

will be held at St. Mark's Church near Capitol Hill. The vigil will be held from 7 to 8:30 p.m., and I encourage all of my colleagues and staff members to join us.

Mr. Speaker, the Members of this House should spend more time with the families and victims of gun violence. I say that because, in the 3 years since the shootings at Sandy Hook, the majority of this House hasn't even allowed a single vote—not one vote—on gun safety legislation. It has now become the habit that, after every new, tragic mass shooting that claims the lives of more innocent Americans, this House merely acknowledges a moment of silence and then goes back to business as usual.

I am heartsick, and I am outraged. Every time one of these mass shootings happens, people are retraumatized in my communities: the families, the first responders who went into the school, all of us. It is appalling and it is unacceptable that this keeps happening in America, and this Congress, the American Congress, does nothing.

Mr. Speaker, the time has passed for moments of silence. It is time for days of action. As vice chair of the House Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, I am working on several commonsense measures, bills that would help prevent gun violence in this country while respecting and protecting the Second Amendment. It is time for congressional leaders to bring these bills to the floor to allow a vote.

The cost of the inaction is being paid by American families all across this great Nation. The families of victims and survivors of gun violence deserve a vote. They deserve a vote on a bipartisan bill that will close background check loopholes and save lives. They deserve a vote on legislation to end the prohibition on Federal research funding for public health research on our gun violence epidemic, and they deserve a vote on a bipartisan bill this week to close the loophole that allows suspected terrorists to walk into a gun shop and legally buy a weapon.

More than 2,000 suspects on the FBI terrorist watch list have successfully bought guns in the United States in the past 11 years. I am a cosponsor of the Republican bill to fix this. H.R. 1076, the Denying Firearms and Explosives to Dangerous Terrorists Act, would bar the sale or distribution of firearms to anyone the Attorney General has determined to be engaged in terrorist activities.

The time for silence is over. We in Congress have a sworn duty to protect and defend the American people, but that is not what we are doing when we observe a moment of silence and do nothing.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the House bring up H.R. 1076, the Denying Firearms and Explosives to Dangerous Terrorists Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the House is in session sole-

ly for the purpose of conducting morning-hour debate. Therefore, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I will therefore stand quietly for the remainder of my time to protest the appalling silence and inaction of this House's refusal to take meaningful action to protect the American people from the ravages of gun violence.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

HONORING KIRK P. GREGG UPON HIS RETIREMENT AS EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, CORNING INCORPORATED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED) for 5 minutes.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a great company in my district, Corning Incorporated, an American company that has risen over its 164-year history to become one of the most innovative manufacturers in the world. But, Mr. Speaker, in particular, I rise to take a moment to honor one of the individuals of that company that has made it one of the leading manufacturers across the world. That individual is Kirk Gregg, Corning's executive vice president and chief administrative officer, who is retiring from the company after 22 years of executive leadership.

Over his tenure, Kirk has made an enormous contribution to the company's success and to the community's development. I am most grateful to Kirk for his unparalleled commitment to the community. He has had an enormously positive impact on our constituents and our extended family who live in the district.

Mr. Speaker, Kirk joined Corning in 1993 and was named chief administrative officer in 2002. The same year, he was appointed to serve on Corning's management committee, a small, very senior group of executives who lead the company on a day-to-day basis. Over the last decade, Kirk has risen up the corporate ladder to become the third highest ranking executive in the company.

As chief administrative officer, Kirk has built the core infrastructure that makes Corning efficient and effective. He has had global responsibility for the corporate staff, including human resources, information technology, supply management, transportation, business services, community relations, government affairs, and aviation—a long list indeed. In total, he has managed over \$1 billion annually in corporate infrastructure, making Corning's staff one of the top performers among its peers in the country's corporate community.

