

he used 6 years ago. I thank Senator KAINE for helping to lead the effort for a ban on high-capacity ammunition magazines such as the ones used at Virginia Tech and used at Newtown and used in so many other shootings across the country over the years. With his support, I plan to offer a high-capacity magazine ban, on behalf of Senator LAUTENBERG, in an amendment to the gun violence legislation currently before the Senate.

I am proud to be working with others, such as Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator SCHUMER, and my colleague Senator MURPHY, in that effort. I encourage my colleagues to work with me and Senator KAINE to pass commonsense legislation as we mark the tragedy at Virginia Tech and we remember the victims of Newtown.

I thank the families of the victims of these shootings from all across the country who have come to Washington over these past days, and indeed weeks, working so hard and so diligently, working through their grief and pain, doing something that is so difficult for them so others can be spared this pain and grief.

Many will face difficult votes, perhaps as early as tomorrow. We have approached the cusp of these vital and historic votes. Many of these votes will be difficult for my colleagues. But as difficult as they are for them—and for many whose difficulty I respect—let's remember how difficult it has been for those families of the victims to come here to look you in the eye as they have done and say: Let's now do something about gun violence. That is what I heard in the wake of Newtown, as early as the evening that horrific tragedy occurred. Let's do something about the guns.

We have the opportunity to do something about the guns. As Gabby Giffords said to the Judiciary Committee just weeks ago: Be bold. Be courageous. America is counting on you.

That is her urging to us. That is our obligation and our historic opportunity.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING BRITISH PRIME MINISTER BARONESS MARGARET THATCHER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the resolution that is at the desk honoring the life, legacy, and example of British Prime Minister Baroness Margaret Thatcher.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 98) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we have just agreed to a resolution honoring the late Margaret Thatcher before her funeral tomorrow. It is our intention for that resolution to be a statement equal to her legacy. Her work with Ronald Reagan reinvigorated the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Margaret Thatcher was one of the most influential and revolutionary figures of the 20th century, and failing to name her achievements would do her memory and legacy a great disservice. It would be unheard of to commemorate Churchill, for example, and ignore his heroic role in steering his countrymen through the Battle of Britain, nor would we think of honoring Lincoln without mentioning the Civil War. Doing the right thing when it is not easy or popular is what defines leadership, and it defined Margaret Thatcher. It is fitting that the Senate honored her legacy just a few moments ago.

Margaret Thatcher didn't just change a country or give people hope, she helped alter the course of history. It is true that she did not just go along to get along. Had she done so, I am sure we would have long since forgotten her.

Let's honor her for all she did. Let's acknowledge the enormity of what she accomplished. Let's mention her achievements by name, and the resolution does that. As I said, we owe Margaret Thatcher a tribute equal to her legacy.

SAFE COMMUNITIES, SAFE SCHOOLS ACT OF 2013—Continued

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I rise today as a mother, a grandmother, and a Senator—a Senator whose State has been touched far too many times by gun violence, including mass shootings. I also wish to reiterate my support for the people of Boston who are dealing with the aftermath of senseless, tragic, and cowardly violence.

I think I need to put into context why I have for so long been an advocate of gun safety measures. In January 1989, a gunman stepped onto the grounds of Cleveland Elementary School in Stockton, CA. He fired at least 106 bullets from an AK-47 rifle across the schoolyard. He killed 5 children, ages 6 to 9, and 1 teacher, and he injured 29 other students before fatally shooting himself. This horrific crime led California to enact an assault weapons ban and, of course, we know that assault weapons ban in California is still in place. I so appreciate Senator FEINSTEIN's leadership in trying to, once again, authorize at the Federal level an assault weapons ban.

Californians still remember this tragedy in Stockton, just as the Nation will always remember the victims of the horrific events of Friday, December 14, 2012, at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

I flash forward to from 1989 and the Stockton tragedy to a law office in San Francisco in 1993, where a crazed gunman—I remember his name, but I will not say it—with an assault weapon killed eight people and wounded six. One of those people was a brave lawyer who threw his body over the body of his wife, sacrificing his own life to save hers. That young man was one of my son's best friends, and I know personally how these horrific and senseless tragedies live on with the survivors—the parents, the spouses, the children, the families, and the friends. It changes their lives and it pierces their hearts forever.

I have told you a couple of stories about California. But let me say this: Let's look at what has happened across this Nation since Sandy Hook. In the 120 days since Sandy Hook, more than 2,200 Americans have been killed by gun violence. Hardly any place was spared.

We know there are many, many firearms in America. There are 300 million firearms in the United States. If you were to divide that up, that would be one gun per person, of course. There are many people who have many, many guns.

This is a 50-percent increase—the number of guns in circulation—since 1995, when there were, as I say, about half that number.

When I go home and I speak about this—and I write about it—I say: There are 31,000 reasons why we need to pass sensible gun laws because—31,000—that is the number of people who die every year in America from gun violence. That is 87 people every single day, on average.

You look at this: 31,000 people dying every year from gun violence. So how do you get a sense of what that is? I think back. One of the reasons I got into politics in the first place was the war in Vietnam and trying to end it, first as an activist and then, actually, as an elected leader in my country. I think about how many people died in the 10-year war of Vietnam and it was

a little bit more than 50,000 in that 10-year period and it turned our country upside down—upside down. I can tell you, I lived through it: generation against generation. It was a very tough time in this Nation. People lost faith in the country. It was tough.

