

NOT VOTING—42

Bishop (UT)	Goodlatte	Miller (MI)
Boustany	Govdy	Payne
Brady (TX)	Grayson	Rohrabacher
Carter (TX)	Griffith	Rush
DeLauro	Grijalva	Sanchez, Loretta
Duffy	Gutiérrez	Simpson
Ellmers (NC)	Herrera Beutler	Sinema
Farenthold	Hinojosa	Stutzman
Farr	Hurt (VA)	Takai
Fattah	Kind	Thornberry
Fincher	Labrador	Weber (TX)
Flores	Marchant	Webster (FL)
Forbes	Meeks	Whitfield
Garamendi	Meng	Wilson (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK) (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1902

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on roll-call No. 298, I was unavoidably detained and unable to return to Washington, D.C. in time to cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5053, PREVENTING IRS ABUSE AND PROTECTING FREE SPEECH ACT; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5293, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017

Mr. STIVERS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-621) on the resolution (H. Res. 778) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5053) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit the Secretary of the Treasury from requiring that the identity of contributors to 501(c) organizations be included in annual returns; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5293) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the additional motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

NSF MAJOR RESEARCH FACILITY REFORM ACT OF 2016

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the

bill (H.R. 5049) to provide for improved management and oversight of major multi-user research facilities funded by the National Science Foundation, to ensure transparency and accountability of construction and management costs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5049

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "NSF Major Research Facility Reform Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) DIRECTOR.—The term "Director" means the Director of the Foundation.

(2) FOUNDATION.—The term "Foundation" means the National Science Foundation established under section 2 of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950 (42 U.S.C. 1861).

(3) MAJOR MULTI-USER RESEARCH FACILITY.—The term "major multi-user research facility" means a science and engineering infrastructure construction project that exceeds the lesser of 10 percent of a Directorate's annual budget or \$100,000,000 in total project cost that is funded in the major research equipment and facilities construction account, or any successor thereto.

SEC. 3. MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT OF LARGE FACILITIES.

(a) LARGE FACILITIES OFFICE.—The Director shall maintain a Large Facilities Office. The functions of the Large Facilities Office shall be to support the research directorates in the development, implementation, and assessment of major multi-user research facilities, including by—

(1) serving as the Foundation's primary resource for all policy or process issues related to the development and implementation of major multi-user research facilities;

(2) serving as a Foundation-wide resource on project management, including providing expert assistance on nonscientific and non-technical aspects of project planning, budgeting, implementation, management, and oversight;

(3) coordinating and collaborating with research directorates to share best management practices and lessons learned from prior projects; and

(4) assessing projects during preconstruction and construction phases for cost and schedule risk.

(b) OVERSIGHT OF LARGE FACILITIES.—The Director shall appoint a senior agency official as head of the Large Facilities Office whose responsibility is oversight of the development, construction, and transfer to operations of major multi-user research facilities across the Foundation.

(c) POLICIES FOR LARGE FACILITY COSTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall ensure that the Foundation's policies for developing and maintaining major multi-user research facility construction costs are consistent with the best practices described in the March 2009 Government Accountability Office Report GAO-09-3SP, or any successor report thereto, the Uniform Guidance in 2 C.F.R. part 200, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation as appropriate.

(2) COST PROPOSAL ANALYSIS.—

(A) GENERAL REQUIREMENT.—The Director shall ensure that an external cost proposal analysis is conducted for any major multi-user research facility.

(B) RESOLUTION OF ISSUES FOUND.—The Director, or a senior agency official within the

Office of the Director designated by the Director, shall certify in writing that all issues identified during the cost analysis, including any findings of unjustified or questionable cost items, are resolved before the Foundation may execute a construction agreement with respect to the project.

