

I am so proud today to join with my colleagues on the issue of what do we do in the United States Congress, the body that deliberates the major issues of the day, the body that is entrusted by the people who put their faith and trust in their elected representatives to do right, to do right by the American people, yes, to keep them and their families safe.

In Connecticut, gun homicides in 2013 were 71; in 2014, 56—we went down; 2015, 79. Probably one of the most searing events in the United States of America was the massacre of children, of babies in Sandy Hook. That isn't to say that in every city in this country children are not dying every day. Since Sandy Hook, one American child is killed every single day. These are our children. Almost 100,000 have died by gun violence since Sandy Hook.

What I would like to do is to read to you the names of victims at Sandy Hook. These are not what we are here today to speak about. Yes, we talk about statistics and we talk about percentages, but what is important is to know about the flesh and blood behind those numbers.

At Sandy Hook:

Rachel D'Avino, 29, a teacher's aide.

Dawn Hochsprung, 47, principal of Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Ann Marie Murphy, 52, a teacher's aide.

Lauren Rousseau, 30, a teacher.

Mary Sherlach, 56, school psychologist.

Victoria Leigh Soto, 27, a teacher who hid her children in a closet. And I know, because she was a constituent, her family today suffers every day because of her loss. She shielded these babies, and she lost her life.

And who are these babies?

Charlotte Bacon, 6 years old.

Daniel Barden, 7.

Olivia Engel, 6.

Josephine Gay, 7.

Dylan Hockley, 6.

Madeleine Hsu, 6.

Catherine Hubbard, 6.

Chase Kowalski, 7.

Jesse Lewis, 6.

Ana Marquez-Greene, 6.

James Mattioli, 6.

Grace McDonnell, 7.

Emilie Parker, 6.

Jack Pinto, 6.

Noah Pozner, 6.

Caroline Previdi, 6.

Jessica Rekos, 6.

Avielle Richman, 6.

Benjamin Wheeler, 6.

Allison Wyatt, 6.

We all have children. We have grandchildren. And I won't forget that day because my grandchildren at that time were 5, 6, 7, and 8 years old. I had to steel myself to be away from them because when I looked at them I just began to cry, because it can be anyone's child, anyone's grandchild who will lose their life.

One child every single day is killed by gun violence in the United States of America. They leave families, they

leave siblings who are unable to even cope with the sense of loss. These families have tried to channel their grief by the Newtown Promise.

Why are we here today? We are here today to say: universal background checks; no fly, no buy. It is as simple as that.

And for me personally, as my colleague from Rhode Island said, we should ban assault weapons. We should ban them. That is what occurred at Sandy Hook and several other of these tragedies.

The American people sent us here to vote. That is what you have done, demand that this Congress vote on this issue. Debate it and vote, and people can be free to vote whatever way they choose to, but our Constitution says we vote on these issues.

We should not be denied. Those children all over America, the adults, should not be forgotten. They should be remembered and that this body was allowed to vote on their behalf.

WE SHOULD PROTECT ARTISTS AND SONGWRITERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, the DMCA, as it is commonly known here in this Chamber, is nearly 20 years old.

Now, just as a reminder, 20 years ago, Google was being born. Americans were out dancing the "Macarena," and they were holding cell phones that were the size of bricks. That was 20 years ago.

Tech companies like YouTube may have changed the way Americans consume music, but our laws have not kept pace to protect the songwriters and the artists who actually create that music.

This week, 180 musical artists and songwriters, including Taylor Swift, Paul McCartney, The Black Keys, and the bands Chicago and U2, sent a letter to Congress calling for the reform of the 1998 Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a copy of this letter.

DEAR CONGRESS: The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) is broken and no longer works for creators.

As songwriters and artists who are a vital contributing force to the U.S. and to American exports around the world, we are writing to express our concern about the ability of the next generation of creators to earn a living. The existing laws threaten the continued viability of songwriters and recording artists to survive from the creation of music. Aspiring creators shouldn't have to decide between making music and making a living. Please protect them.

