

change. . . .” Parenthetical editorial comment: That is the job of Republicans in Congress.

BlackRock also had something to say about a price on carbon. They said this: “Higher carbon pricing would help address [externalities from fossil fuels] and would be the most cost-effective way for countries to meet their Paris agreement pledges.”

So in the real world, where real decisions are being made by very smart people backed by real money, they are telling their clients: You must take climate change seriously, and you must take carbon pricing seriously.

The BlackRock report had this data on prices that companies are setting on carbon internally—in their own internal accounting—across sectors, including healthcare and energy and utilities. As we can see, the price per metric ton ranges from a low of about \$10 in information technology, up to over \$350 per metric ton—internal costs of carbon accounting in these industries.

The point ought to be pretty clear. The business community is acting, investors are insisting on it, and a price on carbon is a key part of the program.

The legendary Wayne Gretsky’s rule was to “skate to where the puck is going to be.” These major firms recognize where the carbon economy is heading. We should too. We would, if it weren’t for the political mischief wreaked in Congress by the fossil fuel industry.

BlackRock and Goldman Sachs are not alone. The insurance and reinsurance industry is one of the world’s biggest investors, as well as one of the world’s best analyzers of risk. Munich Re and Swiss Re, and others in property casualty and reinsurance, warn us that climate change is real and portends huge costs for society. Munich Re’s head of risk accumulation in the United States said in 2015: “As a nation, we need to take steps to reduce the societal impact of weather events as we see greater variability and volatility in our climate.”

One of the biggest investors in the housing market is the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, Freddie Mac. Freddie Mac has warned about climate change impact on the real estate sector: “The economic losses and social disruption may happen gradually, but they are likely to be greater in total than those experienced in the housing crisis of the great recession.”

When we think of what we went through in the housing crisis of the great recession, wow, Freddie Mac is warning that the economic losses and social disruption from climate change in our housing markets are likely to be worse.

These are all serious investors and they have serious warnings for us, and ignoring all of them just to please fossil fuel industry patrons is a big, big mistake.

Even President Trump’s nominee to head the Securities and Exchange Commission, Jay Clayton, thinks we need

action. For years, his law firm has encouraged clients, including ExxonMobil, to disclose climate change-related risks to the SEC and to investors. If he is confirmed, I hope he will enforce the SEC’s existing disclosure requirements for climate risk and clarify that public disclosures should include asset valuations based on global compliance with international treaties. Investors need climate change risks disclosed against a “reality check” baseline that assumes international compliance with the Paris climate commitments. An assumption that we fail should not be acceptable.

Slowly, investor disclosures are improving. Last year, New York attorney general Eric Schneiderman forced Peabody Energy to restate its disclosures. Just last week, Chevron acknowledged to its investors in an SEC filing that, lo and behold, some of its products “may be considered pollutants,” noted “new conclusions about the effects of the company’s operations on human health or the environment,” and they acknowledged “an increased possibility of governmental investigations and, potentially, private litigation against the company.”

It is better late than never, I suppose. Now it is time for the rest of the industry to report fully and fairly, first on the risks that shareholders bear from assets that are wrongly valued now—that are falsely valued in their reports—and, second, on the company’s potentially culpable behavior in climate denial.

Institutional investors are joining in those efforts. Our Rhode Island pension fund, managed by our treasurer, Seth Magaziner, is pushing for greater transparency on political and lobbying spending at large energy companies like Exxon, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, and Devon. For the resolution filed at ConocoPhillips, Rhode Island was joined by over 20 other cofilers, including the State of Connecticut, Senator MURPHY’s home State, whom I see here on the floor.

Just recently, the G20 nations—the 20 biggest economies in the world—set up a group called the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures. It is made up of 32 members from large banks, insurance companies, asset management companies, pension funds, credit rating agencies, and accounting and consulting firms—you know, liberal extremists. And they are saying: Here it comes; let’s get ready. They have asked that companies begin to come clean on the climate risk they face.

The big energy companies need to come clean on how much they are spending to deny climate science and where they are spending it, because, ultimately, it is their own investors who will be hurt by their irresponsibility. Ultimately, all the phony climate denial they pay for is a fool’s errand because the laws of physics, chemistry, and biology aren’t going away, and a day of reckoning for all this mischief

and nonsense they have paid for inevitably will come.

We in the Senate have a duty to the American people to find a way to combat climate change. I realize this body will need help in that task. We will need help from the business community, which can apply its understanding of market forces and risk analysis to this challenge. It would help if the fossil fuel industry would focus on the long term health of its shareholders rather than on short-term gain. The fossil fuel industry should stand down the relentless political opposition it has maintained to any climate solution, and it should stand down the phony climate denial operation it continues to support.

