of the National Defense Stockpile (NDS) in accordance with section 11(a) of the Strategic and Critical Materials Stockpiling Act as amended (50 U.S.C. 98 et seq.) for FY 2012; to the Committee on Armed Services.

560. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule — Federal Housing Administration (FHA): Hospital Mortgage Insurance Program-Refinancing Hospital Loans [Docket No.: FR-5334-F-02] (RIN: 2502-A174) received February 20, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

561. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Dubai Aerospace Enterprise (DAE) Limited of Dubai, United Arab Emirates pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

562. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations, (Greenup, Illinois) [MB Docket No.: 12-225] (RM-11668) received February 20, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

563. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory

Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Addition of South Sudan to the Restricted Destinations List [NRC-2012-0278] (RIN: 3150-AJ21) received February 20, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

564. A letter from the Principle Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Regulations; Areas of the National Park System, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Bicycling [NPS-SLBE-12083] [PPMWSLBES0-PPMPSPD1Z.YM0000] (RIN: 1024-AE11) received February 15, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

565. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Annual Report to Congress on the Refugee Resettlement Program for the period October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009 as required by section 413(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, pursuant to 8 U.S.C. 1523(a); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia, Mr. JONES, and Mrs. LUMMIS):

H.R. 879. A bill to provide for a biennial budget process and a biennial appropriations process and to enhance oversight and the performance of the Federal Government; to the Committee on the Budget, and in addition to the Committees on Rules, and Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DEFAZIO (for himself, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. WELCH, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. SARBAKES, Mr. MICHAUD, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. CHU, Ms. DELAURO, and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 880. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose a tax on certain trading transactions; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MCGOVERN (for himself, Mr. BOUSTANY, and Mr. ISSA):

H.R. 881. A bill to limit the use of cluster munitions; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ (for himself and Ms. SPEIER):

H.R. 882. A bill to prohibit the awarding of a contract or grant in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold unless the prospective contractor or grantee certifies in writing to the agency awarding the contract or grant that the contractor or grantee has no seriously delinquent tax debts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ (for himself, Mr. LATTA, and Mr. LABRADOR):

H.R. 883. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to permit certain veterans who were discharged or released from the Armed Forces by reason of service-connected disability to transfer benefits under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.