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GUN VIOLENCE

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

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, in the 4 years that I have been privileged to represent the remarkable people and amazing communities of Illinois' Second Congressional District, I have come to this floor many times to urge action.

I have called for a budget that invests in jobs, farmers, and rural communities. I have called for action to address the trillion-dollar student debt crisis. I have called for real solutions that make healthcare affordable for all American families. I have spoken on many issues facing this House, but nothing I have spoken on is more important than protecting American lives.

I have begged for commonsense reforms that prevent children from being shot while playing at a playground. I have begged; I have pleaded; I have screamed; I have cried; and I have even ground the people's House to a halt with last year's historic sit-in.

What answer was I given? Was I given answers to take home to grieving mothers and police widows? Was I able to tell them that their loved one's death wasn't in vain and that we were going to do something to save the next life? No. I was met with silence, and worse, an active effort to silence my voice and the voice of millions of Americans.

So I ask myself: Why? What is the issue? Why can't I, an elected Representative of the American people who draws my authority directly from the United States Constitution, get something done to save lives? Why can't we get a vote on commonsense, lifesaving legislation that is supported by 90 percent of Americans and more than 70 percent of NRA members?

Mr. Speaker, tragically, the answer is simple. It is greed.

Mr. Speaker, what is the cost of your inaction? It seems that \$5,950 you took from the NRA matters more to you than the 7,490 Americans we have already lost this year to gun violence.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve to know that just 79 cents for an American life is the cost of your silence and inaction.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it might be easy for you to ignore the connection between those dollars and the lives lost, but I cannot—and I will not—ignore it. I will not let you ignore or forget it either.

I am going to stand here and remind you, remind the people of Wisconsin's First District, and remind all Americans that money matters more to you than these American lives. One dollar—one name. One dollar—one grieving family. One dollar—one lost American:

One dollar—Xavier Joy, 23, was a success story. He was playing football at Morehouse, was an AmeriCorps volun-

teer, and wanted to change Chicago for the better;

Two dollars—Blair Holt, 16, was killed shielding his friend on a CTA bus;

Three dollars—Hadiya Pendleton, 15, killed just weeks after performing at President Obama's inauguration.

While Chicago might make headlines, gun violence is killing people in every community, in every city, and in every town, including Wisconsin's First District.

Four dollars—Paramjit Kaur, 41, killed while trying to pray;

Five dollars—Satwant Singh Kaleka, 65, killed at the temple he founded;

Six dollars—Prakash Singh, 39, a reader at his temple;

Seven dollars—Sita Singh, 41, killed by a White nationalist for wearing a turban;

Eight dollars—Ranjit Singh, 49, murdered at his church;

Nine dollars—Suveg Singh, 84, killed while expressing his love for his God;

10 dollars—Harry Canady, Jr., 20, killed sitting on a porch in Racine;

11 dollars—Sean Bialas, 23, of Kenosha, shot and killed while physically unable to defend himself;

12 dollars—David Bauspies, 36, of McHenry, accidentally shot and killed in East Troy;

13 dollars—Jose Torres, 36, murdered on the 1600 block of Holmes Avenue in Racine;

14 dollars—Nicholas Chaulkin, 17, of Racine, killed by a domestic abuser, likely while defending his mother;

15 dollars—David Tilton, 37, of Janesville;

16 dollars—James Norris, 37, was killed at his job as a restaurant delivery driver in Racine;

17 dollars—Jeremy Trawitzki, 38, killed in Muskego;

18 dollars—Thomas Kruse, 41, killed in Muskego;

19 dollars—Joseph Hensel, 27, killed in Elkhorn;

20 dollars—Andrew Jones, Jr., 27, also killed by his friend in Racine;

21 dollars—Maurice Carter was shot and killed in a Racine County robbery;

22 dollars—Carl Nichols, 26, shot and killed by a friend in Kenosha.

