

faces difficulty. We cannot claim justice for all when we throw away the innocent unborn life.

Mr. Speaker, I want to delve for a moment into the deeper reasons for these divisions over abortion and the deeper reasons why we have such a caustic debate.

For those of us who are pro-life, it can be hard, frankly, to understand why everyone just doesn't see our perspective. But I believe that much of the ugliness surrounding the abortion debate hinges upon the competing values of personal autonomy versus relational responsibility, once again, personal autonomy versus relational responsibility.

Of course, working hard, making something of yourself, refusing to let difficult circumstances overcome you, are all hallmarks of a well-ordered life essential to an individual's progress as a person.

But, Mr. Speaker, rugged individualism can lead to rugged isolationism, crushing the vitality of the human heart and leading to loneliness, hopelessness, and ultimately despair.

And could it be, Mr. Speaker, that the confusion surrounding abortion is the loss of an understanding of the dignity of each person as they are set in the environment of a community?

On this deeply painful topic of abortion, the primary community in question is, first and foremost, the unique bond between a mother and her child, followed by the bond of the extended family and extended community.

All politics—all life—Mr. Speaker, is ultimately founded on relationships. Happiness depends upon social life, on interdependency. A healthy society depends upon stable and healthy relationships for promoting sustainable values and our greater ideals.

But because of cultural confusion, we establish a false choice. Is it a woman's right to choose or is it a child's right to life? This should not be a consideration in the broader community that is committed to bonds of solidarity.

Sadly, I believe, we have lost sight of the degree to which the logic of radical autonomy, severed from foundational principles that order human relations, namely, in charity, have created the circumstances in which we now find ourselves.

Individuals who are alone so often become disassociated from mutuality and community. Decades upon decades of this cultural conditioning leaves us with an aggregate understanding that our strength is only found in ourselves. No wonder a young woman, scared, alone, or abandoned feels such pressure to abort.

Mr. Speaker, during last year's historic papal visit to the United States, Pope Francis highlighted the need for what I call social conservation.

□ 2000

At its root, social conservation is the answer to the widespread longing in all of our hearts, that longing for a culture of meaning, of purposefulness.

Pope Francis promoted universal human values, the importance of society, the primacy of the family, the dignity of work, the responsibility of people to properly steward the natural environment, and the sanctity of all life, especially the poor, the elderly, those who are marginalized, and the unborn.

This holistic approach of Pope Francis does not fit our political class distinctions, which rage all around us in this body. So this is not a Democrat or Republican issue, it is about the protection of persons and how we build a truly healthy society.

Children in the womb are vulnerable, precious members of their families. We must defend them, not in isolation, but as a part of the social fabric upon which our shared future as a people depends.

Now, some abortion advocates charge that defenders of the unborn are pro-life only until birth of the child; that the pro-life position is a part of a grotesque fiction called the war on women. That is a very painful accusation.

In the end, I wish we could rise above this, because I believe everyone should agree that the choice between radical autonomy as a justification for abortion, versus relational responsibility, is a false choice. To be pro-life is to be genuinely pro-child, pro-woman, and pro-family.

No matter how hard the circumstances, we should all be loving enough, caring enough, and we certainly have resources enough to protect both the mother and her child.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to look for ways to reframe this entire debate, to look for some light. Maybe there will continue to be deep philosophical differences over the question, but maybe there is some common ground.

A spectrum of policy proposals could more effectively build wider coalitions, I believe, in the pro-life debate, advancing cultural conversion instead of cultural war. Initiatives could include an assault on the scourge of coercion, which forces many women, including young girls, to have an abortion at the hands of an uncaring boyfriend or unscrupulous doctor.

Can't we find it in ourselves to attack this injustice? I would like to believe we can.

What about incentives for businesses to provide better pregnancy and new parenthood assistance, including maternity and paternity leave? Some of my colleagues speaking before me mentioned some of these proposals. No woman should be forced to choose between a paycheck and her child.

Other ideas could be adoption, enhanced adoption facilities, countermeasures against workplace pregnancy discrimination, classifying pregnancy as a qualifying event for health insurance, initiatives for responsible fatherhood.

That is not my idea, that is President Obama's idea. In fact, I com-

mended him for that because he raised it in the State of the Union, as I recall, about 2 years ago.

Finally, I think we should channel money from the abortion facilities which are receiving America's taxpayer dollars, which most Americans disagree with, by the way, toward nurturing pregnancy health centers, and there are many beautiful examples of this all around the country.