One of the biggest problems confronting songwriters and recording artists today is the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. This law was written and passed in an era that is technologically out-of-date compared to the era in which we live. It has allowed major tech companies to grow and generate huge profits by creating ease of use for consumers

to carry almost every recorded song in history in their pocket via a smartphone, while songwriters' and artists' earnings continue to diminish. Music consumption has skyrocketed, but the monies earned by individual writers and artists for that consumption has plummeted.

The DMCA simply doesn't work. It's impossible for tens of thousands of individual songwriters and artists to muster the resources necessary to comply with its application. The tech companies who benefit from the DMCA today were not the intended protectorate when it was signed into law nearly two decades ago. We ask you to enact sensible reform that balances the interests of creators with the interests of the companies who exploit music for their financial enrichment. It's only then that consumers will truly benefit.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Here is the problem: the DMCA safe harbor provision.

What this does, YouTube has created a platform where anyone with a smartphone can access nearly any song ever recorded. Often this content is infringed, and it does not—does not—compensate the artist who created it.

The safe harbor provision immunizes YouTube from claims of copyright infringement if it removes the infringing content in a timely fashion after YouTube has been notified by an artist or a record company. With millions of songs on YouTube, it is really impossible.

Grammy-winning jazz/classical composer Maria Schneider has said the following about the DMCA: "The DMCA makes it my responsibility to police the entire Internet on a daily basis. As fast as I take my music down, it reappears again on the same site like an endless Whac-A-Mole game."

This not only threatens the vitality of songwriters but the economic contributions they make in our communities. Take my home area in Tennessee. A 2012 study shows that in Nashville itself the music industry is a \$5.5 billion asset to the economy. Looking at the entire middle Tennessee region, it is \$9.7 billion.

This is a fundamental American principle. If you make something, if you create something, it belongs to you. In no other walk of life do we allow people to steal the work of others and turn a blind eye, except when it comes to songwriters and entertainers.

Our friends in the tech industry, who do little to nothing to see that the songwriter is protected on their platforms, are the first ones to complain if one of their patents is slightly infringed upon. So I ask them, why are their creations deserving of protection but the creations of others are not? It is unfair, and they know it.

But creators are not going to keep taking it. The times, they are a-changin', as Bob Dylan would say. That is why, for years, I have sought to protect music creators through legislation, like the Fair Play Fair Pay Act that Representative NADLER and I are working on and the Songwriter Equity Act.

To our friends in the tech industry, I say this: willful blindness or situational ethics aren't okay; ignorance

and denial, not acceptable; and refusing to pay people for their work is unfair, and it really needs to stop.

This is about fairness, and it is about honoring the law by enforcing the law. It is that simple.

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DEBATE GUN CONTROL LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Maine (Ms. PINGREE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Speaker, we should not be here today.

We should not have to come to the floor of the House of Representatives to beg the majority party just to debate and vote on commonsense gun legislation that the vast majority of Americans demand. We should not be living in a society where debate and even scientific research about gun violence are stifled and silenced by the majority in Congress, and we should not live in a country where gun violence takes such a toll on our citizens.

But here we are, standing up for the millions of Americans who want Congress to do something and honoring the thousands of Americans who have lost their lives to gun violence. Here we are, standing up for our constituents who are tired of the excuses and want to hear a debate and want to see us take action on gun violence. And here we are today to represent the victims.

The list is so long: Orlando, San Bernardino, Newton, Fort Hood, Charleston. The list goes on. Nine in a church, 23 in a restaurant, 26 in an elementary school, and now 49 in a nightclub. The victims are men and women, Black and White, rich and poor, old and young.

At a McDonald's in California, an 8-month-old baby was killed, along with his mother who was trying to shelter him when a gunman came in and started shooting.

At a North Carolina nursing home, a 98-year-old grandmother was killed when a shooter came in and opened fire.

Here in the United States, you are 10 times more likely to be killed by a gun than in any other developed Nation in the world. Of the 23 richest and most developed countries in the world, we have, by far, the most gun violence. We have half the population of the other 22, but 90 percent of the women killed by a gun are killed by a gun in the United States. Ninety-one percent of the children under age 14, who are killed by a gun, are killed by a gun in the United States. And if you are a young person in this country, you are 50 times more likely to die of a gun death than in all of those other countries. We have the most guns and we have the most gun violence.

