

Feeding Device Act to ban the sale of large-capacity magazines and Denying Firearms and Explosives to Dangerous Terrorists Act to prohibit individuals suspected of ties to terrorist organizations from purchasing a gun, and H.R. 2380 and H.R. 3411, which fix our broken background check system.

Any of these bills would immediately improve public safety in this country, a country that sees its citizens die at the hands of a loaded gun 297 times more than in Japan, 49 times more than in France, and 33 times more than in Israel.

Any one of these rational, common-sense proposals would immediately make life safer for men, women, and children in cities and towns across America; yet, we are going to sit on our hands because Republican leaders would rather genuflect before the National Rifle Association than do anything that could help save the lives of thousands of Americans.

The last time this institution passed a major bill to prevent gun violence was November 10, 1993, when the House approved the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act and President Clinton signed it into law.

Mr. Speaker, I will end by saying I do not know what it will take for us to finally take action. But I do know what I will do. I will continue speaking out every week on the floor of this Chamber until we get something done that makes our communities safer and honors the lives of all the victims who have lost their lives in this country to gun violence.

AMERICA MUST STAND FIRM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I just wrote on the board that it has been 1,510 days since the President said that Syria's Bashar Assad must go. He is still in office.

It is 767 days since the President drew the red line in the sand that said, if Bashar Assad used chemical weapons on his own people, he must go. He is still in office.

What we are seeing in Syria—the refugees' humanitarian crisis, a bloody civil war, the rise of ISIS—is a direct response to this administration's ineptness to handle these problems.

Now we have Russia's Putin on the floor of the U.N.—on U.S. soil—saying America is weak. But we didn't need Putin to tell us that by his words. He has done it by his actions. He invaded Crimea in Ukraine because he knew that this administration would draw another red line, but do nothing about it.

America is losing her standing in the world because we would rather appease our enemies than show strength. This administration still has no strategy handling ISIS, no tangible plan to handle the Syrian problem or defeating

Assad, and certainly no plan to deal with Russia's new very powerful aggression in many areas of the world.

Assad must go. ISIS must be defeated. America must stand firm and show the world that we are a force to be reckoned with, not to be trampled on.

CELEBRATING THE LIVES OF BEN KUROKI AND SUSUMU "SUS" ITO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. TAKAI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. TAKAI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the lives of two trailblazers for the Asian American community, Ben Kuroki and Susumu "Sus" Ito.

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Kuroki and his brother were one of the first Japanese Americans to enlist in the United States Air Force during World War II at a time when over 100,000 other Japanese Americans were forced into incarceration camps without due process under the law.

The need for aerial gunners was high; so, Kuroki applied for the job, was approved, and was sent to a 2-week course in Britain. Kuroki received on-the-job training. His maiden flight was on December 13, 1942.

During this time of heavy discrimination against Japanese Americans, Kuroki's flight crew was instrumental in protecting him from the sneers and abuse by his fellow soldiers.

Kuroki received three Distinguished Flying Cross medals for volunteering to fly 25 combat missions against Germany and 28 missions in the Pacific. He was the only Japanese American to serve as an aerial gunner in the Asia-Pacific theater during World War II.

The son of Japanese immigrant farmers, Kuroki was born on May 16, 1917, in Gaithersburg, Nebraska.

After his many missions in Europe, Kuroki visited other Japanese Americans behind barbed wire to promote the military and asked other Japanese Americans to join what would soon become the 442nd Regimental Combat Team of the 100th Infantry Battalion.

Ben Kuroki exemplified the embodiment of patriotism and service above self. He often said, "I had to fight for the right to fight for my own country, and now I feel vindication."

Today I rise to share Ben Kuroki's tremendous accomplishments and dedicated public service with the House of Representatives. Ben Kuroki was the definition of an American hero.

I would also like to take this time to recognize another extraordinary trailblazer for the Japanese American community, Susumu "Sus" Ito.