It has been Kirk's work for the community that distinguishes him among the corporate leaders and for which I am most grateful. He has played a huge

role in meeting the needs of New York's southern tier. For 17 years, he chaired the Three Rivers Development board, attracting tens of millions of dollars of investment to diversify the local community and create jobs. For 15 years, he led the Corning Classic LPGA tournaments, raising millions of dollars for our area hospitals. And statewide, he served for a decade on the board of directors for the Business Council of New York State, 2 years as the board's chairman. Last, but not least, he has been an enthusiastic supporter of our local charities, cultural institutions, and human service organizations.

Mr. Speaker, every Member of Congress seeks the perspective of people with broad insight into and who would contribute generously to the communities we represent. For me, Kirk is one of those rare people. He understands the people, the community, and the responsibility that corporate leaders have to support their local institutions. At the same time, Kirk is modest and self-effacing. Kirk is one of those people who works quietly and effectively to make our communities better.

Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to call Kirk Gregg my friend. I know that I speak for the entire southern tier—Corning, New York, community when I thank him for his citizenship and service. We wish him and his wife, Penny, the very best in a well-deserved retirement. May they enjoy many more happy days entering this new chapter in their great lives.

CLIMATE CHANGE IS THE GREATEST THREAT TO OUR PLANET

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

Mr. GALLEGUO. Mr. Speaker, as the world looks to its leaders convened in Paris this month to act on the greatest threat to our planet, I rise today in support of a strong and fair global climate agreement. Now is the time to demonstrate our leadership and our obligation to the security and protection of our communities and our economy by committing to a robust agreement that puts us on a safer path for future generations.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, House Republicans showed the American people, once again, where they stand when it comes to tackling the threat of climate change. By casting political votes against the Clean Power Plan, their message is loud and clear that any meaningful action will be met with attacks and political theater.

Mr. Speaker, political theater does nothing to stop rising sea levels, extreme weather, and land erosion. Failure to act will risk American economic prosperity and will disproportionately impact the poorest and most vulnerable communities across our Nation.

In the American Southwest, Latino and African American populations are

more vulnerable to heat exposure and heat stress due to factors like sub-standard housing and the lack of affordable utility costs. Native American communities face additional unique challenges. They rely directly on natural resources for food, medicine, and jobs, all of which are expected to be negatively affected by climate change. These communities have all called for action on a national and international scale, and we must listen.

Mr. Speaker, my Democratic colleagues on the Natural Resources Committee have called on the Republican leadership to tackle this problem. But time and time again, we have been met with silence and inaction when it comes to discussing and acting on these critical issues. We must do better. Around the world, nations are looking to the United States for leadership on this serious issue. We must step up and join other nations who have already made commitments to act on climate change.

The facts are clear: Action on climate change will not undermine our economy; it will support economic growth. In fact, acting will produce real benefits for our environment and our economy, including new businesses, better jobs, lower poverty, and reduced mortality rates. And businesses agree.

Last week, in a full-page ad in The Wall Street Journal, over 100 top companies, including Coca-Cola, Microsoft, Sprint, and DuPont, all called for strong action to tackle climate change in order to minimize climate risk and boost the economy. These businesses recognize what I hear from folks in my district from Phoenix and across Arizona: The time to act is now. We must build on the progress made in Paris.

Mr. Speaker, I stand with the scientific, environmental, and public health communities who all agree that Paris must be the floor, not the ceiling, of our ambition. If the world takes a step forward in Paris, our partners will be prepared to build stronger climate policies and agreements moving forward. Local governments, States, and businesses will be empowered to reaffirm their commitments to low-carbon pathways for decades to come.

Some argue that America cannot lead on climate. Mr. Speaker, America led the way into space, to the creation of the Internet and computers, to cellphones and so much more. We can and must lead into this new energy future. Our innovations and our leadership are going to fuel a cleaner and safer environment and economy, and our policies must reflect these realities.

When future generations look back on the progress made in Paris, I hope it will be to thank us for what we have accomplished in order to leave them a healthier and safer environment. Let's not let politics and grandstanding prevent us from taking responsibility for the planet we are leaving behind for our children and our grandchildren.