Yet we have 31,000 people killed every year in America from gun violence, and it is something where we all kind of just say: OK, that is terrible, but we do not do anything about it. But we are about to do something about it that is very important. It may not be everything I would want to do, given my history on this issue, but I will say, if we can move forward with sensible background checks—and I thank Senators MANCHIN and TOOMEY so much, so much, for their work—and if we can do something about straw purchasers, and if we can do something about making our schools safer—which I am pleased to say I wrote the legislation that is in the underlying bill before us—if we can do a few of these things, it would be a big step forward.

Do I want to see more done? Yes. Do I want to see the ban on assault weapons reinstated? I do. But I do feel we are at a point in time where we may be able to get something done that matters.

I think we ought to look at mass shootings in the last 30 years. First of all, 40 percent of mass shootings have occurred since 2006. So if you go back 30 years, you see 40 percent took place since 2006.

According to the Washington Post, in 2012 alone, 175 people were killed or wounded from mass shootings. People who should not get these weapons are getting these weapons. People with severe mental illness are getting these weapons. We know that.

Today, we got to see in the Democratic Caucus lunch a heroine, someone who is unbelievable, Gabby Giffords, struggle with each step, with every word. Why? What did she do? She held a townhall meeting so she could bring government to her people in the most personal of ways. And someone who was very sick got access to weapons, and the rest we know.

In the name of those who were lost, Gabby Giffords and her husband Mark Kelly have been truth-tellers. These people—Mark and Gabby—are gun owners, proud gun owners. They are not coming from a different place. Yet they are standing for sensible gun laws. I am so grateful to them for dedicating their lives to this, and I am so grateful to the parents of the children and all the victims at Sandy Hook for putting a human face on these numbers.

Madam President, 175—what does that mean? If you saw the faces you would know what it means. And sometimes the wounds, as we see with Gabby, are so hard to deal with.

We can make it harder for people who are criminals, who have no right to have a gun, we can make it harder for them by making sure they have to undergo a background check.

Today, I learned from Mark Kelly that we, through the background checks that we already have—that is when people go to a regular retail store—we have stopped well over a million gun sales, well over. Yet we do not have that same system in place for gun shows or private sales.

So JOE MANCHIN and Senator TOOMEY have been working together, and they have crafted a way to move toward a sensible background check—yes, protecting family members who want to give a gun to the next, but they have preserved, the most important part of their bill, which is to simply make a uniform standard for a gun sale wherever you purchase your gun.

Some of the strongest proponents of this are people who run retail stores who go through the laborious situation—although it is pretty quick now—of doing a background check. Yet somebody can go across the street to a gun show and make a deal and never be asked, and they could be a criminal, they could be mentally unbalanced, they could be a terrorist, OK, and still get a gun.

I want to look at the issue of school shootings in America. The tragedy that took place at Sandy Hook is a tragedy that far too many of our Nation's communities have faced in recent years.

I have in the Chamber a chart that shows that since the year of Columbine, 262 students, teachers, and others have been killed or wounded in K-12 school shootings. People go to school. It is supposed to be a protected zone. Who thinks about this? Look how many people since Columbine. And we swore we would never allow that to happen again. It is happening. So we have to do more.

I tell you, this is just K-12. But if you look at America's colleges and universities, in my own State, at California's Oikos University, in 2012—it is in Oakland—a former student returned to the campus and killed seven people and injured three. We have these horrible violent incidents at colleges and universities.

School shootings are on the rise in America. I am telling you. I have the numbers to show it on this chart. Divided up by decades, we go back. From 1979 to 1988—this is the number of incidents at schools; not the people killed, but the number of school shootings—there were 27. This is just for K-12. This does not include the universities. So for K-12, from 1979 to 1988, 27 incidents; from 1989 to 1998, 55 incidents; from 1999 to 2008, 66 incidents.

This is a number we do not want to keep going up. In so many of these cases it could have been prevented. I am not saying every case, but certainly in some cases. If we were able to do something about the magazine capacity here, that would have a big impact on the numbers as well. So we are moving up, and that is not a good number.

The parents of the fallen children at Sandy Hook and Oikos in my home State have joined countless other par-

ents who have lost their children in violent assaults on our Nation's schools and colleges. They have joined with parents of Colorado's Columbine High School, California's Santana High School, Minnesota's Red Lake Senior High School, West Nickel Mines School in Pennsylvania, Virginia Tech, and so many others.

The shooting at Sandy Hook is another reminder that we have failed our children. I do not know how to put it another way. I am so sad about it. This topic is so heavy in my heart because I know we can do some things to change it. I believe we are on the brink of doing some things—not enough in my view but some things to change it.

I could tell you, Madam President—because the Presiding Officer was there today—we had quite a caucus today. Our colleagues who stood up, who have seen these tragedies in their States, were beyond eloquent. Our colleagues—who are trying to do something that, yes, may be politically difficult—are showing courage.

It is one of those moments when you say: I am blessed to be here, and I can do something about this. I think more and more of our colleagues are beginning to realize this, as they meet with the parents and they meet with colleagues and they sit down one-on-one.

We have to keep our children safe.