(C) TRANSMITTAL TO CONGRESS.—The Director shall transmit each certification made under subparagraph (B) to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

(3) INCURRED COST AUDITS.—The Director shall ensure that an incurred cost audit is conducted at least biennially on any major multi-user research facility, in accordance with Government Auditing Standards as established in Government Accountability Office Report GAO-12-331G, or any successor report thereto, with the first incurred cost audit to commence no later than 12 months after execution of the construction agreement.

(4) CONTINGENCIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided for in subparagraph (C)(ii), the Foundation shall—

(i) provide oversight for contingency in accordance with Cost Principles Uniform Guidance in 2 C.F.R. part 200.433, or any successor thereto, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation as appropriate, except as provided in this paragraph; and

(ii) not make any award which provides for contributions to a contingency reserve held or managed by the awardee, as defined in 2 C.F.R. part 200.433(c).

(B) UPDATING POLICY MANUAL.—The Foundation shall update its Large Facilities Manual and any other applicable guidance for contingencies on major multi-user research facilities with regard to estimating, monitoring, and accounting for contingency.

(C) FOUNDATION REQUIREMENTS.—The policy updated under subparagraph (B) shall require that the Foundation—

(i) may only include contingency amounts in an award in accordance with Cost Principles Uniform Guidance in 2 C.F.R. part 200.433, or any successor thereto, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation as appropriate; and

(ii) shall retain control over funds budgeted for contingency, but may disburse budgeted contingency funds incrementally to the awardee to ensure project stability and continuity.

(D) AWARDEE REQUIREMENTS.—The policy updated under subparagraph (B) shall require that an awardee shall—

(i) provide verifiable documentation to support any amounts proposed for contingencies; and

(ii) support requests for the release of contingency funds with evidence of a bona fide need and that the amounts allocated to the performance baseline are reasonable and allowable.

(E) CURRENT AWARDEES.—The Foundation shall work with awardees for whom awards with contingency provisions have been made before the date of enactment of this Act—

(i) to determine if any of their use of contingency funds represents out-of-scope changes for which Foundation's prior written approval was not obtained; and

(ii) if out-of-scope changes are found, to identify any financial action that may be appropriate.

(5) MANAGEMENT FEES.—

(A) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph, the term "management fee" means a portion of an award made by the Foundation for the purpose of covering ordinary and legitimate business expenses necessary to maintain

operational stability which are not otherwise allowable under Cost Principles Uniform Guidance in 2 C.F.R. part 200, Subpart E, or any successor regulation thereto.

(B) **LIMITATION.**—The Foundation may provide a management fee under an award only if the awardee provides justification as to the need for such funds. In such cases, the Foundation shall take into account the awardee's overall financial circumstances when determining the amount of the fee if justified.

(C) **FINANCIAL INFORMATION.**—The Foundation shall require award applicants to provide income and financial information covering a period of no less than 3 prior years (or in the case of an entity established less than 3 years prior to the entity's application date, the period beginning on the date of establishment and ending on the application date), including cash on hand and net asset information, in support of a request for management fees. The Foundation shall also require awardees to report to the Foundation annually any sources of non-Federal funds received in excess of \$50,000 during the award period.

(D) **EXPENSE REPORTING.**—The Foundation shall require awardees to track and report to the Foundation annually all expenses reimbursed or otherwise paid for with management fee funds, in accordance with Federal accounting practices as established in Government Accountability Office Report GAO-12-331G, or any successor report thereto.

(E) **AUDITS.**—The Inspector General of the Foundation may audit any Foundation award for compliance with this paragraph.

(F) **PROHIBITED USES.**—An awardee may not use management fees for—

(i) costs allowable under Cost Principles Uniform Guidance in 2 C.F.R. part 200, Subpart E, or any successor regulation thereto;

(ii) alcoholic beverages;

(iii) tickets to concerts, sporting, or other entertainment events;

(iv) vacation or other travel for nonbusiness purposes;

(v) charitable contributions, except for a charitable contribution of direct benefit to the project or activity supported by the management fee;

(vi) social or sporting club memberships;

(vii) meals or entertainment for nonbusiness purposes;

(viii) luxury or personal items;

(ix) lobbying, as described in the Uniform Guidance at 2 C.F.R. 200.450; or

(x) any other purpose the Foundation determines is inappropriate.