AMERICA: LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

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

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, one thing that we can all agree on is that America is the land of opportunity. Our beautiful country has remarkable stories about those young and old, who, through adversity, have gone on to achieve great things. Those human stories are often the best way for us to demonstrate why our country is so special. I would like to share two stories with you this morning.

Emily Torchiana recently visited my office while she was here in Washington, D.C., after being chosen for a

Jefferson Award for community service. Just last week, she was also awarded the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Award for Public Service. Emily is from Collegeville, in my congressional district, and, after her own experience with severe cyberbullying led to a suicide attempt, she began telling her story.

Emily found people would reach out to her after each speech to share their own experiences and thank her for being so open with her journey. She is now the founder of a nonprofit focused on mental health advocacy, awareness, and services.

Emily's nonprofit supports mental health workshops in schools as well as workshops for parents and teachers so adults can learn how to support children and young adults suffering from mental illness. The mission statement of Emily's nonprofit includes working to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health, something I believe is a critical aspect for us all as we continue to develop and advance solutions for those facing mental illness.

Quoting from Emily's nonprofit website, she writes: "My hope is that the more people who will open up about their struggles, the more others will feel comfortable reaching out for help. . . . Unlike physical illnesses, these mental illnesses are not seen, but that does not mean they are not there. I hope this will give us all the opportunity to walk briefly in the shoes of the fellow human beings we come across every day."

Emily's work is an inspiration to us all.

Congratulations, Emily, for being recognized for your outstanding service to communities across our country, and we wish you the best of luck with your career.

Ammar Al-Rubaia is another young adult who has an inspiring and remarkable story. A reporter in my congressional district recently shared Ammar's story with me, and I want to take a moment to share a story about opportunity, hard work, and a young man fulfilling his dreams.

A native of Baghdad, Iraq, Ammar became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 2015. He was participating in a youth exchange program that transferred him to West Vincent Township, in Pennsylvania's Sixth Congressional District, where he attended Owen J. Roberts High School and ultimately attended Westtown School.

Ammar came face to face with al-Qaida before his move. In a column in 2009, journalist Michael Rellahan remembered reading Ammar's college essay.

Mr. Rellahan wrote: "In striking detail, Ammar recalled the day in June 2007 when he sat in his classroom at the Gifted Students School in his native Baghdad and a teacher came in to announce simply that: 'They are here—al-Qaida.'"

Ammar wrote in his journal: "At that time, I felt like I was a few minutes away from death, getting closer

every second. I was scared, but not because I thought that I was going to die. I was scared because I was thinking about what might happen to my family when they heard that I got killed. My dad always told me, 'Don't go to school; your life is more important than your education,' but I never listened, and I always argued with him because I believe that my education was important enough to take the risky chance."

The gunman entered the room, looked around, and went away. They stole some cars, but left everyone alive. Ammar recalled: "Those seconds felt like years; they were the longest seconds in my life."

Here is the great part of the story: It is not a story; it is real life. Ammar was granted political asylum, and in 2013, he graduated from Bard College and has since completed medical school, moving on to a career to help others and improve their healthy lives.

We should be proud of him and the thousands of other young men and young women every day who are fighting through adversity to achieve, who will go on to make this a greater country than it already is; and it is a reminder to all of us in what is, at times, a very divisive political environment that the reason that we do these jobs is to make sure that we are providing opportunity for the next generation, and it is they who will make our country an even greater place. It is their achievements that are the cornerstone of our country and a great reminder to all of us that we are a special country with special people doing great things every single day.

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to associate myself with the comments and remarks of the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) with regard to being mindful of the deaths from gun violence that plague our communities all across the country, and particularly as the summer has begun, these deaths will continue.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak today about another kind of gun violence that makes our streets and homes unsafe, and that is the deadly encounters between civilians and police officers.

Mr. Speaker, I have wracked my brain trying to understand these deaths. I have grieved with the mothers who have lost their children. I have met with experts and attended roundtables on how to find a way to mitigate these fatal police encounters.

