

when 20 6- and 7-year-olds were killed in Sandy Hook, CT, along with 6 adults who cared for them, as well as the gunman and his mother. Since that day, 6,633 people have been killed by guns at a rate of about 30 a day—the highest of any civilized nation in the world, and we do nothing.

One of those, on July 14, was Horsley Shorter, Jr. Horsley managed a Family Dollar store in Tampa, FL. Junior, as he was known, had some kids come in occasionally who would try to take things out of the store or try to steal. When he had to report them to the police, he would. But this was a very gentle man, and more often than not he would pull the kids aside and try to talk through things with them to try to help them understand what they were doing and what the implications were.

He would never do anything to instigate a fight, his friend said. In fact, his last words to one of his coworkers was “the pen is mightier than the sword.”

What happened that day was an armed robber came into the store and demanded money from the clerk. According to police, Shorter was inside the office, and he was shot when he ran out to try to help his coworker who was at the counter. The robber then forced the clerk at gunpoint into the parking lot, where he stole the clerk's car and used it to escape. According to one friend, Shorter was very close to that coworker, took him under his wing, which was the reason he ran out into harm's way to try to save him.

This friend said:

I believe that's why that young guy is alive [today]. Junior wasn't going to watch nobody die. He gave his life for him.

About 2 weeks earlier, on July 2, Chanice Reed, 22, and Annette Reed, her mother, as well as Eddie McCuin, a 10-year-old, were shot in a triple murder in Fort Worth, TX.

An hour after the shooter killed his pregnant girlfriend, her mother, and her little brother, he walked into the Forest Hill Police Department, telling officers to arrest him because he “did something bad.” He was 22 years old. He had a history of domestic violence. He was sentenced to 1 year of deferred adjudication probation because of assault.

Because of a domestic dispute, and because of his easy access to guns, in order to resolve this disagreement, he shot his pregnant girlfriend, her mother, and her 10-year-old little brother.

Just a couple days ago, in Bridgeport, CT, Pablo Aquino died. He was 27 years old. He was described as a “humble man.” He was always down at the baseball field helping kids because he had a son playing baseball there.

He spent his days at the Fairfield County Hunting Club in Westport, where he tended to horses.

He got into an argument—a simple argument—when the suspect decided that the best way to solve this argument was to turn a gun on Pablo, killing him.

The next day, the community had a vigil for him. The vigil was to remember him but also because they did not have enough money for a funeral. So as the vigil was going on, one of his friends stood out on the corner with an empty tin can of iced-tea mix, asking passersby to contribute a couple cents for a funeral that was expected to cost \$2,000.

Over the July 4 period, there were three shootings in New Haven, CT.

At around 10:30 on Wednesday night, police said somebody shot and killed 19-year-old Errol Marshal. His body was discovered on the front porch of a home, pronounced dead at the scene.

At the same time, investigators found Courtney Jackson, a 26-year-old, suffering from a gunshot wound to the stomach.

Brian Gibson, 23, of New Haven, was shot outside of a public housing complex shortly thereafter.

All three shootings were connected. All three shootings are due to the fact that too many kids and too many young adults today do not know how to resolve their disputes any other way than getting a gun, and also because in a city such as New Haven guns are like water; they are all over the place. They are all over the place because this body does not pass legislation to keep guns out of the hands of criminals. We refuse to pass a bill making it a Federal crime to illegally traffic guns.

All those seem very dissimilar from Newtown. But then there are ones you hear about that strike you as so similar to the reason why I am here today talking about this, because of the 26 people who died at the Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Not much more than a month after Newtown, the Griego family was killed, all in one fell swoop, in Albuquerque, NM—Greg, 51; Sarah, 40; Zephania, 9; Jael, 5; and Angelina, 2. The parents were killed by their son, the little girls and boy killed by their brother. Nehemiah was 15 years old when he took a semiautomatic weapon to kill his family. Like Adam Lanza, the shooter in Newtown, Nehemiah was a troubled teen—more troubled than anyone around could have realized. Like Adam Lanza, he took out his rage on his family, first killing his mother while she lay sleeping in her bed. Like Adam Lanza, he had plans to continue his killing spree. He was going to go to the local Wal-Mart before he was stopped. He was anticipating getting into a fire-fight with the police. And like Adam Lanza, he used an assault weapon that was readily available to him in his own home.

Greg, 51; Sarah, 40; Zephania, 9; Jael, 5; Angelina, 2—5 of the 6,633 people—30 or so a day—who have been killed by guns since December 14. We are not going to stop them all by passing a piece of legislation on the Senate floor. Background checks will not bring 6,600 people back, nor will a ban on human trafficking, nor will a ban on the sale of 30-round magazines or assault weap-

ons. But they will absolutely bring some of those people back. They will absolutely lessen the rate below 30 a day.

I am going to continue to come down to the floor week after week to tell the stories of victims of gun violence, to give them a voice on the floor of the Senate, so that someday, some time, hopefully soon, this place will wake up to the fact that we do have responsibility over life and death on the floor of the Senate, and it is about time, when it comes to the rising incidents of gun violence across this country, we do something about it.

I yield back the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JAMES B. COMEY, JR., TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant bill clerk read the nomination of James B. Comey, Jr., of Connecticut, to be Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. shall be equally divided and controlled in the usual form.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be divided equally between the majority and minority.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING APPROPRIATIONS

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I want to notify all of our colleagues that Senator COLLINS and I have been working together with many of our colleagues on amendments to the transportation and housing bill over the past week. I want to be very clear—that work is continuing. The majority leader has made clear that we are going to keep working on amendments

on that bill, so everybody should be prepared for more votes.

