

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last night the Republican leader filed cloture on the McCain amendment. The Republican leader has committed to a Democratic alternative pending to the McCain amendment, and we have one. We have it ready now, and we will have it typed up and ready to go in a couple of hours.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in the aftermath of last week's mass murder in Orlando that took the lives of 49 people, we saw where the American people stand on gun control. We know that gun safety is essential to making us a safer, more secure America. As an example of what went on in Orlando after that terrible morning, people stood for hours in long lines waiting to donate blood. People attended large gatherings to express their united grief. People left flowers and figurines at the scene of the murders. In cities across the country, people stood at candlelight vigils to honor members of the LGBT community and the Latino community who were slaughtered.

Here in the Capitol, Senator MURPHY stood on the floor of the Senate for 15 hours demanding that Congress act to stop gun violence. In Florida, families and friends of victims stood grieving at graveside services for their murdered loved ones.

Where were Senate Republicans? Where did they stand? Yet again, Senate Republicans stood with the National Rifle Association.

Yesterday, the leader of Gun Owners of America—the shadow organization of the NRA—said he believed that people should be armed in bars and taverns. That is what he said.

Last night, for the third time in as many years, Senate Republicans stood with the NRA in blocking common-sense gun legislation that would keep firearms and explosives away from suspected terrorists and other dangerous individuals.

Senate Republicans proved again that regardless of how brutal the massacre or how reasonable the solution, ultimately—it doesn't matter; there is never a good time—their actions will be dictated by the National Rifle Association.

A CNN poll released yesterday said 90 percent of Americans support expanded background checks and 85 percent of Americans support legislation keeping guns away from suspected terrorists. There is one reason that these proposals are not already law—the National Rifle Association—because they oppose anything dealing with guns.

How can Senate Republicans side with the NRA against the American people? Ninety percent of Americans support expanded background checks. If you are a criminal or a crazy person, you shouldn't be able to get a gun. Eighty-five percent of Americans sup-

port legislation keeping guns away from suspected terrorists. But the NRA doesn't support that, and so Senate Republicans don't support it.

Here is a little secret for my Republican colleagues: The NRA doesn't care about you. It doesn't care about your constituents. It doesn't care about the constitutional rights of its followers. The NRA and its leadership care about two things: Making money for gun manufacturers and making money for the NRA—and selling more guns.

The NRA wants gun manufacturers to be able to make more guns. There are never enough. The NRA wants to have more firearms sold. More guns sold means more money and more donations for their bottom line.

During times of crisis when Americans should be coming together to find these commonsense solutions, what does the NRA do? They raise every dollar they can by spreading lies and fomenting these conspiracy theories. The mail is out, folks. Look in your mailbox. Direct mail is their specialty. They circulate false mailers to their followers.

For example, "Congress is trying to take away your guns!" or "President Obama wants to confiscate your firearms!"

The NRA uses that money to fund ads against candidates who refuse to bow down to the gun lobby.

Taking a page from the Koch brothers' playbook, the NRA uses so-called dark money to influence elections through mysterious front groups awash in undisclosed campaign cash.

The NRA says they are spending money to protect gun owners. Well, it is clear what it is really about. It is about protecting the power of the National Rifle Association.

Since the Supreme Court's misguided Citizens United decision, the NRA has tripled its political spending to support their radical agenda, but Republicans in Congress have no knowledge of any of this. Senate Republicans pretend the NRA is simply a grassroots organization working for America's best interests. Nothing could be further from the truth. This is false.

The NRA used to advocate for mandatory background checks. It used to encourage reasonable legislation to keep guns away from dangerous individuals.

One month after the Columbine shooting in Colorado, where those two young men killed a lot of innocent people, Wayne LaPierre, the executive vice president of the National Rifle Association—the man who goes on TV all the time justifying what they do—testified before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime. Here is what he said:

We think it is reasonable to provide mandatory instant criminal background checks for every sale at every gun show. No loopholes anywhere for anyone.