MENTAL ILLNESS AND GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, next week is the third anniversary of the sad tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School; but it is also time to recall all those other cities in America where tragedies have occurred: Tucson, Colorado Springs, Lafayette, Charlotte, Chattanooga, Dallas, Houston, Roseburg, Isla Vista, the Navy Yard, and closer to my district in Pittsburgh, Franklin Regional High School.

What is common among these tragedies is the lives lost. I keep in my office photographs of some of the children whose lives were lost at Sandy Hook—Benjamin Andrew Wheeler, Dylan Hockley, and Daniel Barden—as well as those of teachers and other people from the school. A day doesn't go by that I greet them in the morning and throughout the day and remember their lives, snuffed out too early.

But, sadly, the body count is more than just them when it comes to dealing with what people with severe mental illness and violence do. The body count this year is amazing. There will be 41,000 suicide deaths, 43,000 deaths from drug overdose, perhaps 1,000 to 1,500 homicides, perhaps a couple hundred people who encounter the police and are mentally ill and end up with their death, an unknown number of homeless who die that slow-motion death of homelessness, and those who are mentally ill that die 25 years sooner because of other chronic illness.

The body count this year will be greater than the U.S. combat deaths in Korea and Vietnam combined. Will that wake us up to do something in this Chamber?

□ 1030

There are several things we must do: We must reform the agency called SAMHSA, which has used Federal money over the years for the most ludicrous and preposterous things; from designing art for pillowcases to collages and other aspects. We must reform the 112 Federal agencies that we pump money into every year to deal with mental illness. We have to deal with the shortage of beds. We have to get rid of the same-day doctor rule. We have to bring in more psychiatrists and psychologists who can provide treatment. We have to provide more early intervention and prevention, a greater workforce. And this Chamber has to stop postponing action on reforming our mental health system and bring to the floor H.R. 2646.

I have been working with a wide range of Democrats and Republicans over the last couple of years to reform this bill, revise it, and perfect it. But at some point, if we are serious about helping those with serious mental illness, we have to bring it for action.

Part of what happened is we closed all these asylums years ago and thought that if we provided some treatment for people, things would get better. States failed to provide that treatment. We shut down hundreds of thousands of psychiatric hospital beds and leave people still dumped into a system where they don't get care.

Our current mental health system is hugely discriminatory. The most fundamental, dangerous, and destructive hidden undercurrent of prejudice is low expectations; that your disability is as good as it gets. The shift to consider changes in how we treat severe mental health is a pendulum swinging the other way.

The grand experiment has failed of closing down all the institutional care and stopping all treatment. It is a principle that operated under the misguided self-centered and projected belief that all people at all times are fully capable of deciding their own fate and direction, regardless of their deficits and disease, and that the right to self-decay and the right to self-destruction overrides the right to be healthy.

Those children at Sandy Hook had rights. The people throughout the country who are mentally ill have the right to be well and not just the right to be sick.

But to maintain the current philosophy that many have, we abdicate comfortably our responsibility to act and live under the perverse redefinition that the most compassionate compassion is to do nothing at all.

It further bolsters the most evil of prejudices that a person with disabilities deserves no more than what they are. Under that approach, no dreams, no aspirations, no goals to be better can even exist. Indeed, to help a person heal is a head-on collision with a bigoted belief that the severely mentally ill have no right to be better than they are and we have no obligation to help.

This is the corrupt evil of the hands-up approach in the anti-treatment model. That perversion of thought is embedded in the glorification that to live a life of deterioration, paranoia, filth, squalor, and emotional torment trumps a healed brain and a true chance to choose a better life.

We have to change this trajectory. When we leave for the holiday period here, we will go by another month before we can bring this bill to the floor. Two hundred and forty people will die each day being a victim or perpetrator because of the mentally ill. For goodness sake, if we are going to do anything to help this country, Mr. Speaker, let's bring H.R. 2646 for a vote on this floor and fix this problem in America.

TERRORISM AND ISIS STRATEGY

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

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the imminent danger