I urge all of my colleagues to continue talking to me and to Senator COLLINS, and we will keep working to get as many amendments as possible.

Many of you have approached us already with your plans and thoughts. I urge the rest of you not to wait until the last minute. Senator COLLINS and I are working with the floor staff to line up votes.

I know everyone is anxious to have the August recess occur. We are as well. The sooner we can get the amendments and get this bill completed, the sooner all of us will be able to accomplish that.

I know a number of our colleagues on the floor have noted that this has been an open process. That is what Senator COLLINS and I set out to do, and we are going to make sure that continues.

This is a bipartisan bill. I will remind all of us that it got 6 Republican votes in committee and 73 votes to proceed to the open debate we have had this past week. That debate, again, is going to continue. I am hopeful we can move to a bipartisan finish on a good bill that reflects great ideas from both sides of the aisle.

I again want to thank Senator COLLINS for her work on this, and we are ready to move forward.

I yield the floor to her at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Thank you, Madam President.

Colleagues, as the chairman of our subcommittee, Senator MURRAY, has pointed out, we are continuing to work through the amendments that have been filed on this bill.

I do not think I need to remind any of our colleagues on either side of the aisle that the August recess is fast approaching and the Senate will have to wrap up its work on this bill before we adjourn.

So I would say to my colleagues, if you have good ideas or even not so good ideas about this bill, we urge you to come to the floor and file your amendment and do so as soon as possible.

As Chairman MURRAY has pointed out, there has been an open amendment process. We have disposed of some amendments; a couple through rollcall votes, a few others through unanimous consent. But we could have done a lot more last week had people been willing to come to the floor and allow us to proceed to amendments that were filed.

I also want to highlight a letter the Appropriations Committee has received from more than 2,420 national, State, and local organizations, and State and local government officials in support of the funding that is in the programs that are included in this important bill. This is an important bill. It is a bill that will help us rebuild our crumbling infrastructure. It is a bill that helps us meet the housing needs of

homeless veterans, of disabled senior citizens, of very low-income families. It is a bill that will help the private sector create thousands of new jobs at a time when our economy needs them—in fact, hundreds of thousands of new jobs.

It is not surprising to me that so many organizations are lending their voices in support of this bill. I want to read one quote from the letter from these organizations. The letter notes that:

Through these investments, Congress supports small business job creation, expands our nation's infrastructure capacity, supports economic recovery and growth, reduces homelessness and housing hardships, and promotes lasting community and family economic success.

I think that is a very good description of the purpose and the programs in this bill.

One of the programs in this bill that is extremely popular and has been used very well to promote economic development and community reinvestment in my State is the funding for the Community Development Block Grant Program. That is an area where our bill differs greatly from the House bill.

I want to point out that tomorrow the House of Representatives is expected to consider its version of the fiscal year 2014 Transportation and Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill. Think about this. If we pass our bill, they pass their bill, we could actually proceed to a conference committee and work out the differences between our respective bills. The differences are marked. I do not minimize the differences in terms of priorities and funding, but that is what Congress is all about.

If we do pass our bill and the House proceeds to pass its version of the T-HUD appropriations bill, we will be the first but I hope not the only fiscal year 2014 spending bill that is ready for conference, goes to conference, and I hope becomes law.

Finally, let me say, I recognize the Senate bill is not perfect, despite the heroic efforts Senator MURRAY and I made in committee and the input and insight from our colleagues that are incorporated into this bill. But it is a good-faith bipartisan effort that attempts to strike the right balance between fiscal responsibility and our Nation's infrastructure and housing needs.

I am confident the bill that would come back from conference would be, frankly, at a lower spending level, which I and many on my side of the aisle want to see. But I was encouraged by the Senate's vote last week of 73 to 26 to allow the Senate to proceed to this bill. I know we can make improvements. That is what the amendment process is all about.

Again, I want to second what our chairman has said and encourage our colleagues to get their amendments filed and to work with both of us so we can proceed to wrap up this work ses-

sion on a high note of passing, on time, an individual appropriations bill. I am willing to work hard over the recess to conference the two bills, to get going on that. I know the chairman is as well.

I want to thank the chairman and my staff and her staff also for working so hard.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, what is the parliamentary situation?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The nomination of Mr. Comey to be the FBI Director.

COMEY NOMINATION

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I wish to speak about the Comey nomination.

James Comey, Jr., should be confirmed to be our next Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. I feel it should be done without delay. Director Mueller has served very well, but his term expires early September. It is imperative the Senate work quickly to confirm his successor.

I worked with Ranking Member GRASSLEY to schedule James Comey's confirmation hearing as soon as we returned from the Fourth of July recess. Earlier this month, with Senator GRASSLEY's cooperation, we in the Judiciary Committee unanimously reported the nomination of James Comey to the floor. However, in contrast with the treatment of previous FBI Director nominees—the FBI Director nominees of all preceding Presidents—who were all confirmed by the full Senate within a day or two of being reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee, James Comey is the first FBI Director nominee to be filibustered in Senate history by either Republicans or Democrats.

In this case, of course, it is the Republicans who are filibustering a law enforcement position such as this, somebody who was voted out of the committee by every single Republican and Democratic Senator—and then to be filibustered by Republicans on his nomination?

We should be voting to confirm James Comey tonight. It has already taken twice as long to bring up this nomination for a vote in the full Senate as for any previous FBI Director. President Obama officially nominated James Comey on June 21, 38 days ago. No other FBI Director has waited longer than 20 days from nomination to confirmation. The FBI Director plays a very vital role in our national security, and the Senate must put an end to these routine delays.

Nearly 12 years ago, when the Senate considered President Bush's nomination of Robert Mueller to be Director of