By pursuing these policy proposals, maybe we shift the cultural understanding that it is not a choice between radical autonomy—I can only find strength in myself, me, as an individual, I am alone, abandoned, no matter how much I need others—and a relational responsibility that we all have for one another.

Let's elevate this idea of that relational responsibility of interdependency within community because we are living in a shattered society.

Nothing else is working, Mr. Speaker. We are in an age of anxiety and a time of growing threat to the family, the very basis of the strength of this great Nation.

Now, more than ever, compassion should be our first principle.

Abortion is violence. Abortion is not health care. Abortion is a false choice that no one should ever be forced to make.

Let's elevate the ideal of motherhood, protect it, nurture it, respect it, provide for it, celebrate it, the genius of the feminine, and the beauty of all life.

Mr. Speaker, in a few short weeks, these young people who will, by the thousands, tens of thousands, crowd around this Capitol, they are really telling us one simple truth: Love them both, just love them both.

I yield back the balance of my time.

PROTECTING OUR SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) for 30 minutes.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, it was New Year's Eve in Blanchard, Oklahoma. Eighteen-year-old mother Sarah McKinley, alone with her 3-month-old son, heard a ruckus at the door. Two men were outside trying to break it down. Grabbing her baby and barricading the door with her sofa, she immediately called 911.

In the frantic and desperate situation that followed, it became clear that law enforcement would not arrive in time to prevent the assault by armed intruders. She informed the dispatcher that she had a shotgun, and asked if it was all right to shoot the intruders, should they make their way inside.

Wisely, the dispatcher told Sarah: "I can't tell you to do that, but you do what you have to do to protect that baby."

Sarah already knew what she might have to do, and hoped against hope

that law enforcement, while responding quickly, would arrive in time.

When the armed intruders broke down the door, 24-year-old Justin Martin climbed over the couch and was greeted with a shotgun blast to the chest. While his accomplice ran for his life, Sarah had saved hers and her baby's.

Eight weeks ago, 88-year-old Arlene Orms was at home alone in Miami, Florida, when an intruder kicked in her door. Orms responded by retrieving a .25-caliber pistol, but fired it at the home invader, prompting the criminal to flee.

Following the incident, Orms' neighbors expressed absolute support for her actions, with one telling a local media outlet: "You have to do something. You have to protect yourself."

Arlene Orms, like most Americans, inherently understands that you have the right to defend your life, your property, and your liberty.

The right to keep and bear arms is as fundamental to our freedom as any other inalienable right we enjoy as Americans. This right is God-given, as much as the freedom of religion, and to exercise worship, the freedom to assemble and express, the freedom to own property, and to protect our privacy.

As such, serious-minded individuals must have serious deliberation on any attempt to alter these fundamental American rights that are embodied in the Bill of Rights, inalienable, not granted by government.

In a time where Americans face uncertain threats from terrorists at home, most Americans clearly understand why we must preserve the right to defend ourselves, our families, and our property.

For those who would refuse their right to defend themselves, they have the freedom to do so. They do not have the freedom to make that decision for others.

In terms of human behavior, our survival instincts are inherent. The Creator of the universe did not make human beings with fangs, claws, quills, or odors for their self-defense. Instead, he gave them their intelligence and, by extension, their hands, to fashion implements to protect their lives.

While the President is certainly welcome to choose not to defend himself, as is his right, it is not his right to prohibit others from protecting their lives and property.

The President has histrionically compared his gun control agenda with the advancement of women's suffrage rights and the elimination of slavery, chiding Republicans for their lack of advancement of the human race.

If we look historically, rather than histrionically, it was Republicans who eliminated slavery and embraced Republican activist Susan B. Anthony, the women's suffragist, to get voting rights for all women, where his party had stood in the way.

The President can no more rewrite history than he can rewrite the Con-

stitution. While he may be a constitutional scholar, he needs to be schooled on constitutional history. From Madison, Hamilton, Jefferson, and Adams, all the way to the Supreme Court decisions with *Heller* and *McDonald*, this inalienable right has been affirmed in defense of its articulation in the Bill of Rights.

While the President complains of congressional inaction on the right to keep and bear arms, it can no more take action to deny this right than it could deny a free press, a free religious expression, or property rights to individuals.

Congress will not act to destroy the Bill of Rights, and we will stand in the way of any executive who will not uphold the Constitution of the United States.

Still, the administration presses forward with passion and conviction, convincing Americans that the threat is so grievous, the injury is so great, that Americans must act to inhibit our liberty. We are told that mass shootings are on the rise and gun deaths are out of control and the worst among developed nations.