Wayne LaPierre said that.

Now, in 2016, it is a different story. Just yesterday this same organization

pressured Senate Republicans to vote against closing loopholes he said should be closed.

Senate Republicans voted against the Murphy amendment that would have closed loopholes in our Nation's background check system.

Senate Republicans voted against Senator FEINSTEIN's amendment that would have closed the terror loophole, which simply allows suspected terrorists to legally purchase weapons and explosives. We believe it should be closed, but it is not. The loophole is still there because Republicans have always followed the NRA mandate.

That is how strong the NRA's hold is on Senate Republicans. Republicans won't even agree to keep guns away from terrorists.

The Republican Congress has become so thoroughly indoctrinated that it is now the legislative wing of the NRA. While the Republicans do the bidding of the NRA, innocent Americans are being gunned down in schools, churches, and nightclubs.

How many more mass shootings will we have to endure before Republicans realize that they are being used by the NRA? How many more people have to die before Republicans come to grips with the fact that the NRA is only concerned about its bottom line?

The American people are looking to Congress for leadership. They are hoping we will do something substantive to protect our communities from gun violence, but the simple truth is, we cannot protect the American people and protect the NRA at the same time. Public safety demands a solution that prevents dangerous people from possessing weapons, while the NRA exists solely as a fundraising vehicle for more guns, more bullets, and fewer safeguards.

It is time for Republicans in Congress to defend the people who sent them to Washington in the first place, and put the personal safety of their constituents over the needs of the NRA. It is time for the Republicans to tell the NRA: Enough murder, enough carnage, enough guns.

Mr. President, there is no one on the floor seeking recognition. I ask the Chair to announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the whole world knows that on June 12, a gunman shot and killed 49 people and wounded 53 more in the worst mass shooting in modern American history, but what they may not know is, there has been at least 10 other mass shooting incidents in America since Orlando. By mass shootings, I mean incidents where at least four people were injured or killed by gunfire.

Two of those mass shootings were in Chicago, in my home State of Illinois. On June 13, five men were shot in the East Garfield Park neighborhood, and on June 18, four people were shot in the middle of the afternoon in the South Shore neighborhood. Fortunately, none of the victims in these two Chicago mass shootings were fatally wounded, but since the Orlando shooting, there have been many other gunshot victims in Chicago who have lost their lives.

Last Friday, Yvonne Nelson, a city worker, was shot and killed walking out of a coffee shop on the South Side in the middle of the afternoon. The shooter was aiming for someone else in an apparent gang dispute, but Ms. Nelson was shot in the chest and killed. She was 49 years old, a member of the New Life Covenant Church, and beloved by friends and family. She was described as a beautiful person, hard-working, loving, kind. She was taken from us last Friday.

Last Thursday, Denzel Thornton, who worked for the Chicago Public School System, was shot and killed outside the entrance of McNair Elementary School in the South Austin neighborhood shortly after noon. He was 25 years old, a graduate of DePaul University, and aspired to be a chef. He was a promising young man with a bright future ahead of him. He was taken from us in the middle of the day as the elementary school children looked on.

This past weekend, 13 people were shot and killed in Chicago, and at least 41 others were injured by gunfire. The youngest shooting victim was only 3 years old.

So far this year, over 1,700 men, women, and children have been wounded or killed by gunfire in the city of Chicago. I will keep the victims and their families and loved ones in my thoughts and prayers, but thoughts and prayers are not enough. As lawmakers, it is our responsibility to do everything in our power to protect the people we represent and to stop the killing in the neighborhoods of America.

Last Friday, I visited the city of Chicago and went to several different spots to get a perspective on this gun

violence and killing. I met for an hour with the superintendent of police, Eddie Johnson. He has 28 years on the Chicago police force. This is man who started as a patrolman. He understands the violence on the streets. We talked about so many different things.