One of the pieces of legislation that is less controversial that is included in the base bill before us is the School and Campus Safety Enhancements Act that I have authored with Senator COLLINS, Senator WARNER, and Senator KIRK to help secure our Nation's schools.

For years, we had the very successful Secure Our Schools program. Basically, we build from that program and we make some changes to it that I think will make it better.

I want to explain the way it would work. What we say is, if a local entity—and this could be a police department; it could be school districts—if they feel they want to secure their schools, they will have to put some funds on the line, about 50 percent of the funding. But we would supplement that funding by 50 percent. We would help to pay for security-related capital improvements at the school plant.

A lot of our schools are old. When they were built, no one thought 5 seconds about some of these issues. Classroom locks, lighting, fencing, reinforced doors, security assessments, training for students and teachers and administrators, coordination with local law enforcement—there are so many things we can do. But we know our school districts and our local police departments are stretched right now.

We want to help them pay for some of these things—perimeter fencing, for example, and cameras. You could see someone coming onto the campus and take action to either alert your school officers who may be there or your local police department to prepare.

We have had a similar program in place since 2002, but the authorization

expired in 2009. In the past, 5,500 schools have received these funds, but the funds were not even sufficient. Fifty-four percent of the entities that applied for these grants were turned away. So we know this is a program the schools like because they took advantage of it. But we ran out of funds. We want to make sure we reauthorize this. In the past, programs such as the one in the bill passed with a 307-to-1 vote in the House and the Senate 95 to 0.

What we do is reauthorize the Safety in Schools Program for 10 years. We increase the authorization to \$40 million a year. We allow more flexibility. We do not say what they have to use it for. By the way, they do not use it for more cops in schools. That is another issue. It is not in this particular piece. It is something I care about and want to work on. It is not in this bill.

What is in this bill is making capital improvements to the facilities. It is not a one-size-fits-all. Some people do not need a fence or a camera or a door. We leave it up to the schools. Flexibility. We also do something Senator WARNER truly wanted. We create a Department of Justice and Department of Education task force to develop advisory school safety guidelines. We include language from Senator GRASSLEY to ensure adequate grant accountability. Senator WARNER and Senator KIRK also wanted to create a National Center for Campus Public Safety, which will serve as a clearinghouse for education, training, and best practices. Here is the thing. Some of our campuses know how to do this and others do not. So we want to make sure there is a central place one can find out the best practices.

I was going to go through, in closing, some of the ways these funds were actually used on the ground before this program expired. In Sulphur Springs, TX, which is a school district made up of nine schools, they wanted to do a safety assessment. They were able to make that safety assessment so they knew what they had to do to make their schools safer.

When they did their study, they found they needed to replace older security equipment and technology, expand restricted access keyway systems, and placed classroom security levers on all doors, which allowed teachers to lock doors from the inside. Simple point. You may say: Oh, that is not expensive. Why do you need to spend money? It sure adds up when you truly want to secure a door and want to do it right. So if you have many doors, we can help them do these things. If they wanted to make sure they hardened their facility, that is what the money is for.

There is a township in New Jersey that used funds to secure perimeter and playground areas by installing security gates at elementary and intermediate schools to create a safer learning environment. The new exterior fences defined school boundaries, mak-

ing the school grounds safer for students. Interior gates were placed at schools, providing the ability to lock off specific areas of the schools during emergencies.

Again, it is common sense. But when these schools were built, no one thought about this. Everything was open. It is similar to the Capitol when I came here. I am dating myself. A long time ago, you could go anywhere—no metal detectors, no fences, walk up the steps to the Capitol. We have lost a lot of that freedom. Our world is now to balance our freedom in the greatest country in the world with security. That is what we are trying to do with this.

In Minnesota, we saw grants used to conduct security assessments and institute safety training classes. In Palmer High School in Colorado, they implemented a new surveillance, lockdown, and evacuation procedure. They doubled the number of doors that are operated by security cards, so it reduced the number of outside individuals able to gain building entry. It makes it harder for people to get in. It might be annoying for some parents, but I think right now people realize this is what is needed. It is this balance.

In Florida, in Leon County, which is responsible for 50 schools, they had no central point of contact to coordinate communication across all school facilities. So they set up, with the funds from this program, a 24-hour emergency operations center which has significantly reduced emergency response time. There is one point of contact.

So what we have done in this bill is not a one-size-fits-all. We do not say in here: You have to do 10 things. We say: You come up with the plan. You send it to the Department of Justice. They look at the plan. They work with you to make it good. If they think it is worthwhile, we will fund it 50 percent.

My final point. I want to show who supports school safety provisions in the bill: Fraternal Order of Police, Security Industry Association, National Sheriff's Association, National Association of School Resource Officers, International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators.

I ask unanimous consent to have the list printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SECURITY INDUSTRY GROUPS

Fraternal Order of Police, National Sheriffs Association, National Association of School Resource Officers, International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, International Union of Police Associations, Security Industry Association, Texas State University's Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training Center (ALERRT).

PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND ADMINISTRATORS

National Parent Teacher Association, National School Board Association, National Education Association, American Association of School Administrators, National As-

sociation of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Rural Education Advocacy Coalition, Association of Educational Service Agencies, National Rural Education Association, Virginia Tech Victims Family Outreach Foundation, American Association of University Women.