(G) **REVIEW.**—The Foundation shall review management fee usage for each Foundation award on at least an annual basis for compliance with this paragraph and the Foundation's Large Facilities Manual.

(6) **REPORT.**—Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit to Congress a report describing the Foundation's policies for developing and managing major multi-user research facility construction costs, including a description of any aspects of the policies that diverge from the best practices recommended in Government Accountability Office Report GAO-09-3SP, or any successor report thereto, and the Uniform Guidance in 2 C.F.R. part 200.

(7) **NONCOMPLIANCE.**—The Director shall ensure that the Foundation shall take the enforcement actions specified in 45 C.F.R. 92.43 for noncompliance with this section.

SEC. 4. WHISTLEBLOWER EDUCATION.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Foundation shall be subject to section 4712 of title 41, United States Code.

(b) **EDUCATION AND TRAINING.**—The Foundation shall provide education and training for

Foundation managers and staff on the requirements of such section 4712, and provide information on such section to all awardees, contractors, and employees of such awardees and contractors.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. **LOUDERMILK**) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. **EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. **LOUDERMILK**. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 5049, the bill now under consideration.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. **LOUDERMILK**. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased to sponsor H.R. 5049, the NSF Major Research Facility Reform Act of 2016, to improve the management and oversight of major multi-user research facilities that are funded by the National Science Foundation and to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent with transparency and accountability.

The NSF funds a variety of large research projects through cooperative agreements, including multi-user research facilities, tools for research and education, and instrumentation networks. Current construction projects underway include the Large Synoptic Survey Telescope, the Daniel Inouye Solar Telescope, and the National Ecological Observatory Network, otherwise known as NEON. These 5- to 10-year construction projects range from \$350 million to \$500 million in total project cost. The proper stewardship of taxpayer dollars is paramount when executing projects of this magnitude.

The Committee on Science, Space, and Technology held a number of hearings over the last year and a half on these large research projects, including several on the NEON Project, after learning about the mismanagement of appropriated funds. Specifically, the hearings discussed the findings of two financial audits. One of those audits discovered that NEON was allowed to use Federal taxpayer dollars for explicitly unallowable costs, including liquor, lobbying, and a lavish holiday party.

Both audits of the NEON Project were initiated by the NSF inspector general due to concerns about the lack of review of costs by the NSF. In addition, the IG had concerns about the NSF's accounting financial controls of major research facilities prior to entering into cooperative agreements. The IG's work, combined with the oversight of this committee's, resulted in the National Academy of Public Administration's, also known as NAPA, con-

ducting a commissioned review of the NSF's management of cooperative agreements.

The bill I bring to the floor today is a product of many recommendations that were made by the NSF IG, the auditors, NAPA, and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

First, the bill enhances the role of the NSF Large Facilities Office in project management, giving it statutory permanence and ensuring that expert management staff at the NSF work with scientific program staff throughout all phases of project development and construction. It also requires a senior agency official to have responsibility for the oversight of the office.

Second, the bill requires the NSF to commission an external cost proposal analysis for all major multi-user research facilities with a total project cost of over \$100 million. This will ensure that proposed construction budgets are reasonable while allowing the NSF and the awardee to address all cost issues before construction begins. This small investment at the beginning of the award will pay off in savings for the life of the construction project.

Third, the bill requires an incurred cost audit at least every 2 years during construction, starting 1 year after the execution of the agreement. These regular audits will help ensure that a project is on track and will detect problems while something can still be done to remedy the problem, not after the project is well on its way to being over budget or is already complete.

