

antiviolence mural. He was one of 60 artists working on Oakland's superhero mural project. He was shot by someone trying to steal his camera.

Chyemil Pierce. Chyemil was 30 years old. She was shot on March 13, 2015. She was a mother of three that was shot by a stray bullet while shielding her children. She had walked her 7- and 9-year-old children home from school at about 4:45 p.m., in broad daylight. Two others were injured in this shooting.

Torian Hughes. Torian was the grandson of my friend, Oakland Council president Lynette Gibson McElhaney. He died by a gunshot just a few days before Christmas.

Mr. Speaker, how many more Torians? How many more Antonios? How many more Chyemils will die protecting their children?

Enough is enough. It is past time to do something. It starts with enacting background checks on all gun sales and making sure that guns stay out of the hands of those who cannot fly on airplanes. That is just common sense. The American people know it. It is about time the Republicans listen.

I am so proud that my community, California's East Bay, has rallied to support our efforts. Some family members attended our National Day of Action last week and pleaded with us to do something.

I want to share what one of my constituents said during our sit-in 2 weeks ago on the House floor. She called my office, in tears, with a powerful message for all of us, especially Speaker RYAN.

She said: "I am a victim of gun violence, and I really appreciate what you are doing."

She made one simple request—a request that the entire House Democratic Caucus has been making: "I hope you can settle down and get a vote."

I dare the Speaker to call her back and tell her: Sorry, we are trying to gain consensus. Some Members still have reservations. Sorry, reelection support from the NRA is more important than addressing the epidemic of gun violence.

Call her, Mr. Speaker, and tell her that the NRA and its millions matter more than her.

We need to keep guns out of the hands of people who should not have them. Vote on our bills for background checks for all. Enough is enough.

ALZHEIMER'S AWARENESS

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

Mr. RIGELL. Mr. Speaker, I found in my public service that one of the great privileges of serving are the opportunities it has afforded to me to meet with so many amazing Americans and Virginians from all walks of life. Many of these occasions have been moments of great joy: greeting servicemembers when they have returned home from serving abroad, graduation ceremonies.

There have also been moments of profound sadness and serious moments where not only me, but I am sure my colleagues here, have had the opportunity—and the difficult one—to actually meet with those who have lost a servicemember in service to our country or those whose families have really been hit so hard with a debilitating, indeed, fatal disease.

One of those fatal diseases that I come to the floor this morning to speak about is Alzheimer's. I believe probably every Member of this House has been affected by it in some way; both sides. It certainly affected my own family.

Alzheimer's damages and eventually destroys brain cells. It leads to memory loss and other challenges in brain function. It usually develops slowly and gradually gets worse. Ultimately, Alzheimer's is fatal.

Every 66 seconds, Mr. Speaker, a fellow American is diagnosed with Alzheimer's. But let's be clear: we are not talking about statistics here. We are talking about people.

To my left is the Garner family. I have learned so much from the Garner family about Alzheimer's. If you ever wonder if engaging your local Representative makes a difference; indeed, it does. This family is an example of that.

This is Jim; his wife, Karen; and their two beautiful children. I got to know Jim when he was diagnosed in the early stages of Alzheimer's. He was an officer in the United States Air Force at Langley. He served with distinction. Alzheimer's cut that short.

This is Frankie. Their daughter, Frankie, is amazing. She is one of the strongest advocates I know for a cause that she believes in. I have learned a lot from her and her entire family.

Jim passed away this past April, just days before his 54th birthday. Karen kept a blog about her experiences, and with her permission, I want to read from that blog. This is Karen speaking:

I want people to see what Alzheimer's disease does to a wonderful human being. I want to break the misconception that Alzheimer's disease is just old people forgetting someone's name or getting lost. I want to erase the stereotypical patient idea. I want the stigma that follows a diagnosis to be a thing of the past.

Well, we have got a long way to go before that is a complete reality across our Nation, but she and the family have helped me understand this. I am grateful to them and to the Alzheimer's Association for helping me further grasp at a deeper level just how this disease is harming our country.

Now, if we look at it, here are some of the statistics that we have got to keep in mind. It is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States. Of the 10 top killers of Americans, Alzheimer's is the only disease that cannot be prevented, cured, or even slowed.