Let me tell you, I think I can propose a solution that we can all support, and that is H.R. 3060, the Preventing Tragedies Between Police and Communities Act, which would link law enforcement training on deescalation techniques to receipt of Federal Byrne JAG funds.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I certainly wish that I could take full credit for this concept because I think that this legislation would both save civilian lives and police lives; however, this idea is rooted in the Police Executive Research Forum report which both Republicans and Democrats have cited. It was written by police officer peers and by police officer experts.

Mr. Speaker, what they found is that police academies require 58 hours of training on how to use a firearm and another 49 hours on other defensive tactics. While they don't require, they offer 8 voluntary—1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8—8 voluntary hours on how to employ deescalation tactics in crisis intervention. We need to require this deescalation training.

This deescalation training curriculum would be to use verbal and physical tactics to avoid escalating the situation, use the lowest level of force as possible and a safe response to identified threats, and be aware of mental health and substance abuse issues and crisis intervention strategies in order to appropriately respond. This training would provide police with the tools they need to prevent violent interactions and save not only their lives, but the lives of civilians, too.

We know that kids are out of school and that the tensions in our streets are high. Police are on alert, and far too many of us are distrustful of the police due to the painful and frightful memories of how many deadly encounters have dominated headlines—close to 1,000 in 1 year.

How can this Congress recess for the summer and not take up this bill? Yes, the Affordable Care Act is a big issue here before us in Congress, but if you live in communities of color around the country, the immediate healthcare issue for you is being shot by a police officer who has been sworn to protect you.

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If you die at age 12, like Tamir Rice, who was shot by police for playing with his sister on a playground in Cleveland, how can you be concerned with Medicaid?

If you are killed at 31 years old, like Dontre Hamilton, who was shot 14 times by police for resting on a park bench in Milwaukee, nursing home care is not your priority. You won't have the good fortune of living that long.

I ask my colleagues to prioritize preserving lives by supporting this legislation.

RECOGNIZING RETIRED COLONEL ROBERT A. ATOR, II

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize one of Arkansas' finest, Colonel Robert A. Ator, II, of Little Rock.

A veteran of the United States Air Force, Colonel Ator retired on June 3,

2017, after proudly serving our country for 28 years. Before joining the Arkansas National Guard, Colonel Ator served 11 years on Active Duty with the United States Air Force. He is a veteran of several major combat operations, including Operation Desert Shield, Operation Desert Storm, Operation Provide Comfort, Operation Provide Promise, Operation Joint Forge, and Operation Noble Eagle.

Ator is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, where he married Michelle, his wife of 28 years, just 3 days after graduation. Today, his son, Cadet Third Class Robert A. Ator, III, is a sophomore.

Colonel Ator is the recipient of numerous awards and medals, including the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the Air Medal, the Aerial Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster, and the Air Force Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster.

Colonel Ator is an example that all Arkansans and Americans can admire. I wish him and his family the very best in their future endeavors.

SALINE COUNTY CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CENTER

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the proposed plans for a career and technical education center in my district.

Lamont Cornwell of the Saline County Economic Development Corporation presented detailed plans to the Arkansas Economic Development Commission on June 8 for a center that is specifically aimed at training our State's skilled workforce community.

The center would allow students to enroll in science and technology career preparatory classes, careers that will only become more invaluable as our Nation moves forward.

The center will impact parents and children of all socioeconomic statuses and positively change our technical career education environment in central Arkansas.

As co-chair of the Congressional Skilled American Workforce Caucus, I was encouraged to see the recent passage of H.R. 2353, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education Act. I am encouraged to see leaders in Saline County step up and embrace a passion for our skilled workforce community.

HONORING FOSTER PARENTS

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the importance of foster families around Arkansas and the organizations dedicated to their recruitment.

According to recent Arkansas data, the number of foster youths has outpaced the number of spaces available in foster homes by 1,283. Many families have already stepped up to the plate to provide a loving home for children in the foster system.

One such family, Andrew and Amy Baker of Searcy, Arkansas, was recently named Foster Family of the Year by our State's Division of Children and Family Services for their