They have identified 1,300 who they suspect are most likely to be shooters or victims. By and large, these are men with a history of gun violence. Over the Memorial Day weekend, approximately 66 people were shot in the city of Chicago, and 80 percent of them came from the list. So we have a finite list of suspects whose names pop up more often than not when it comes to this gun violence. We talked about ways to address it, and there are many people thinking about how to deal with it in the right way, in a constitutional way but with a specific strategy to end this gun violence.

The superintendent told me a story. He said: You know, after you have been a cop in Chicago for a while, you get pretty tough. There aren't many things that make you emotional, but I do remember when there was a shooting in a home and a grandmother was killed and a toddler next to her was killed. We arrested the 15-year-old.

The superintendent said: I looked in his eyes, and I said: What were you thinking to spray that gun into that home and killing that grandmother and that toddler, and he said that young man looked him in the eye and said: They shouldn't have been there. They should have known better.

The superintendent said: I was crushed with that comment.

I talked to him about a visit I made to the juvenile facility about 6 weeks ago in Chicago to meet some of the young people who were waiting to stand trial. They had been charged with adult crimes. They are in the juvenile facility being held until the date of the trial. Some of them wait 1 year to 2 years. They take on a life in this juvenile center. There is a high school, a gym, activities, and there is also counseling. For many of these young people, this is the first time ever that someone with professional credentials sat down with them and tried to figure out what was going on in their minds and why they would commit these crimes of violence.

Afterward, I asked one of the counselors: What kind of mental condition do you find in these young people who are engaged in this random violence? He said they find everything—a spectrum of mental illness, from bipolar to schizophrenia, to acute depression, and on and on and on—but he said there is one recurring finding: 92 percent of these juveniles have a recurring issue. I asked: What is it? He said that 92 percent of them have either been the victims of or witnessed violent trauma.

When we think about PTSD—men and women who take on the uniform of the United States and go off to war and who either hurt themselves or witness violence that occurs on the battle-

field—and they come home troubled and needing counseling and help. By and large, these folks are over the age of 18, but now we are talking about teenagers and adolescents having gone through the same or similar experience with violence. What impact does that have on the human mind of an adolescent? Are we dealing with some form of post-traumatic stress disorder that makes them so hardened and callused that they don't even appreciate the violence of their own lives and their own acts? I think that is a very real concern.

Let me quickly interject that struggling with mental illness does not mean you are going to be a violent criminal at all. It is more likely that you are going to be the victim of a crime with your mental illness or mental condition, but we have to take an honest look at this aspect of what we are dealing with when it comes to violence.

Friday night, I went to visit a friend—a controversial friend, to some a radical Catholic priest in Chicago but from where I am standing, the man who has given his life to a neighborhood who desperately needs it. His name is Mike Pfleger, and he is a Catholic priest at St. Sabina in Chicago. He had a peace march on Friday night. Father Mike brought out 400 people—300 African American and 100 White and Hispanic. We had a rally and at that rally mothers stood up and read the names of those under the age of 20 who have been killed this year in the city of Chicago. They read 150 names ranging from 20 years of age to zero, babies who were shot and killed.

There were a lot of tears that night over the losses, and a reminder that the statistics we read every single day in a newspaper are real human lives causing real human pain and suffering to the families who survive. Then, Father Mike rallied everybody and took them out on a march through the neighborhood there, trying to reclaim one of the toughest, most challenging areas in the city of Chicago.

So what are we going to do about it—the U.S. Senate right here in Washington, DC? Last night, it was a disappointment.

Many of us took to the floor to join Senator MURPHY last week in his filibuster. He was the leader, and I give him the credit for his steely determination to stand here—literally, stand here for, I believe, 15 hours in a filibuster—to force the votes we had last night. Senator MCCONNELL, the Republican leader, agreed to have those votes, and after they were finished, all four amendments were defeated. I am sure many people across the country said: What a waste of time that the Senate would acknowledge the problem, yet not find a solution to move forward. Well, I would add quickly that we haven't given up and we shouldn't. Senator SUSAN COLLINS of Maine is working on an amendment right now relative to the question of whether a