The rate of diagnosis is increasing. Right now, we have about 5 million

Americans that are suffering from this disease, including 135,000 Virginians. If we fail to act, Mr. Speaker, the number of Americans living with Alzheimer's could soar to as many as 16 million by 2020.

I am a fiscal conservative. I am acutely aware of our fiscal trajectory. Yet, as I look at the cost of Alzheimer's—and it is far more than a cost—if we look at what is happening here statistically, here is where our expenses are going, Mr. Speaker. I, as a fiscal conservative, come to the House floor today to say that we need to be investing more in Alzheimer's research.

We worked in, I think, an admirable and bipartisan way to increase funding to over \$660 million a year. Mr. Speaker, I call for \$2 billion. It is money well invested. Some things that we invest in are true expenses. Other things are true investments. This is one of them.

We should fund every program and medical research opportunity that shows promise. And, indeed, there are great opportunities for promise here. We can investigate brain imaging, biomarkers, and clinical tools that may result in earlier and more accurate diagnoses, timely interventions, and effective disease monitoring.

If we had advanced this, we could have done a better job for Jim and his family's lives. We ought to really set for our country something like the great moon shot that my father was so an integral part of.

Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that we can do this. We can find a cure. We can do right by the next generation. Keep in mind that it is not about statistics, but it is about people.

GUN VIOLENCE IN AMERICA

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

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, our country has witnessed over 130 mass shootings since the beginning of this year. There are 270 million guns in the United States. That amounts to 89 per 100 Americans.

On average, 31 Americans are murdered with guns every day in this country, and 151 are treated in America's emergency rooms. Gun violence costs this country \$230 billion every year, which amounts to \$200 per person.

Gun death rates fell 56 percent in my State of California, from 1993 to 2010, because the legislature engaged in evidence-based research policy initiatives that have dropped that rate.

Between 2004 and 2013, 316,000 Americans were killed by firearms. During that same timeframe, 313 Americans died from terrorist attacks, both internationally and domestically.

Approximately 40 percent of all gun sales are private and are, therefore, exempted from the current background checks. Studies show that every day that background checks are used, the

system stops more than 170 felons, 50 domestic abusers, and nearly 20 fugitives from buying a gun in the United States.

Since 2004, more than 2,000 suspects on the FBI's terrorist watch list have bought weapons in the United States. A gun in a home in the U.S. is 22 times more likely to be used to kill or injure in a domestic homicide, suicide, or unintentional shooting, instead of being used in self-defense.

From 2012 to 2013, at least 100 children were killed in unintentional shootings in the U.S.; almost 2 each week. Guns have killed more Americans in 12 years than AIDS, war, and illegal drug overdoses combined.

On average, 55 Americans kill themselves with firearms each day in this country. In States that require background checks for private handgun sales, there are 48 percent fewer firearm suicides, while the rates of suicide by other methods are nearly identical.

Suicides involving firearms are fatal at least 85 percent of the time in this country compared to the second most used attempted suicide level, which is pills. They are only successful 3 percent of the time.

Mr. Speaker, for those of us who have lost a family member to firearm gun violence, this is an issue that cannot be reconciled with the current majority opinion.

Twenty-eight years ago, my father took his life with a firearm. He had been under the care of a physician for 10 years to deal with depression. We still don't know how he got his gun. He is buried across the river, as a World War II vet, in Arlington.

Mr. Speaker, for those of us who respect the Second Amendment, but also expect the Congress to act rationally on this public health issue, we expect Congress to respect victims of gun violence.

For that reason, we demand, we ask respectfully, and we expect the Speaker and the majority to bring up for a vote two simple bills. We want a vote on the no fly, no buy bill, and we want a vote to close the loopholes on background checks. The victims of gun violence expect no less.

□ 1045

CONFRONTING OUR CHANGING OCEANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, my constituents and I are blessed to live, to work, and to play in the paradise that is south Florida. And those of us who have fallen in love with south Florida all want our kids and our grandkids to enjoy the same positive experiences that define our unique community.