Ito, the oldest and only son of Japanese immigrants, was drafted into the military in 1940. After Pearl Harbor, his parents and his sister were sent to the incarceration camp in Rohwer, Arkansas. During this time, he volunteered to become a forward observer for the 442nd Infantry Battalion, one of the

most dangerous positions in the battalion.

Known as mischievous, he brought with him to Europe an Agfa Memo, a contraband 35-millimeter camera that fit right in the palm of his hand. Ito spent his deployment in Europe, starting in 1944 until the war ended, taking pictures of his surroundings.

From playing chess during downtime to posing with the Colosseum during their trek into Rome, he spent the war revealing the daily lives of this little known mostly Japanese American unit.

However, many of Ito's pictures also accurately depicted the brazenness of war. The 442nd was one of the first battalions to reach the Dachau Concentration Camp, and Ito took pictures of dazed prisoners leaving the camp for the very first time. He also captured the despair of his fellow soldiers as they rescued the Lost Battalion.

After World War II and through the GI Bill, he started an extraordinary career as a cellular biologist and became a researcher and professor at Harvard Medical School, where he worked for over 50 years.

Ito donated his vast collection, thousands of images, to the Japanese American Museum in Los Angeles, as part of their Before They Were Heroes: Sus Ito's World War II Images collection.

In August, I had the opportunity to tour this exhibit. The images he captured constantly reminded me of the courage of our Japanese American GIs who fought valiantly for our country while their families remained behind barbed wire.

Today I rise to share Sus Ito's tremendous accomplishments and dedicated public service with the House of Representatives.

□ 1215

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND REAUTHORIZATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, last week, the Nation saw a very important program expire, the Land and Water Conservation Fund. I rise today to encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join with me and call for a vote on a full and continued permanent reauthorization of the LWCF.

For 50 years, this critical fund has added value to my district and to so many across the Nation. Last week, inaction by Congress led to the expiration of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and I believe it is critical that we renew our commitment to the fund.

The fund helps our communities protect critical lands by providing State and local governments with necessary funding and flexibility to develop and improve the very land on display for

everyone to enjoy. Nowhere is it more critical than in my home State of Pennsylvania.

Over the past 50 years, Pennsylvania has received approximately \$300 million in land and water conservation funding for protection in many areas of national significance, such as Gettysburg National Military Park, the Paoli Battlefield, the Brandywine Battlefield, Valley Forge National Historical Park, and John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge.

Not only have we seen the LWCF at work on the State level, we have also seen its benefits at the local level, including the Birdsboro Waters Forest Legacy Project, protecting critical woodlands at the East Coventry Wineberry Estates, expanding Shaw's Bridge Park in East Bradford Township, and enhancing the Pottstown Borough Memorial Park with a new dog park, pavilions, restrooms, ballfields, and walking trails.

The outdoor recreation industry, Governors, mayors, sportsmen, small-business owners, conservation leaders, landowners, ranchers, farmers, and millions of Americans are united in a push for permanent reauthorization and full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund because it provides an economic benefit to our region and across the country. The LWCF gives a boost to the \$646 billion recreation economy and serves to protect our national parks and other public lands from being destroyed.

Indeed, in one such study, the Outdoor Industry Association has found that outdoor active recreation generates \$21.5 billion annually in consumer spending in Pennsylvania alone. Outdoor recreation supports over 219,000 jobs across the State and generates \$7.2 billion in wages and salaries. It also produces \$1.6 billion annually in State and local tax revenue.

Outdoor recreation benefits the Pennsylvania economy. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that each year over 5.4 million people participated in hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching in Pennsylvania, contributing \$5.4 billion to the State economy.

Additionally, the Land and Water Conservation Fund State Assistance Program provides matching grants to help States and local communities protect parks and recreation resources. Nationwide, the LWCF has benefited countless counties in America, supporting over 41,000 projects.