But before America signs up to eliminate one of her inalienable rights, let's deliberate with a sober mind. The President and his party would report outrage if conservatives suggested that the First Amendment must be scrapped because of such abuses as libel, hate speech, religious bigotry and sit-ins, warranted necessary commonsense reforms to the first of our enumerated freedoms embodied in the Bill of Rights.

Americans recognize that we must face the unpleasantness of abuse of these rights on occasion to secure its inviolable status.

Not the same, some may say. We are talking about outrageous loss of life and injury and it must stop, they claim.

Since when did our security become substitute for our liberty? Americans for 240 years, rather, have sacrificed to secure it.

And the simple truth is, the facts supporting this liberal gun control call to give up an essential American liberty have been widely and unfairly distorted. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 199,756 people lost their lives to firearms in 2014. But on examination, only 15,000 of that number were homicide. That is only 8 percent of the total. The vast majority, over 68 percent, were accident-related, and even that has steadily declined in recent years.

□ 2015

Suicides accounted, sadly, for most of the remainder at 21 percent

But the truth about gun homicides is that you are as likely to die from malignant neoplasm of the esophagus as you are to violent homicide with a firearm. You are twice as likely to die from the result of a fall. You are 2½ times more likely to die by accidental poisoning.

Still, while these incidents are tragic, and many beyond the scope of civilized thinking, we cannot substitute emotion for examination. Contrary to those most vocal—and most funded—voices on this issue, we are not the most violent civilized country on the planet. In fact, according to data compiled from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United States ranks in the bottom half of homicides worldwide among civilized or uncivilized nations.

Still, the President often touts Europe as a commonsense model for better policy and security. A remarkable seven European countries have higher overall per capita homicide rates than the United States. Where is that news flash? Disarming law-abiding citizens as a solution to curtail those that break the law does not necessarily make people safer, but it certainly makes them more defenseless. On our own shores, we can find an example of this line of thinking by examining the most violent cities in America. They are most likely to be ones with the strictest gun laws.

If gun control advocates ignore this body of evidence, as they are wont to do, they will explore ways to eliminate this essential right in America through other means. We often see them turn to the false assertion that the Second Amendment was never intended for individuals—remarkable, considering that James Madison insisted on enumerating inalienable individual rights into the body of the Constitution before he accepted the compromise to secure them through an amending process known as the Bill of Rights. Like all of our Framers and Founders, he understood common or natural law and its roots in the English Bill of Rights of 1689, and it guaranteed the individual right to bear arms.

All of our constitutional Framers would have relied heavily on Sir William Blackstone's thought on law and liberty. This brilliant jurist secured complete influence among every colonial attorney and all of our Founding Fathers with his *Commentaries on the Law* published in 1765. He was explicit in his assertion that to secure individual life, liberty, and property, it was necessary "to the right of having and using arms for self-preservation and defense."

It comes as no surprise then, in the language of common and natural law so clearly understood in the context of the time that the Second Amendment would be so highly placed in the order of individual rights at number two.

Gun control advocates argue the amendment was only for militias, not individual people. Despite that argument being struck down for 225 years in Supreme Court rulings to include the most recent cases of *Heller* and *McDonald* in 2008 and 2010, it is instructive to see what the Framers said themselves about the meaning of people and militias.

Richard Henry Lee wrote in *Federalist* Number 18, that brilliant group

of papers known as the Federalist Papers that argued for our Constitution: "A militia when properly formed are in fact the people themselves. To preserve liberty, it is essential that the whole body of the people always possess arms and be taught alike, especially when young, how to use them."

In fact, when one examines the First and Third through the 10th original amendments, it is difficult to interpret any other meaning than that they apply to individuals. The Second Amendment is no exception. The Supreme Court has always agreed.

The famous 14th Amendment, during Reconstruction after Black Americans were freed from slavery—you know, that famous amendment that is the most referred to—guarantees equal protection under the law for all American citizens. It started out, and most Americans are not aware of this, as a Second and Fourth Amendment issue.

The Southern Democratic Party lawmakers were nullifying individual liberty with their State Black Code laws which deprived Black Americans of their right to liberty, property, and to keep and bear arms as they attempted to defend their homes. Republicans fought back against these lawmakers and then led the fight to pass legislation addressing the issue in 1868. Democratic President Andrew Johnson vetoed the bill. Congress overrode it and then secured their rights forever in the 14th Amendment to the Constitution.