Mrs. BOXER. I have left out PTAs, National School Board Association, the NEA, and so on. We have a long list.

Look, we will never be able to stand here and say we have solved every problem. We cannot. But we have to be able to say, we have to be able to know we did everything we could to reduce these tragedies. As I stand here I think, what will people say who do not vote for this and the next tragedy comes? What will they say? How can they look at their kids and their grandkids and say: I did not think it was right.

We need to do commonsense things around here, not put ideology ahead of practicality. The slaughter of innocents must stop. I am going to support the Toomey-Manchin amendment. It closes the gun show and Internet loophole. It is not the perfect background check I would write. We know that. But it is good. It is solid. It moves forward. I am going to support Senator LEAHY—his amendment which will outlaw the abusive practice of straw purchasing and gun trafficking. I will support Senator FEINSTEIN's important amendment on assault weapons, to ban those weapons. She has worked so hard to make it fair and just and right. It would also take high-capacity clips off our streets.

Senator FEINSTEIN will have much more to say on assault weapons. I will withhold my remarks on that until that debate. Clearly, we have work to do. Clearly, we all carry from our State and in our hearts stories of this violence. Now we have a moment in time where we can actually act. I truly appreciate this opportunity.

ORDER FOR RECESS

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the time until 6 p.m. be for debate only; that at 6 p.m. the Senate recess subject to the call of the chair; that when the Senate reconvenes the majority leader be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO MARGARET THATCHER

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I rise to honor the memory of Margaret

Thatcher. When she passed, the United States lost a great ally and the world lost one of the greatest champions of liberty who has ever lived. I commend our colleague Senator MITCH MCCONNELL for today offering a resolution that was approved by unanimous consent praising Thatcher's leadership. I commend all 100 Senators for consenting to and adopting that resolution.

I would like to spend a brief amount of time talking about the incredible import of Margaret Thatcher's legacy. Margaret Thatcher became familiar to so many of us in the United States after she started winning elections. We think of her as the scourge of the Socialist policies that threatened to ruin Britain, as the resolute victor of the Falklands War, and, of course, as the ideological soulmate of President Ronald Reagan, who battled the Soviets.

I have always been fond of her admonition that conservatives need to first "win the argument," then we will win the vote; in other words, that we need to effectively communicate our ideas in order to prevail in elections, and elections will naturally follow as the consequence of doing so.

I would like to talk about her days winning the argument, in particular, her seminal speech on January 19, 1976, entitled "Britain Awake." At the time, it seemed to many that the conservative movement had failed. As James Callaghan succeeded Harold Wilson as the Labor Prime Minister, the Tories were in apparent disarray.

Thatcher had wrested control of the party from former Prime Minister Edward Heath. Few gave her a chance at broader electoral success. Indeed, she said at the time she did not anticipate a female Prime Minister in her lifetime. I would be remiss if I did not note Margaret Thatcher was Britain's first and, to date, only female Prime Minister.

Thatcher was a trailblazer, and her ascension wasn't simply a matter of breaking the glass ceiling as much as it was refusing to acknowledge its existence.

Thatcher made the argument in that 1976 speech. She began by observing:

The first duty of any Government is to safeguard its people against external aggression. To guarantee the survival of our way of life.

She then addressed the Soviet menace, noting: "They put guns before butter, while we put just about everything before guns." She bluntly and truthfully said the Soviets were "a failure in human and economic terms."

She went on to tell the nation: "The advance of Communist power threatens our whole way of life."

However, she stated:

That advance is not irreversible, providing that we take the necessary measures now. But the longer that we go on running down our means of survival, the harder it will be to catch up.

These comments strikingly were echoed not long after by President

Ronald Reagan, when he spoke so clearly and addressed the Soviet Union as an evil empire. He went on to observe that Marxism would end up discarded on the ash heap of history.

At the time Margaret Thatcher's comments and Ronald Reagan's comments were derided by much of the intelligentsia, the media, the academy, and by many observers who knew far better than these seemingly naive souls. They were derided when President Reagan was asked: What is your philosophy of the Cold War? He responded: It is very simple. "We win, they lose." This was seen as a simple Manichean view of the world and not realistic. Yet I would suggest their vision ushered in a far safer day for humanity.

Margaret Thatcher laid out the stark decision before the nation.

There are moments in our history when we have to make a fundamental choice. This is one such moment—a moment where our choice will determine the life or death of our kind of society—and the future of our children. Let's ensure that our children will have cause to rejoice that we did not forsake their freedom.

Margaret Thatcher won the argument. She took office during Britain's "winter of discontent" when Britain had double-digit inflation, a top income tax rate of 83 percent, and rising unemployment. She revolutionized the economy with free market ideas in her 10 years of service which ushered in a new decade of prosperity.

When she took office, the top income tax rate was 83 percent. It was cut to 60 percent and then to 40 percent. The middle tax rate was cut to 30 percent, and the lowest tax rate was eliminated altogether.

When she took office, the top corporate tax rate was 53 percent. She cut it to 35 percent. The top capital gains tax rate was a stifling 75 percent. Thatcher cut it to 30 percent. As a result of progrowth policies, unemployment fell from a high of 12 percent early in her tenure to 7.5 percent near the end. Public spending as a percentage of GDP fell from 45.1 percent of GDP to 39.4 percent of GDP. Inflation fell from almost 22 percent in 1979 to a low rate of 2.4 percent in 1986.