Fourth, the bill increases agency control over project contingency funds by requiring the NSF to retain the majority of the funds rather than the awardee. Reflecting the input of many stakeholders, the bill allows the NSF to disburse contingency funds incrementally to the awardee to allow for project continuity and stability. Contingency expenditures must be supported by verifiable cost data, and the awardee must record and report all contingency expenditures to the NSF.

Next, the bill closes loopholes for the use of management fees, codifying regulations that the NSF has recently put into place to ensure taxpayer funds are never abused again. This prohibition includes alcohol, concert tickets, unnecessary travel, and lobbying. The bill also requires awardees to demonstrate a financial need to justify management fees which are included as part of the award.

Finally, the bill has a provision that supports the education of the NSF grant awardees and their employees on the law that protects whistleblowers. It was thanks to a whistleblower auditor that many of the issues with the NEON Project were brought to light.

As a former small business owner and as the former director of a nonprofit, I, wholeheartedly, understand the importance of accountability. The fact that the NSF is mishandling American taxpayer dollars, with little consequence,

is inexcusable. What is even more inexcusable is that the NSF has received warnings about this kind of irresponsible spending over the past 4 years, and it has not taken adequate measures to resolve the matter.

This bill will ensure that the NSF makes the systematic changes necessary to restore confidence in federally funded research projects and that taxpayers can trust us with their money in their knowing that it will be spent in the manner it was intended.

I thank Chairman SMITH for his support in moving this bill forward, and I ask my colleagues to join me in passing these commonsense reforms.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 5049, the NSF Major Research Facility Reform Act of 2016. While I support the passage of this bill in the House today, I do so with some reservations, which I will discuss later in my remarks.

Major research facilities play a central role in helping the NSF meet its mission to promote the progress of science and cultivate the next generation of scientists and innovators. These facilities include telescopes, research ships, engineering test beds, and other cutting-edge research platforms. We recently held a hearing to congratulate the scientists who are working on one such endeavor, the LIGO project, which detected gravity waves.

As the LIGO project demonstrated, these efforts involving major facilities have the potential to generate profound breakthroughs in science and to inspire a whole new generation of our best and brightest to pursue careers in STEM. However, these major facilities also cost a lot of money. Properly managing those large expenses is critical to ensuring the success of the major facilities projects and is, ultimately, critical to the advancement of science.

The intent of this bill is a good one. It is to ensure the proper oversight and accountability for the National Science Foundation's investments in major research facilities.

The National Science Foundation manages about 15 research facilities across its diverse science and engineering portfolio. In any given year, three or four new major facilities are under construction. H.R. 5049 largely addresses the design and construction phase of these facilities, which is the highest-risk phase.

Republican and Democratic members and staff of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology worked together over many weeks to develop and move through the committee a bill that addresses the need for strong oversight and accountability while taking into consideration the legitimate concerns of the agency and stakeholder groups about unintended consequences. I appreciate the work of Mr. LOUDERMILK and Chairman SMITH and

the Republican and Democratic staffs in this regard. However, the devil is always in the details, and I hope that discussion will continue on some of the details if this legislation continues to move forward.

The fact is that every other Federal agency is held to governmentwide standards and policies for contracting. In this bill, we are creating a different set of rules with less flexibility for the National Science Foundation even though the Foundation's record, overall, has been a very good one and even though the Foundation has taken many aggressive steps already to rectify deficiencies where they did exist.

As such, I hope that we tread carefully. Given that the impetus for this bill was one project that went awry because of an inexperienced project management team, the last thing we want to do is to enact a law that discourages the most experienced project management professionals from doing business with the NSF, thereby increasing the risk to the taxpayer.

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In closing, I want to thank Mr. LOUDERMILK and Chairman SMITH for working with us to improve the legislation; and I hope we continue to work with the agency, the National Science Board, and the expert stakeholders to ensure we achieve our shared goals of both safeguarding taxpayers' money and promoting the progress of science.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the majority leader.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, the Innovation Initiative is about two things: enabling innovation in the private sector, and bringing innovation into government.