That sense of wanting to be able to pass down that south Florida lifestyle

to future generations is really what has motivated me to action on the threat my community faces from a changing ocean. Sea level rise has been occurring steadily along southeast Florida for the last hundred years, and we should be concerned about increasing coastal flooding and saltwater intrusion into our drinking water sources.

Meanwhile, new research at the University of Miami suggests that ocean acidification is not only slowing the growth of corals off our coast, but is actually causing the underlying reef structure to begin to dissolve. To counter the threats from changing ocean conditions, we must develop strategies to protect people's livelihoods and the coastal waters upon which south Florida's local economy depends.

One such strategy that could pay huge dividends is the restoration of the coral reefs off south Florida. This is actually, Mr. Speaker, the third-largest barrier reef in the entire world. Our reefs have been declining for 40 years, and recent coral disease outbreaks and bleaching events have proved to be devastating.

To save south Florida's reefs, I am introducing the Conserving Our Reefs and Livelihoods Act, or the CORAL Act. The CORAL Act would widen the scope of reef restoration and conservation research to include the impact of ocean acidification, warming seas, and invasive species on coral reefs. It would allow for the release of emergency response funds to study coral disease and bleaching events as they happen, instead of as a postmortem.

It would expand the focus of the law from simply focused on conservation, to gearing Federal agencies and their partners to play active roles in restoration and recovery. And it would promote innovative work toward understanding the genetic diversity of corals, so that researchers can captive-breed native corals that are specially adapted to current and future ocean conditions for use in restoration projects.

The environmental and economic benefits of coral reefs are strongly intertwined, and the CORAL Act would give everyone a place at the table to help develop consensus-based and scientifically rigorous conservation and restoration efforts—efforts that produce real results for Floridians.

Restored reefs will increase economic activity through better fishing, diving, recreation, and tourism; and healthy coral growth will allow reefs to keep pace with rising seas to limit the potentially devastating impacts of storm surge on our coasts in the future.

Mr. Speaker, having fled the oppressive Castro regime in Cuba with my parents decades ago, I know that south Florida is special because it serves as a place of hope for so many. We cannot allow changing ocean conditions to rob us of our livelihoods, of our lifestyle, of our identity as an optimistic community.

My CORAL Act is only a start for south Florida, but it will help in understanding the impacts of ocean acidification, warming seas, coral disease, and invasive species on our reefs so that we can develop effective solutions, so that we can salvage our reefs, and so south Florida will continue to thrive as part of an ever-changing landscape and as an enduring source of hope and inspiration to people from around the world.

WE NEED COMMONSENSE GUN SAFETY LEGISLATION

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

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, Columbine is in my district, and I was in Congress when the terrible shooting in Columbine happened.

Who will forget that day, all those students marching out of the school with their hands held up so they could show the police that they weren't those terrible shooters.

Who can forget the terrible tragedy reflected in the mothers' faces when they saw that their children weren't those children that were bused to safety?

Who can forget the lingering aspects that Columbine has shown us, year after year, tragedy after tragedy?

I can't tell you the number of times I have repeated that horror in my own life, watching on TV when the Aurora shooting, just a few miles from my house, occurred. A masked man came in and, with an assault rifle and high-capacity magazine clips, shot so many people in just a few minutes.

Just a few weeks ago, when we saw, in Florida, one lone gunman with an assault rifle and high-capacity magazines just mowing down so many people who were having fun, who can forget the reflection in those mothers' faces?

But for every terrible tragedy that we have like that, we have thousands of more people who are killed on our streets, in our urban areas, and around our country, and who are killed in terrible domestic violence cases.

Just last week, when I was at home in Denver, just a few blocks from my husband's law office, a man walked into an office and shot a woman, and then turned the gun on himself. I can't tell you how I felt that day, when my husband sent me an email, seemingly out of the blue, that said: "Don't worry. I'm on lockdown. I'm okay."

This has become just routine in Americans' lives, and it is wrong. It is wrong. We can't continue like this as a country. We can't continue to have a moment of silence every time there is a mass murder, and to tut-tut every time we hear of someone like that woman who was shot in my district, and then do nothing.

This is why we had our sit-in before the July Fourth recess. And I will tell you what, those actions woke up my constituents. My office here in Washington, D.C., and my office in Denver,