In fact, the Supreme Court has determined with clarity that the constitutional individual right of Americans to bear arms is guaranteed on Federal enclaves such as Washington, D.C., with the *Heller v. District of Columbia* decision. In *McDonald v. Chicago*, the Supreme Court in 2010 held that the individual right extends to keeping and bearing arms to all States and territorial jurisdictions.

Okay. Fine, you say. But there is no reason why people need military-style firearms. Those need to be banned. The Framers of the Constitution and the Supreme Court, strangely, to those who would have this way of thinking, would disagree.

In 1939, *United States v. Miller*, Justice Holmes speaking for the Court in the case where one Mr. MILLER asserted he had a constitutional right to bear a sawed-off shotgun without paying a special exemption tax of \$200, the Supreme Court held that no such right existed on the grounds that sawed-off shotguns of the very short length Mr. MILLER possessed were not suitable as a military-type firearm if needed for common defense—a paraphrase, not a quote.

1997, *Printz v. United States*, Justice Clarence Thomas, our most recent treatment of the Second Amendment prior to the late Supreme Court decisions, stated that they reversed the District of Columbia's invalidation of the National Firearms Act enacted in 1934. In *Miller*, we determined the Second Amendment did not guarantee a

citizen's right to possess a sawed-off shotgun because the weapon had not been shown to be of "ordinary military equipment" that could "contribute to the common defense."

Ban military rifles you say? Throughout our history, they have been guaranteed as an essential portion of the defense of our liberty, our homes, and our lives.

What about the terrorist watch list? Nobody on the terrorist watch list ought to be able to own a firearm. The terrorist watch list is only on suspicion—no court, no rule of law, no jury of your peers. It is on suspicion for surveillance, and it can be done bureaucratically and administratively. In fact, we have had several Members of Congress, such as my colleague from Alaska, DON YOUNG, who was falsely and inadvertently put on the terrorist watch list. Under this line of thinking, his Second Amendment rights would be removed.

Well, we can't have these terrorists coming here and then being able to buy a firearm. They can't. People do not understand 18 U.S. Code. They don't understand the law. If you are a non-resident legal alien, you cannot possess, purchase, or receive a firearm. It is the law. There are only very small rare exceptions for that, such as if you were approved for a specialized hunting trip or maybe you were armed security for a head of state, for example.

Well, what about that gun show loophole? Businesses shouldn't be able to sell firearms without a background check. News flash: You cannot sell a firearm under a business license without a background check. If you do so, whether you are on your property or off your property at a gun show, you are committing a felony and with strict sentencing laws often that are minimum sentences of 10 years or more.

Well, what about Internet sales? You can go online and you can just order a rifle, and they will ship it to your home—again, false. People do not understand the law.

The United States Postal Service and our commercial carriers do not allow shipping of firearms except under licensed dealers. The only exception to that would be if you had an original manufacturer's warranty and you ship it directly back to the manufacturer under their license, and they will receive it and send it only directly back.

As the only Member of Congress who owns a firearms manufacturing business, I know about what I speak. If someone in another State were to try to order a firearm off of our Web site, it would never get shipped to their home or I would go to prison. Instead, we tell that person: You need to get the local firearms licensee in your area to send a certified copy of your license to us, and they are in a form where we can recognize what is a real license. When we receive that, we will ship it to him, they will do the check, and you will fill out forms and you can receive

your firearm. That is the way the law works.

So all of this outrage from my colleagues on the liberal left of trying to fix things, the law already exists. It is like saying that we need to do something about murder. We need to make some laws to stop murder. Maybe they will quit doing that. Oh, we already have those laws, and people still commit crime.

Therein is where we need to focus. Target the abusers, not the law-abiding American citizen, and do not target the Republic of the most incredible constitutional form of law the world has ever known.

Serious people decline to trivialize any right expressly addressed in the Bill of Rights. A government that abrogates any of the Bill of Rights with or without majority approval forever acts illegitimately and loses the moral right to govern the Republic. This is the uncompromising understanding reflected in the warning that America's gun owners will not go gently into these utopian woods.

While liberals and gun control advocates will take such a statement as evidence of their belief in the backwater, violent, and untrustworthy nature of the armed American citizens, we gun owners hope that liberals hold equally strong conviction about their printing presses, their Internet blogs, and their television cameras. The Republic depends upon the fervent devotion to all of our fundamental rights. That is the oath that we take, and no President's tears will ever shake us from the defense of that Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. RUSH (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of attending to family member's medical procedure.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 3762. An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 2002 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 27 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, January 8, 2016, at 9 a.m.