Perhaps the most telling tribute to Margaret Thatcher's leadership is 3 days after she gave her "Britain Awake" speech, the heroic fearless speech, she was dubbed "The Iron Lady" in the Communist news outlet, the Red Star.

When your military enemies are describing you as formidable as "The Iron Lady," it indicates you are winning the argument, that your message is being heard.

Margaret Thatcher wasn't great just because she gave a good speech. She became great because she explained what was at stake. She articulated the meaning of economic freedom, freedom which allowed someone such as she, a shopkeeper's daughter, to rise to prosperity and leadership.

She articulated the value of national pride and convinced the public of the virtue of standing for freedom and against tyranny and oppression.

As Baroness Margaret Thatcher lays down the tortured freedom she spoke of in 1976, we can pay no higher tribute to her than to heed her arguments which are as valid today as they were then.

It is unfortunate news accounts have indicated the U.S. Government will not be sending a member of the current administration to her funeral tomorrow. I hope those news accounts are mistaken.

I hope President Obama, Vice President BIDEN or senior Members of the Cabinet make the decision to travel to Britain and to honor the incredible legacy of Baroness Margaret Thatcher. It was truly a providential blessing Margaret Thatcher served alongside President Ronald Reagan and Pope John Paul II. Together, the three of them did something which previously had been unimaginable.

So many had opined the Cold War was unwinnable. We had to accept detente. We had to accept a condition in which the United States would constantly be in military conflict with the Soviet Union and our children would constantly be in fear of potential catastrophic nuclear war.

Yet when Reagan, Thatcher, and Pope John Paul all ascended to leadership together, they had the vision to do something very few imagined was possible, to win the Cold War without firing a shot.

Had that been suggested in the 1970s, this would have been diminished as crazy talk. Yet this is precisely what they did. Indeed, I would suggest in modern times there are few, if any, more deserving of the Nobel Peace Prize than those three leaders whose vision, courage, and collective leadership transformed the global debate and ended the Cold War which jeopardized the very fate of humanity. There have been no other leaders in modern time more deserving of recognition of a prize such as the Nobel Peace Prize than the three leaders who avoided war without firing a shot.

Today, many of us are the children of the generation which fought and won the Cold War. We can gratefully rejoice that Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan and Pope John Paul II did not forsake our freedom.

As the children of those great leaders, it is now incumbent upon us, the next generation, to ensure freedom remains every bit as vital and real, not just for this generation but for our children and their children's children.

Baroness Margaret Thatcher was an extraordinary leader and courageous leader, a woman of vision, a woman of principle, and a hero—a hero to the United States and to the world. All of us, in my judgment, are in her debt.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, let me begin by offering my deepest condolences on behalf of all the people of Maryland for the 20 students and 6 adults who lost their lives at the hands of a single shooter at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT, on December 14, 2012. Some of the victims put themselves in harm's way in order to save the lives of children, true heroes.

We have an obligation to the Sandy Hook families to seize this moment, set our political fears aside, and act responsibly. America has more than 3,300 victims of gun violence nationwide since the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, CT. Each heart-breaking event is shocking in its own right but also tears us apart, wondering what could we have done to prevent this from happening.

I am proud the Senate has come together to engage in a real debate on what steps should be taken to minimize the risk of future shootings.

The safety of our children and communities should never be put at risk by partisan gridlock. I agree with President Obama. We cannot wait for another tragedy to enact commonsense, reasonable gun safety measures, especially on weapons of war which have no legitimate civilian use.

I am sympathetic to the interests of legitimate hunters and collectors, but we should reinstate the Federal ban on assault weapons. We should also prohibit high-capacity ammunition clips which hold more than 10 rounds at a time. We must take steps together to strengthen our mental health system, make our schools safer, crack down on gun traffickers, straw purchasers, and reduce the glorification of violence in our culture.

The elimination of assault weapons in our community would have minimal or no impact on legitimate hunters or legitimate gun owners, but it could save lives. Listen to what law enforcement says. They don't think it is a fair fight when they have to go up against a criminal who has an assault weapon. The criminal has the advantage. We should support law enforcement and get assault weapons off the street.

Listen to the accounts of the massacres we have seen when the perpetrators had these clips with so many rounds of ammunition. At Sandy Hook, they went into a classroom and used the number of bullets which were in that round to massacre children. This was tragic. The consequences could have been different if these large ammunition clips were not available. It could save lives.

Dealing with mental health issues, dealing with school safety issues, dealing with straw purchase purchases, all

that could keep these weapons out of the hands of those who should not have these weapons, the types of weapons which caused these massive killings.

I support universal background checks for all firearms buyers as proposed by Senator SCHUMER. I congratulate my colleagues, Senators MANCHIN and TOOMEY, for coming to a bipartisan consensus on strengthening the current background check system.

The background check proposals for the first time would require background checks for all gun sales in commercial settings, including at gun shows, Internet, and in classified ads. I believe this legislation will keep guns out of the hands of convicted felons, domestic abusers, and seriously mentally ill who have no business buying a gun. Studies have shown nearly half of all current gun sales are made by private sellers who are exempt from conducting background checks.