It has now been 3 months since we started the Innovation Initiative. In that time, we have met with innovators at the forefront of both our missions. Today in the House, we are focused on harnessing innovation for the public good.

Just moments ago, we passed Representative DARIN LAHOOD's bill to advance networking and information technology research and development; and now we are considering BARRY LOUDERMILK's reform of the National Science Foundation.

Basic research and development investment is important as we strive to remain at the cutting edge of technologies that will offer Americans a happier and healthier life. But when the integrity of such efforts at public institutions is compromised, as happened with the major NSF facility that experienced massive cost overruns last year, it calls into question the entire model. So this bill makes changes to our research facilities to make them operate with transparency and accountability.

When you look across our government, you can see inefficiencies, a lack

of accountability, and practices and policies that just don't make sense. That is bad for the workers, it is bad for business, and, most importantly, it is bad for America.

Here in the House, we aren't accepting the status quo. If it doesn't make sense, we are getting rid of it. If it is holding back innovation, we are changing it.

Mr. Speaker, we will surely consider more pieces of innovation initiative in the weeks and months to come. Unleashing the power of innovation, we will ensure American leadership now and into the future.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), the chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Mr. LOUDERMILK is the chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee's Oversight Subcommittee, and I appreciate all the work he has done on this bill.

H.R. 5049, the NSF Major Research Facility Reform Act, is the second bill today that is part of Majority Leader MCCARTHY's Innovation Initiative. We appreciate all of his efforts on this and other innovation bills, which now total 17.

This legislation addresses an issue about which the Science, Space, and Technology Committee has expressed concerns for the last 2 years: the National Science Foundation past management of major research facility projects.

The Science, Space, and Technology Committee seeks to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent on research in the national interest, not wasted on mismanagement and questionable costs.

This bill achieves that goal. It addresses gaps in project oversight and management through solutions identified by the NSF inspector general, auditors, an outside review panel, and the Science, Space, and Technology Committee's own oversight for a year and a half.

Last year, in the wake of several reports of project waste and mismanagement, NSF Director France A. Cordova agreed to commission a study by the National Academy of Public Administration to take a closer look at how NSF could better manage large-scale research projects. The study's report offered 13 recommendations to improve NSF's management of cooperative agreements.

Although NSF has begun to implement some of the recommendations, there is still a need to implement four key measures addressed in this bill: preconstruction verification of total project cost, incurred cost audits during construction, better control over contingency funds, and proper use of taxpayer-funded management fees.

The bill's approach to these four reforms ensures that no current or future large-scale research project faces the same financial mismanagement that plagued one of NSF's largest projects, the \$400 million National Ecological Observatory Network, called NEON. Last September, we learned that the project was likely to be \$80 million overbudget and 18 months behind schedule. I recognize that the NSF is taking steps to better manage the cost of NEON, which include firing the management organization; however, it is time to make systemic changes for all current and future major research projects.

The accountability provisions in the bill have been developed with input from the minority, the NSF, and many stakeholders. We incorporated many of their suggestions during the markup of the bill in committee on April 27, and the bill was reported out of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee by voice vote.

Our staff has continued to work with the minority on the report that was filed with the bill to make sure our intentions in the underlying bill are clear. Although I believe the current NSF leadership is committed to improving its management of these construction projects, we need to make sure that the NSF will make the systemic changes necessary in a timely and permanent fashion. This change of how the NSF does business should outlast the current administration.

Many stakeholders have expressed support for the bill since it provides certainty for how the NSF will operate. All agencies as well as their grantees and contractors need to be held accountable for how they spend taxpayers' hard-earned dollars. The basic responsibility of any government agency is to act in the national interest.