It will take all of us coming together—companies, investors, regulators, governments, citizens, Republicans and Democrats—to achieve Donald Trump’s once-stated goal of combating the “catastrophic and irreversible effects of climate change”—his quote: “catastrophic and irreversible effects of climate change.”

I did not misquote President Trump, although he was Donald Trump then. It was 2009, and this full page advertisement was taken out in the New York Times declaring that the science of climate change was “irrefutable” and the consequences of climate change would be “catastrophic and irreversible.” It was signed by none other than Donald J. Trump, as well as his children, Donald Trump, Jr., Eric Trump, and Ivanka Trump. They were right then. If they get back to this, they will be right now.

The evidence and the science have only piled up since 2009. It is time for all of us to heed the advice of our universities, our scientists, and the people who actually know what they are talking about, and put the arguments of the fossil fuel industry where they belong—in the trash bin of history. We need to wake up before it is too late.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, last night, President Trump began his speech with an appropriate reference to the anti-Semitic attacks that have occurred all over the country. Two bomb threats were called into a Jewish community center in the New Haven area in Connecticut. I visited that center and the staff and the kids of that center, who are now being housed in a nearby synagogue. He also condemned, in strong terms, the murder of a young man in Kansas City, the victim of an apparent hate crime, targeted for simply being a foreigner or being of a different religion. We can’t know exactly what the reason was, but it was an attack based on hate.

I want to tell my colleagues a little bit about that young man, to begin with, as a means of, once again, coming to the floor of the Senate to tell my colleagues about the victims of gun violence in this country—the 86 or so

people every day who are taken by guns, suicides, and murders and accidental shootings; the 2,600 people a month whose lives are taken through gun violence, and the 31,000 a year. By the way, that number is just the number of people who are killed. Those are the lives that are eliminated. There are another 75,000 every year who are injured by gun fire, whose lives are irrevocably altered by that act of violence.

Srinivas Kuchibhotla was a 32-year-old engineer. He was working for Garmin. He was just hanging out at a bar. It was Austin's Bar and Grill, and he was enjoying the company of friends. Witnesses saw a man enter the bar. He was agitated, and he was drunk. He was a patron of the bar. He had left and he reentered, and he began shooting at Srinivas and his friend. Witnesses say that the shooter told Srinivas to "get out of my country" before killing him and then critically injuring his friend and an unbelievably brave bystander who tried to stop the shooter.

Hundreds of grief-stricken family members and friends gathered in his hometown in India for this young man's funeral. In accordance with Hindu tradition, his body was carried on a carriage and his ashes were laid to rest. Friends said that his mother was absolutely wailing as the carriage went by.

His mother had wondered whether America was a safe place for her son. Months before the shooting, she asked him to return to India if he was feeling insecure, but he told her he was safe, that he was fine. His wife also wondered how safe it would be to stay in the United States, but she said that Srinivas always assured her that only good things could happen to good people.

He undoubtedly was a good person. His family members remember him as the kindest person you would meet. He was, in their words, "full of love, care and compassion for everyone. He never uttered a word of hatred, simple gossip, or a careless comment."

His friends and family members remember him as "brilliant, well-mannered and simply an outstanding human being."

He was "a very sharp, top-of-his-class kind of guy," said one of his classmates at the University of Texas at El Paso where Srinivas earned a master's degree in electrical and electronic engineering. He was also an avid cricket player and a big fan of cricket as well.

He was 32 years old. He was sitting at a bar, enjoying time with his friends when a man who was at the bar, who probably saw Srinivas, thought that he looked different from him and, filled with hate, walked back into the bar and shot and killed him.

That is only one story from that day. On average, there are 85 other stories across the country in which people lose their lives to gunfire. What made me so mad last night was that after that moment—that appropriate moment in

which President Trump talked about this horrible shooting—moments later, he referenced the daily slaughter that happens in our cities. He spoke in front of the joint session for, it seemed, nearly an hour and a half and offered absolutely no solutions to do anything about the cascading gun violence that is enveloping our Nation.

Irony of all ironies, the same week that he is lamenting, eulogizing Srinivas's death in Kansas City, he is signing a law passed by this body that would allow for more people with serious mental illness to get their hands on guns.

We don't know the full story of Adam Purinton yet, but you have to imagine that this was someone who was deeply disturbed. Maybe he was just drunk, but in order to decide to pull out a gun in a bar and shoot someone just because they look different than you do probably means that there is something going on—more than a few beers. Mr. Purinton probably had some stuff going on. He might have been mentally ill.