It makes no sense that felons, fugitives, and others who are legally prohibited from having a gun can so easily use a loophole to buy a gun. Once again, the use of a universal background check will have no impact on the legitimate needs of people who are entitled to have weapons, but it could and would help us keep our communities safe by keeping weapons out of the hands of our criminals who have serious mental illness, domestic abusers. We need to stop their ability to easily obtain weapons as they do today.

This legislation strengthens the National Instant Criminal Background Check System by incentivizing States to improve their reporting system and removing certain barriers to the submission of critical mental health records.

This legislation also makes it easier for Active-Duty military personnel to buy guns in States where they live and are stationed for duty. It clarifies people traveling across State lines may carry guns which are locked and unloaded.

It is heartbreaking to listen to stories of innocent lives cut cruelly short. The pain and grief of families and friends of these students and teachers is unimaginable. We know that teachers and the aides put their lives on the line to try to save children, and that first responders coming to the scene had the unbelievable task of not knowing what they would find. We send our prayers to all, but we have to do more than just say words. We are going to be judged by our deeds, and we have a chance to take action that will be helpful.

This is a tragedy beyond words. I think President Obama said it best when he said that our hearts are broken. Congress needs to come together and take action to protect the safety of our children. We must do better. There have been too many episodes in which children's lives and others have been lost. We must figure out a way to prevent these types of tragedies.

I am pleased the State of Maryland has recently taken action in the gen-

eral assembly session that concluded last week. Governor O'Malley recommended legislation adopted by the Maryland General Assembly that bans assault weapons, limits the capacity of magazine clips from 20 to 10, and increases restrictions on the possession of firearms and ammunition by convicted criminals and those with mental health disqualifications.

The President was correct to take executive action to strengthen and enhance our gun safety laws, but now it is time for Congress to act. The victims of gun violence deserve to have Congress take an up-or-down vote on these issues.

To my colleagues who have reservations about this legislation, let me cite the Heller decision. In June 2008 the Supreme Court decided the District of Columbia v. Heller. The Court held that the Second Amendment protects individuals rather than a collective right to possess a firearm. The Court also held the Second Amendment right is not unlimited, and it is not a right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner and for any purpose. Justice Scalia wrote for the Court in that case, and I am going to quote Justice Scalia:

... nothing in our opinion should be taken to cast doubt on the longstanding prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the mentally ill, or laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings, or laws imposing conditions and qualifications on the commercial sale of arms.

Justice Scalia recognized Congress's right, and I would say obligation, to make sure those who are not qualified to own a firearm do not get that firearm. We have an obligation to make sure that background checks are effective so as to keep out of the hands of criminals and those who have serious mental health issues the opportunity to easily obtain a firearm, as they can in many States today.

The legislation pending before the Senate is in full consistency with the Heller decision and the language of Justice Scalia's opinion for the Court. I know we can protect children while still protecting the constitutional rights of legitimate hunters and existing gun owners. We should take that action on behalf of the safety of our communities. It is our obligation to act.

With that, Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, we are gathered in the Senate in the somber shadow of the events in Boston at the marathon, and I guess I will start by conveying my sympathies to the individuals and their families who were killed or hurt in that terrible act. I share the determination of so many people that our law enforcement folks will indeed get to the bottom of this; that they will get the resources they need, and we will have answers

and justice for the families who are affected.

CLIMATE CHANGE

I rise today, though, on the subject I come to the floor every week we are in session to discuss, which is the need for this body to wake up to the reality of the clear scientific consensus that human activity is driving serious changes in our climate and oceans.

For more than two decades the fossil fuel companies and certain rightwing extremists have cooked up a well-organized campaign to call into question the scientific evidence of climate change. The paid-for deniers then manufacture an interesting product—they manufacture uncertainty—so the polluters who are doing the paying can also keep polluting because a sufficient atmosphere of uncertainty has been created to inhibit progress.

This is not a new strategy. We have seen this played before. Industries eager to drown out scientific evidence to maximize profit is not a new story. They questioned the merits of requiring seatbelts in automobiles, they questioned the toxic effects of lead exposure, and they questioned whether tobacco was really bad for people. Well, they were wrong then and they are wrong now about climate.

Interestingly, they do not actually care. It is not their purpose to be accurate; they just want to create doubt, to sow enough of a question to stop progress. So these sophisticated campaigns are launched to give the public the false impression there actually is a real scientific debate over climate change. In the Senate, regrettably, some of my colleagues even promote this view.

But let's be practical. Which is the more likely case: Are a handful of non-profit environmental groups using their limited funding to pay off literally hundreds and hundreds of climate scientists in an internationally coordinated hoax to falsify complicated climate research? Really? Or is it more likely that fossil fuel corporations are using a slice of their immense profits to float front groups to protect their immense profits? Well, I think the answer to that question is obvious just from the logic, but we don't have to apply logic. We can follow the money and look at evidence.

According to an analysis by the Checks and Balances Project, a self-described pro-clean-energy government and industry watchdog group, from 2006 to 2010, four sources of fossil fuel money—just four of them—contributed more than \$16 million to a group of conservative think tanks that go about the business of being publicly critical of climate science and of clean energy. Those four sources are the Charles G. Koch Foundation, the Claude R. Lambe Charitable Foundation, the Earhart Foundation, and oil giant ExxonMobil.