H.R. 5049 will reduce waste, fraud, and abuse and make more resources available for quality basic research. This will lead to scientific discoveries, spur technological innovation, create new industries, and provide better jobs for Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of this good government accountability bill.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to know that this is a part of the innovation project. There are a number of good bills in the committee that we could really make a part of that package.

I have no further speakers, and I urge support of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this strong bipartisan measure.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MACARTHUR). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5049, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DOTTERER FAMILY CELEBRATES 65 YEARS OF FARMING IN CLINTON COUNTY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate members of the Dotterer family in Clinton County on the 65th anniversary of the their farm, which they celebrated earlier this month.

The Dotterer farm was founded in 1951, when Paul and Jean Dotterer started with just 15 dairy cows and 147 acres. Their hard work paid off, since today the farm includes approximately 950 dairy cows and about 3,000 acres of land, which provides for a harvest of many different crops. The farm is now in its third generation.

Members of the Dotterer family are proud that the milk from their farm is sold locally. In fact, it can be found on the shelves of grocery stores just miles away from their farm.

As a member of the House Agriculture Committee, I know how important farming is to not only Pennsylvania's economy, but to our Nation. It is wonderful to see family farms that are being passed from generation to generation, feeding their communities, our Nation, and the entire world.

I wish the Dotterer family continued success and prosperity in the future.

ORLANDO TRAGEDY

(Mr. CÁRDENAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I am beyond heartbroken from the circumstances of Orlando. I mourn with my fellow Americans the 50 lives lost, 53 people maimed and damaged by this preventable tragedy.

32,000 American lives are lost each year from gun violence. Every elected congressional Member has promised America that the safety of the people is what we or she or he will work on.

We as a Congress do nothing to make our country safer. Why? Because you, Mr. Speaker, refuse to consider any legislation tied to gun violence. Why won't you allow a hearing, a committee discussion on the issue of gun violence?

My moment of silence resolution is waiting for your signature. It would require this House of Congress to hold a hearing on the tragedy in Orlando.

It is time to act. The people are waiting on us to do our job.

8-YEAR-OLD VICTIM OF SEX SLAVERY

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it happened right under the entire community's nose: 8-year-old Jen—that is correct, 8 years old—was raped and tortured almost on a daily basis. Jen was not kidnapped by a stranger or abused by a relative. She was sold for sex by a neighbor at the neighbor's house. It was not just Jen who was sold for sex. It was also her younger sister, a male cousin, and a whole group of kids from her hometown of Norristown, Pennsylvania.

She and her fellow victims were coerced into participating and keeping it a secret through an elaborate con of gifts and threats. No one ever went looking for Jen because she was not ever missing. From 3 to 6 p.m., she was forced to have sex with strangers.

The trafficking finally ended when she was about 10 years of age because the neighbor just disappeared.

Mr. Speaker, sex slavery happens. As parents and grandparents, we need to know where our kids are because monsters that hurt victims must be prosecuted, both the sellers and the buyers, even if they are neighbors.

The message is clear: Our children are not for sale. Leave them alone.

And that is just the way it is.

ORLANDO, FLORIDA, TRAGEDY

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise first of all to acknowledge my colleague, Congresswoman CORRINE BROWN, in whose district this heinous, terroristic, hateful act occurred. I acknowledge my hometown of Houston, where, as I stand here today, they are mourning with memorials that will be held today, Tuesday, and Wednesday in solidarity with the people of Orlando, Florida.

I also rise with great pain in joining my colleague, Congresswoman BROWN, to introduce legislation to push and to remind individuals about the violence that is taking place through the weapons of war that we are allowing to be sold on the streets of America.

It is high time for this body to stop standing in memoriam and for a 1-minute speech and to pass the ban on assault weapons and high-caliber bullets that are destroying and killing and destroying and killing. It has been told that there were bodies whose legs were taken off by the bullets. I ask this body to recognize that we can no longer talk, talk, talk. We must do, do, do.

We will fight till our last breath to demand that the Constitution be respected, Mr. Speaker—as I end—the