When I got here, I thought that one of the few things we agreed upon—Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives—was that if you were seriously mentally ill, you probably shouldn't be able to buy a weapon, not because people with a mental illness are inherently dangerous—that is not true at all—but because erring on the side of caution when it comes to someone who is seriously ill would probably be the safe thing to do. That used to be a bipartisan commitment.

A few weeks ago, this body passed a law to allow tens of thousands of people who have serious mental illness, who have been judged by a government agency to be so sick that they can't manage their own financial affairs, they literally can't cash a check, their Social Security check has to be sent to someone else because they can't manage their affairs—we passed a law to allow those people to buy guns.

Spare me your concern for the victims of gun violence if you are not willing to do anything about it and, in fact, you are going to take steps to make gun violence more likely rather than less likely in this country. So 31,000 people a year, 2,600 a month, 86 a day—there is no other country in the world in which this happens. There is no other country in the world in which these numbers of people are dying from guns. It is our fault because week after week, month after month, year after year, we do nothing about it, and now we are making it worse.

In the 4 years after Sandy Hook happened, I went back to tell people that we had done nothing. That was embarrassing enough. Now I have to go back to the families of Sandy Hook and tell people that when Congress thinks about gun violence, we think about making changes in the law to make gun violence more likely, to put more guns into the hands of dangerous people. We are going backward now.

Teresa Robertson owned a floral shop in a beauty shop in Fairfax, OK. Fairfax is a really small town, a really tight-knit community. It is still on edge because about a week ago, Teresa's estranged husband walked into the store, started shooting at Teresa, and then barricaded himself inside city hall, firing shots at the local police, who returned fire, fatally killing Teresa's husband.

She had filed a protective order against her husband about 2 weeks before because she feared for her life. She filed for divorce a week later, and a week following that, he shot her.

Laws can protect against something like that, right? We have the power to stop that. In Connecticut, if you file a protective order against a spouse who you believe is going to harm you, the police have the ability to take those weapons away for the period of time in which you were adjudicating that protective order.

If that law had been in effect in Oklahoma, maybe Teresa Robertson would still be alive today and maybe her husband would still be alive and maybe their two kids—ages 13 and 16—wouldn't be without both of their parents.

The fact is, every single day, domestic partners—women primarily—are killed or are shot by boyfriends or estranged husbands. It often plays out just like this: protective order, divorce filing, murder. That is on us.

We have the ability to protect women from their estranged husbands. There are laws. We can't stop every shooting, but it certainly can cut down on these numbers.

Two days later, emergency responders found 26-year-old Michael "Shane" Watkins bleeding profusely from a gunshot wound to the head on Berkshire Avenue in Bridgeport, CT. He died shortly after arriving at the hospital. The police are still investigating the shooting, but they believe that Shane was an innocent victim of a robbery that went bad.

His friends said that Shane was someone who was always laughing, who was always smiling, who had a good heart, was a caring person. A neighbor said that Shane was "always upbeat, always joking, always smiling." This was a good kid.

He was a dedicated family man. He was a long time employee of the local Stop & Shop. He was 26 years old. This was a robbery gone bad. Shane Watkins was one of those 86.

Twelve-year-old Kanari Gentry Bowens was playing basketball with friends in Chicago, IL, at Henderson Elementary School. A stray bullet hit her on February 11. For 4 awful, agonizing days, Kanari sat lying unconscious in the hospital with a bullet lodged in her 12-year-old spine before she died on February 15.

Her family released a statement that said: "Please keep your children close and do whatever it takes to protect them from the senseless gun violence in our city."

That doesn't sound exceptional, does it? "Please keep your children close and do whatever it takes to protect them." Think about that idea. Think about the idea that you can't let your children get far away from you in Chicago today because they are not at risk of getting lost; they are at risk of being shot.

The little girl had dreams of becoming a judge. That is not something that a lot of 12-year-old girls are thinking about, but Kanari wanted to be a judge. She was described as a vivacious young girl.

I hear President Trump talk about Chicago all the time. He talks about Chicago as though he cares, but he doesn't propose anything that would reduce the trajectory of gun violence, the horror of living in neighborhoods that you can't let your child stray more than a few feet from you without fearing for their lives. He has proposed nothing to do with making that city safer.

People say Chicago has some of the toughest gun laws in the Nation, yet it is one of the most violent places. Exactly, exactly: Chicago has some of the toughest gun laws in the Nation. New York City has some of the toughest gun laws in the Nation. They are still violent places. Why? Because the vast majority of guns in those cities, the illegal guns that spread throughout the city like poison ivy come from outside of Chicago. They come from Indiana. In New York, they come from South Carolina. They come from North Carolina. They come from places in which it is easy to buy a gun without a background check at a gun show or on the internet. They flow into these cities and become used in murder after murder.