On the receiving end is a lengthy roster of well-known and often-cited right-ward leaning outfits. We will just talk about the top 10 in this set of re-

marks. They are the American Enterprise Institute, the Cato Institute, the Competitive Enterprise Institute, the Heartland Institute, the Heritage Foundation, the Hudson Institute, the Institute for Energy Research, the George C. Marshall Institute, the Manhattan Institute, and the Mercatus Center.

Who is giving? Well, Charles Koch is the chairman and CEO of Koch Industries and the sixth richest person on the planet. Koch Industries is the second largest privately held company in the United States of America. Koch companies include the Koch Pipeline Company and Flint Hills Resources, which operates refineries with a combined crude oil processing capacity of more than 292 million barrels per year. That much oil accounts for 126 million metric tons of carbon pollution each year—as much as 35 coal-fired powerplants produce or 26 million cars.

So to put it mildly, this fellow has some skin in the game. Between 2006 and 2010, the Charles G. Koch Foundation gave almost \$8 million to think tanks and institutes, including \$7.6 million to the Mercatus Center, and \$100,000 to the American Enterprise Institute.

Charles Koch, along with his brother David, also established the Claude R. Lambe Charitable Foundation—those two have the same source—and they direct that foundation's giving as well. This foundation provided almost \$5 million to climate-denying think tanks and institutes, including over \$1 million to the Cato Institute and more than \$2 million to the Heritage Foundation.

The Earhart Foundation was started by Henry Boyd Earhart, using funds from his oil business, White Star Refining Company—now a part of, you guessed it, ExxonMobil. The Earhart Foundation has donated almost \$1.5 million to climate denier groups, \$370,000 to the American Enterprise Institute, \$330,000 to the Cato Institute, and another \$195,000 to the George C. Marshall Institute.

That leaves us, of course, ExxonMobil itself, which is the second largest corporation in the world and often the most profitable. Ranked No. 1 among Fortune 500 companies, its total revenues reached nearly \$½ trillion in 2012, and their profits were nearly \$45 billion. ExxonMobil produces over 6 million barrels of oil per day at its 36 refineries in 20 countries. So it is the world's largest oil producer. From 2006 to 2010, the petroleum giant gave institutes more than \$2.3 million: \$1.2 million to the American Enterprise Institute, \$220,000 to the Heritage Foundation, \$160,000 to the Institute for Energy Research, and \$115,000 for the Heartland Institute.

So what did the Charles G. Koch Foundation and the Claude R. Lambe Charitable Foundation and the Earhart Foundation and ExxonMobil get for all of that so-called charitable giving? Well, the Checks and Balances Project

found from 2007 to 2011 the 10 organizations I cited—the top 10—were quoted or cited or had articles published over 1,000 times—over 1,000 times—in 60 mainstream newspapers and print publications, and invariably they were promoting fossil fuels, undermining renewable energy, or attacking environmental policies.

That is good investing—spend millions of dollars on a handful of think tanks to protect billions of dollars in profits. Really, it is a 1,000-to-1 return. But here is the problem. The public is unaware of the connection usually. Only a handful of these attacks were accompanied by any explanation by the media the fossil fuel industry was involved in them.

Here is one prime example: Last summer, when the Navy displayed its great green fleet, a carrier strike group that runs on a 50-50 blend of biodiesel and petroleum, Institute for Energy Research president Thomas Kyl wrote a column for U.S. News and World Report calling that initiative “ridiculous” and “a costly and pointless exercise.” Never mind for a moment our defense and intelligence communities have repeatedly warned of the threats posed by climate change to national security and international stability and of their own need to secure a reliable and secure fuel supply.

What is misleading is that the U.S. News and World Report in publishing that article attributed the column simply thus, “Thomas Pyle is the president of the Institute for Energy Research,” with no mention the Institute for Energy Research is a front for big donors such as the Claude R. Lambe Charitable Foundation and ExxonMobil.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 additional minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. The problem is that this is one example of a misleading practice that is the norm in the media. More than half of the time, media outlets do nothing more than state the name of the publishing organization, such as “Thomas Pyle and the Institute for Energy Research,” or they may add a functional description such as “think tank” or “nonpartisan group.”

The instances where the publication described the basic ideology of the group—for example, as a “free market” or “conservative” think tank—amount to less than one-third. In all of the media outlets reviewed between 2007 and 2011, the financial ties between the authors and the fossil fuel industry were mentioned a mere 6 percent of the time. Ninety-four percent of the time, the fossil fuel industry funders got away with it.

This chart shows some of the examples. The Washington Post ignored the financial connection 88 percent of the time, Politico ignored the financial

connection 95 percent of the time, the Christian Science Monitor ignored it every time, USA TODAY ignored it 98 percent of the time, and the New York Times ignored it 90 percent of the time. So the scam of laundering money through independent-sounding organizations works. The media lets it work. The vast majority of scientists agree that global warming is occurring, but a recent Gallup Poll revealed that only 62 percent of Americans believe that the vast majority of scientists agree that global warming is occurring.

Well over 90 percent of scientists agree that climate change is happening and that humans are the main cause. The only uncertainty is about how bad it is going to be, and the leading research predicts warmer air and seas, rising sea levels, stronger storms, and more acidic oceans.