The State assistance 50-50 matching program acts as the primary investment tool to ensure that all can enjoy hiking, biking, running trails, community parks, and playgrounds. Approximately \$4 billion in LWCF grants have been awarded to States, including \$4.27 million for 34 total projects in Berks County, \$4.78 million for 30 total projects in Chester County, \$2.8 million for 49 total projects in Montgomery County, and over \$800,000 for 11 projects in Lebanon County. These are all counties in my congressional district.

Our public lands and outdoor recreation areas are an integral part of our heritage, civic identity, and local community. I believe the Land and Water Conservation Fund is one of our most important conservation programs and an excellent example of a bipartisan commitment to the safeguard of our natural resources and cultural heritage, and we must reauthorize it.

As an original cosponsor of H.R. 1814 to permanently reauthorize the LWCF, I look forward to working with my colleagues to preserve our public lands so that current and future generations may continue to enjoy and appreciate them year-round.

I respectfully call upon my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, to work for a bipartisan solution to reauthorize this very important program.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, I would like to recognize the great achievement of Latinos within their communities.

America has been home to countless numbers of outstanding Latinos over time who reflect the best of our community: activists like Cesar Chavez and Joan Baez; artists like Selena and Carlos Santana; the brave women and men who have served in our armed services; and, of course, today's ambitious young DREAMers.

Latinos, like all Americans, are committed to building a better and stronger future for our country and within our communities. We strive to instill a culture of hard work, of healthy living, and of academic success.

Latino families recognize the importance of attaining an education in today's society. In the past decade, Latinos have worked to cut their dropout rate in half, while tripling enrollment in 2- and 4-year colleges.

The top degrees that we earn speak to our involvement in community: our liberal arts degrees, to help the less fortunate; to heal the sick with our healthcare degrees; to create employment with our business diplomas.

In regards to health care, with the landmark Affordable Care Act, a record 2.6 million new Latinos are signed up for health care, and they are on track to leading healthier lives.

But, Mr. Speaker, even with these great advances in our communities, there is still so much work to be done. Although our dropout rate is lower, we still have the highest dropout rate among all ethnic groups. Latinos have increased their scores in math and science, but we are still below the national average. And while our communities have made massive strides in putting our children in college, still only 15 percent of college degrees are in the hands of Latinos, again, the

smallest percentage of any ethnic group.

And even while 2½ million new Latinos signed up for health care, 25 percent of Latinos have no healthcare plan, and we battle high obesity and diabetes.

So I have seen these issues firsthand in my district and in California and, as a whole, have seen and have worked to improve our condition.

This Congress, I introduced the All-Year ACCESS Act, which would restore Pell grants for both full-time and part-time students, giving access to postsecondary education all year-round. Back in my home district, I relaunched Enroll OC, adding an additional 2,000 people this year, Latinos in my district, to health care.

So while we make these incredible strides in wellness and education, the Latino community still has so many issues to address. I will tell you this: the problems are not just Latino problems; they are problems for the United States because, you see, America is a family. It is a familia, and we have to address these issues together because, for the first time in my beautiful home State of California, the largest majority ethnic group is now Latino.

And you know what? This should not frighten people, Mr. Speaker. I think it is actually pretty exciting because the Latino community is so embedded in the success of the American Dream, and the American Dream is so embedded in us. We are not aliens, Mr. Speaker. We are doctors, lawyers, community leaders, social workers, laborers, and DREAMers. But more importantly, we are sons, daughters, parents, siblings, and we are neighbors.

It is time for the United States as a whole to embrace the power and the potential of the Latino community and to realize that we share the common goal of furthering the greatness of this Nation. I believe as soon as we realize Latinos yearn to share the same American values and aspirations as so many descendants of other immigrant groups—of Italian Americans and Irish Americans and German Americans and Asian Americans and all Americans—certainly America will thrive.

Latinos are finding their voice, and America needs to listen.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 24 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania) at 2 p.m.