Mr. Speaker, we have the NRA. Through fear, intimidation, and misinformation, the NRA has taken control over the debate on guns to such an ex-

tent that we cannot even vote in this Chamber on whether we should keep guns out of the hands of terrorists.

Right now, someone can be on both the terrorist watch list and the no-fly list. In other words, the FBI thinks you are a terrorist and the TSA bans you from flying, but if you want to drive down to your local gun store and buy an assault rifle, there is nothing anyone can do to stop you.

Over the last 10 years, people on the terrorist watch list tried to buy explosives or firearms 2,233 times. Over 90 percent of the time, they were successful. This is wrong. The American people know it is wrong, public health officials know it is wrong, and nearly every single law enforcement association in America knows it is wrong, which is why they are all in favor of closing the terrorist gun loophole. In fact, a recent poll by a Republican pollster found 76 percent of gun owners and 71 percent of NRA members said suspected terrorists should not be allowed to buy guns.

If you were to walk outside the House of Representatives right now and stop someone walking down the street and ask the simple question: Should terrorists be allowed to buy guns, you would get a very simple answer. They would say: No, of course terrorists should not be allowed to buy guns.

But they can. Republicans here in the House won't even let us have a debate and a vote on it.

How did we get here, Mr. Speaker? How has the debate shifted so far away from commonsense gun regulation that a proposal to close the terrorist gun loophole is this controversial? Why is it that, here in the House, debate is silenced and we are not allowed to vote?

The closest we came to a debate on gun legislation recently came last week when a controversy erupted about the standard procedure to observe a moment of silence on the House floor after a mass shooting.

Mr. Speaker, it is shameful that we have allowed this country to get to a point where Congress has to even have a standard procedure to observe mass shootings, yet we aren't even allowed to have a debate about legislation to address this problem.

It is time for us to stand up to the NRA, to have a fair and open debate about gun violence, and it is time for all of us to do our job representing the American people.

EPIDEMIC OF GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today heartbroken and angered once again by the rampant epidemic of gun violence plaguing our Nation. Gun violence is on the rise across the country. I am not just talking about the tragic mass shootings that grip our collective attention. I am talking

about the everyday shootings that go undetected by the national media.

Last year, gun deaths became the number one killer of youths aged 16-24. We are on track to break this record in 2016.

Just this past Father's Day weekend, 41 people were shot—13 of them fatally—in Chicago. The shootings in those 60 hours claimed the city's 300th recorded homicide this year. This is the list of the names of the people who have lost their lives to gun violence. I don't have enough time to name every name.

Amari Brown, 7 years old, was the youngest. He was shot in the back.

In 2016 alone, more than 1,800 people have been shot across Chicago.

Among this weekend's victims was 3-year-old Devon Quinn. On Sunday, Devon was riding with his father to pick up his mother from work when a hail of bullets hit their car. Devon is still hospitalized.

Devon's story is, unfortunately, all too common in communities like some of the ones that I represent, where a trip down the street to a convenience store or a gas station could end in tragedy.

I am tired of hearing stories like this. It saddens me and angers me each time I speak with constituents and hear their all too familiar story of losing a loved one to gun violence. I am frustrated not only because we are losing an entire generation to gun violence, but because so many of these deaths were preventable if Congress had just had the courage to take action.

Sadly, we don't even talk about gun deaths until it is forced into our lives with another tragic mass shooting. When this happens, we give our fiery speeches, hold our moments of silence, and then we wait for the national buzz to fade. It is a shameful and disrespectful ritual that proves that Congress has little to no plans to truly honor the lives of gun violence victims.

This weekend on "Meet the Press," the Speaker gave his fellow Republicans a pass to "vote their conscience" with respect to their Presidential support. I ask the Speaker to give his colleagues a pass when it comes to voting on backgrounds checks, which 90 percent of Americans support.

With each shooting, we are quick to say that it is a mental health problem, it is a family problem, it is a terror problem. But somehow it is never a gun problem.

It is time we look at the common denominator and accept that the root of the problem is about how guns get into the hands of those seeking to do harm.

Prayer and reflection brings comfort to those who mourn, but scripture of all faiths teaches that prayer must be met by good deeds. Silence without action is deafening.

The majority of the American people want greater action. They want to close the gun show and online loopholes that allow people to purchase