

legislation to close a dangerous loop-hole in our background check system.

Mr. Speaker, give us a vote.

TINA MEINS SPEAKS FOR ME

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, over and over again my colleagues have pleaded with the majority to give us a vote on legislation that will protect Americans from gun violence. Those pleas and the pleas of millions of Americans continue to be ignored.

So instead of my words, I am going to read the words of Tina Meins, whose father, Damian, was killed in San Bernardino last year: "There is room in this national debate for reason, for compromise and for compassion," she wrote. "Let us find common ground. Let's not be paralyzed because proposed solutions will not be perfect. If one person can be saved, isn't it worth the effort to fix this? Let's work together, please, for the good of everyone."

Well, Tina speaks for me, and she speaks for the thousands of families who have lost loved ones to gun violence in America.

GUN VIOLENCE MUST END TODAY

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, 3 weeks ago we gathered on this floor for another moment of silence to remember 49 victims of the mass shooting in Orlando. In the days that followed, our response was the same as it was after Sandy Hook, Umpqua Community College, and Colorado Springs—silence followed by more silence.

In the days since, we can add hundreds of names to the list of those lost in our Nation to a unique epidemic of gun violence, including the following from Massachusetts:

David Atherton, a young firefighter and veteran;

Marcus Hall, killed as his 4-year-old son sat feet away getting his haircut;

Trevor Washington, gunned down after a disagreement at a party;

Andrew Flonory, murdered less than a mile from where his sister and 2-year-old nephew had been executed 6 years earlier;

Anthony Clay, a married father of two, who died as a woman yelled "Don't leave me" over his body;

And 19-year-old Sabrina DaSilva, who had just stepped out of her apartment to grab juice out of her car for her 2-year-old daughter, a daughter who will never see her mother again.

Mr. Speaker, they are friends and neighbors who will be forever missed by the lives they touched, daughters and sons, mothers and fathers, whose families will forever live with the pain

and suffering of losing a loved one. This violence must stop.

WE MUST DO SOMETHING

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, after the historic sit-in that took place on this floor a couple weeks ago, last week I hosted a discussion on gun violence in my district. In attendance were people with a wide range of experiences with gun violence, constituents who volunteered time to advocate for better gun laws, individuals who lost family members due to gun violence, some who themselves were victims of gun violence but thankfully survived.

There were representatives from the LGBT community, public health professionals, a youth violence intervention program director, and the director of a theater production featuring people who lost loved ones to gun violence.

They came from different hometowns and different walks of life, and they have their own beliefs and world views, but they agree on one thing: we must do something to curb the tragic, persistent threat of gun violence in America.

Mr. Speaker, I don't expect all 435 Members of this body to agree on a perfect solution to this troubling issue, but I do expect them to do something that will meaningfully address it, and so do the American people.

WHEN WE SAT DOWN, WE STOOD UP

(Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, when my colleagues and I sat down on the floor, we stood up for millions of Americans who agree it is time for commonsense legislative action to help prevent gun violence.

When the Republican leadership ignored that call and then canceled the rest of the workweek, we took that message back to our districts. At a roundtable in my district, I met with families broken by random acts of gun violence, mothers who were moved by mass shootings, advocates calling for change, and just regular people who just wanted to see less violence. Their stories and their motivations were entirely different, but they all told me one thing: We are with you.

I refuse to let them down, and I refuse to let up until this body considers basic bipartisan, broadly supported reforms, and not shoddily crafted NRA-endorsed bills that do even less than moments of silence.

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GIVE US A VOTE

(Mr. SARBANES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, a moment ago, the House Chaplain expressed the hope—I would imagine it is a fervent hope—that we would return to this place with "a spirit of common purpose." Those are the words that he used.

Nothing would reflect the common purpose of the American people more than allowing us to have a vote on gun safety legislation in this House. Ninety percent of Americans support universal background checks. That is common purpose. A majority of responsible gun owners in this country support universal background checks. That is common purpose. Eighty-five percent of Americans say that, if you can't fly on a plane because you are too dangerous, you shouldn't be able to buy a weapon. That is common purpose.

So, what is the problem? Why can't we bring legislation? Why can't we respond to the anguish and grief of so many families and communities around this country? The Speaker of this House will not allow legislation to come to the floor. He won't allow us to express the common purpose of the American people.

Give us a vote. Give us a chance to demonstrate that common purpose and address this scourge of violence in our country.

NO MORE EMPTY GESTURES

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

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, the whole point of the Democratic sit-in to demand congressional action on gun violence was to say that empty gestures and moments of silence for 30 seconds, followed by the bang of a gavel and resumption of business as usual will not be tolerated anymore in the face of this national gun violence epidemic.

Yet this week, our Republican colleagues are bringing forward a bill, written and blessed by the NRA, that is yet another empty gesture—a glorified moment of silence—because it establishes a completely arbitrary and artificial 72-hour timeframe and unreasonable standards that must be met within that timeframe.

I can't get my dry cleaning back in 72 hours, yet the NRA and our Republican friends expect the Attorney General to come forward, serve process, have a defendant hire an attorney, show up at a hearing, and prove with probable cause as the standard that this individual is about to commit an act of terror? Give me a break.