If you don't have a Federal requirement that background checks have to be conducted wherever you buy a gun, no matter how strong the laws of Chicago are, they can't be protected; 12-year-old girls can't be protected.

This was all in February, by the way. This was all in the last 3 weeks.

On February 20, some friends got together at a local church in Pomona, CA, and all of a sudden, gunshots started firing through the windows and the walls of this church—a drive-by shooting.

You know who was dead at the end of that? An 8-year-old little boy named Jonah. He was adopted from an orphanage in Taiwan. He had been in the United States for only 3 years. His adoptive parents and his friends—you should read what they say about this kid: "He had an infectious smile and loved everyone and everything."

He was still learning English, but with his playful demeanor, he had adapted almost immediately to life in the United States. He loved wrestling with his adoptive dad, running, laughing. He loved superheroes. He was always injuring himself jumping off of something. He loved living in this country.

He was a 5-year-old in an orphanage in Taiwan, and then he was in the United States with a dad and with superhero action figures, and now he is dead because somebody fired bullets randomly into a church in Pomona, CA.

Why don't we do anything about this? We are not so coldhearted as to be unable to understand what life is like for a mom and a dad who lose an 8-year-old child. We are not so brain-dead as to not be able to comprehend the fact that every time someone is shot, there are at least 20 people whose lives are permanently altered.

The post-traumatic stress involved in one shooting has enormous ripple effects. I have talked at length on this floor about the constant grief that envelopes my town of Sandy Hook because of what happened there. It will never end.

Now, instead of defending the status quo, we are talking about making it easier for deeply mentally ill people to get guns. A bill was just introduced on the floor of the Senate this week that would allow for someone to carry a concealed weapon anywhere in the Nation, regardless of what that local State jurisdiction wanted. If you had a concealed weapon permit in Texas, you would be able to walk into Manhattan without any way for the local police to check you out. There is even an effort to make silencers legal.

Mr. President, 31,000 a year, 2,600 a month, 86 a day. I have come down to the floor I don't know how many times—certainly not as many as Senator WHITEHOUSE but many times to tell the stories of the victims. I told a few more this afternoon because if the data doesn't move you—again, only in this country; in no other country in the world does this happen—then maybe the stories of these victims will move you. Maybe being able to put yourself in the shoes of a mom who lost a child, of a husband who lost a wife way before their time, will move you to action.

This is only controversial here. Ninety percent of the American public wants us to move forward with the universal background checks. The majority of Americans think these super-powerful military weapons should stay in the hands of the military and law enforcement. Everybody out there wants to give law enforcement the tools and the funding necessary to carry out the existing law. It is not controversial out in the American public; it is only controversial here.

It is about time that we do something about this epic level of carnage that continues to plague our Nation and have some response to these voices of victims that seem endless.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to enter into a colloquy with the Senator from Delaware.

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

RUSSIA

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I am here to discuss, along with the Senator from Delaware, the issue of Russia. I know it has been at the forefront of much of the debate that is ongoing in this country. I wanted to begin by commending the Vice President and Secretary of Defense and Secretary of Homeland Security and Secretary of State for the strong message of support for NATO. That includes the President last night and their strong support, by the way, for the Transatlantic Alliance that these individuals outlined during their respective visits to the Munich Security Conference and meetings with allies in February.

At that Munich Security Conference on February 18, the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, said: "I hope [he means the world] will choose a democratic world order, a post-West one, in which each country is defined by its sovereignty." I think that based on recent history, it is clear that when a Russian leader says "post-West," we should interpret that as a phrase to mean post-America.

So I would ask the Senator with regard to this, what are his views with regard to Vladimir Putin's desire to establish spheres of influence in Europe and the Middle East, create divisions with our allies. How should we view the Russian world view as it compares to the national interests of the United States?

Mr. COONS. I would like to thank my friend, the Senator from Florida, my colleague on the Foreign Relations Committee and on the Appropriations Committee. I would like to answer his question by saying, it seems clear to all of us on the Foreign Relations Committee who have had the opportunity to travel to Eastern Europe to visit with our NATO allies that Vladimir Putin has a world view and an agenda that is in sharp contrast with our own.

Vladimir Putin dreams of returning Russia to the days of the Russian Empire, to reexerting influence over a broad geographic region from the Baltic Sea and Poland and Ukraine to the Caucasus and Central Asia. He has internally used the West and NATO as a scapegoat for Russia's internal economic woes. He has, as we know, launched invasions or extended his influence through forces and supported illiberal and separatist fighters in Georgia and Ukraine and Moldavia, former Soviet republics, and has launched cyber attacks and propaganda campaigns and coordinated the use of all his tools of state power against our NATO allies in the Baltic region and Central and Western Europe.