Most major players in the private sector actually get it. While the big fossil fuel polluters try to confuse the public in order to boost their bottom line and prolong their pollution, hundreds of leading corporations understand that climate change ultimately undermines our entire economy. Let me mention some of the examples: the Ford Motor Company; Coca-Cola; GE; Walmart; the insurance giant Munich Re; Alcoa, the great aluminum maker; Maersk; Procter & Gamble; FedEx; and the so-called BICEP group, which includes eBay, Intel, Starbucks, Adidas, and Nike.

This notion that this is a hoax, that there is doubt, is belied by some of the most respected names in the private sector. Those companies join the National Academies, they join NASA, they join the U.S. Department of Defense, the Government Accountability Office, the American Public Health Association, and, yes, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, as well as a majority of Americans in understanding that it is time to wake up, to end this faux controversy that has been cooked up by the fossil fuel industry, and to do the work in Congress that needs to be done to protect Americans from the harms of carbon pollution.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:04 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 7 p.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. DONNELLY).

SAFE COMMUNITIES, SAFE SCHOOLS ACT OF 2013—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I want to start off by saying I am deeply saddened by the tragedy in Boston. Franni's and my thoughts and prayers

are with everyone who has been affected.

Franni and I went to school in Boston. In fact, we met more than 43 years ago at a freshman mixer in Copley Square, so we know Boston. We have witnessed firsthand the kind of compassion and resilience we have seen from Bostonians, and I have faith we will find whoever did this and bring that person or those persons to justice.

Mr. President, I came to the floor today to speak in support of the gun violence legislation we are considering. Since the tragedy in Newtown, we have been asking ourselves what we should do to address this problem of gun violence in our country.

My primary focus in the wake of Newtown has been on mental health. Improving the access to mental health care has been one of my top priorities since I came to the Senate, and I am glad people are beginning to focus more on the issue. If we are going to make mental health a part of this, let's make it more than just a talking point. Let's make it a true national priority. Let's really do something to improve access to treatment for folks who need it.

Since the first day I got here, I have been pushing the administration to issue the final regulations for the Wellstone-Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act, which requires insurance plans to cover mental health and addiction services and to do so to the same extent they cover medical and surgical services. Five years after that bill was signed into law, at long last the administration has promised to implement it, and to do so by the end of the year. I expect the administration to follow through on that commitment.

I have also introduced the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act to help law enforcement officers respond to mental health crises in their communities and improve access to mental health treatment for people who end up in the criminal justice system. This is a bipartisan, bicameral bill that I have been working on since last year, well before the tragedy in Newtown.

In January I introduced the Mental Health in Schools Act which will improve children's access to mental health services. Catching these issues at an early age is very important. I met with some mothers from the Mounds View School District in Minnesota about this matter. Their children's lives, their own lives, and their families' lives were changed for the better because the kids got access to the mental health care they needed at an early age.

My bill has 17 cosponsors and key provisions have been included in a package which was recently reported out of the HELP Committee. I look forward to considering that legislation on the Senate floor soon. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

These are important measures, but let me be absolutely clear: The last

thing we need to do is stigmatize mental illness. I said this many times before, and I will say it again because it bears repeating, and it is very important to me: The vast majority of people with mental illness are no more violent than the general population. In fact, they are more frequently the victims of violence than others are.

There is a very small subset of those with serious mental illnesses who may become more violent if they are not diagnosed and treated, and that is the one place where this issue of mental health intersects with the issue of violence. Improving access to mental health care is all about improving people's lives. It is about helping people with mental illness and their families by making them happier and more productive people. However, today we are talking about gun violence prevention legislation.

People have strongly held views on both sides—or all sides—of this issue. Not only is that true in Minnesota, it is true throughout the country. Minnesota has a proud tradition, like Indiana, of responsible gun ownership.

We are home to many sportsmen and sportswomen. Generations of Minnesotans have learned to hunt pheasants, deer, and ducks from their parents, their grandparents, their aunts and uncles, friends and neighbors. We cherish our traditions and our Second Amendment right to bear arms for collection, protection, and sport.

Minnesota has both urban and rural areas. It is home to moms, dads, teachers, law enforcement officers, and health care providers too. We have members of the National Rifle Association and members of the Brady Campaign Against Gun Violence.

After the shooting at Sandy Hook, I reached out to my constituents. I got on the phone, I traveled across the State, I convened roundtables, I talked to hunters, school officials, law enforcement officers, and mental health experts. I wanted to hear Minnesotans' ideas, their hopes, their concerns, and their thoughts because it was and is important to me to approach this in a deliberative way.

Here is what I took away from these conversations: Minnesotans want us to take action to reduce gun violence and make our communities safer, but they want us to do it in a way that honors the Second Amendment and respects Minnesota's culture of responsible gun ownership. There is a balance to be struck there.

The overwhelming majority of gun owners are law-abiding citizens who responsibly use their guns for recreation and self-protection. Their concern should not be dismissed or trivialized. Their rights should not be undermined because of the horrible acts of just a few. So I suggest that our goal should be to take whatever steps we can to reduce gun violence and improve public safety without unduly burdening law-abiding, responsible gun owners. I believe that is what the Safe Communities, Safe Schools Act, the Manchinn-