No more empty gestures. No more moments of silence that are completely disingenuous, including this glorified moment of silence that Republicans are bringing forward this week.

PURSUE COMMONSENSE GUN LEGISLATION

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, last week, I had the opportunity to hear from the families of victims of gun violence. Each story was unique and heartbreaking. But for all the differences in their tragic circumstances, one common thread was echoed by every individual in the room: too many guns are too easily available.

One mother said: "Until we get these guns off the street, the cycle is going to continue."

One way to start to get the guns off the streets is through background checks.

My office has heard from thousands over the last 2 weeks, over the phone, over Facebook, over Twitter. We have heard that Congress can no longer bend to the will of the gun lobby and prevent the passage of commonsense legislation that could save lives.

During that meeting last week, a mother told me: "Changes can be made because I have a voice."

Mr. Speaker, now is the time to heed our constituents' call and pursue real, commonsense legislation that helps get guns out of the hands of dangerous people.

END GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the American public want us to act. They spoke loud and clear. They want an end to the gun violence that is taking place in this country.

We sat down on this House floor to stand up for those Americans who want to see Congress put on RECORD as to where they stand on this issue. Democrats, Republicans, and Independents—80 percent-plus support background checks. They support no fly, no buy. Mr. Speaker, all we are asking for this week and what the American people are asking you for is a vote on these two simple principles.

The Rules Committee is going to meet tonight. We ask that you include two amendments that Democrats will bring forward: no fly, no buy—if you can't fly on an airplane, you can't buy a gun—and comprehensive, expanded backgrounds checks.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think that is too much for us to ask. The American people will be watching to see where their Members of Congress stand on these two important issues.

SILENCE IS DEAFENING

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, between the time that 20 little children and 6 teachers were shot at Sandy Hook Elementary School and the 49 people that were slaughtered in Orlando, we have stood on this floor 27 times for a moment of silence. We send our condolences and our thoughts and prayers, and then the gavel sounds and we go back to business as usual. Well, 2 weeks ago, the Democrats in this House said no more silence. The silence has become deafening.

In the city of Chicago, we lost 70 people in the month of June to gun deaths. There is no moment of silence for them. They are women, children, men, sons, husbands.

We have the ability in the House of Representatives to save lives—not every life, but a lot of lives—and the moments of silence, of doing nothing, have run out. It is time for us to act. We have two bills on our agenda that would begin to address the problem. Republicans have to join with us to act now. The silence is too deafening.

GUN VIOLENCE

(Mr. CONYERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join with all the voices that we hear today to speak to the urgent need to address the problem of gun violence in this country.

We need to consider not only mass shootings, but the daily toll of gun violence that afflicts all of our communities. In 1 year, on average, 108,000 Americans are shot in murders, assaults, suicides and suicide attempts, accidents, and police action. Approximately 32,500 of these individuals die. Nearly 12,000 are murdered—more than 31 Americans every day.

We know what will work to reduce deaths. We must act to expand background checks to close the private sale loophole and make sure those checks prevent the sale of guns to terrorists. We should come together to vote on the two bills and reduce gun violence.

PUT THE BILLS ON THE FLOOR

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

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, the issues are pretty clear. I came up for one simple reason: I am asking my Republican friends: What are you afraid of? What are you afraid of? You get the votes.

I ran for Congress to debate and vote on the issues of the day, vote my conscience—win some, lose some. What did you run for? Did you run to stifle democratic debate? Did you run to simply say to the American people, "We don't care what you say"?

If you believe the words you have been saying for the last week, put the bills on the floor and have a vote. That is the American way.

What are you afraid of? Are you afraid you can't control your Members? Are you afraid some of your Members may actually have to stand up, find some courage, and vote their conscience?

Put these two bills on the floor. The American people want it, the American people deserve it, and the American people are demanding it.

BIPARTISAN ACTION TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE IS NEEDED

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

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, the American people expect us to act to protect them. We need a tough and smart counterterrorism strategy to go after ISIS, and that has to include taking commonsense steps to keep guns out of the hands of terrorists.

In a 2011 propaganda video, an al Qaeda spokesman encouraged radicals to buy guns in the United States, saying: America is absolutely awash in obtainable firearms.

The overwhelming majority of the American people support reasonable fixes to prevent terrorists from buying guns and to expand background checks for all commercial gun sales. Yet, in the 3½ years since the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School, the House has not held a single vote on legislation to prevent gun violence. In that time, gun violence has killed more than 100,000 Americans.

It took a 25-hour sit-in and thousands of Americans rising up and demanding a vote, but here we are finally voting on something. It is a step forward. Unfortunately, the bill we are voting on this week was written by the gun lobby, and it won't do anything to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous individuals.

So let's keep working. Let's send bipartisan legislation to the President's desk, because the American people are demanding action. We should listen and we should act.

IN THE SPIRIT OF ELIE WIESEL

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, Elie Wiesel, one of the great human beings who graced this Earth, passed away this week. He said that sometimes we are powerless to prevent injustice, but we should never fail to protest against injustice.

JOHN LEWIS is a man in this House who is of the same caliber as Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King. He is the same caliber as Elie Wiesel. When JOHN LEWIS and other Democrats protested on this floor, they were here because they might not have been able to prevent injustice, but they needed to protest. And they did it in the spirit of Elie Wiesel.