

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF DONALD W. LEMKA

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 5, 2018

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today we commemorate the life and service of Supervisory Special Agent Donald W. Lemka (Don) who passed away at the young age of 41 last year after a valiant battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife, Tracey, and daughter, Madison Bridges.

Don served his country in the U.S. Marine Corps where his assignments included work on Marine One as Crew Chief and at three U.S. embassies. He then continued his service to our country as a special agent at the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Don's first office assignment was at the San Antonio Field Office's Resident Agency in Austin, Texas, where he worked until 2015.

Given the confidential nature of his work, many of his accomplishments cannot be made public. The people of South and Central Texas are more secure today because of honorable Americans like Don who protect them from global and domestic threats they are often not aware of. We owe Don a debt of gratitude for a life well lived in service to his country.

RECOGNIZING THE 83RD ANNUAL FLORIDA STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

HON. DENNIS A. ROSS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 5, 2018

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 83rd Annual Florida Strawberry Festival in Plant City, Florida, an important celebration in my district.

Plant City, Florida, is recognized as the Winter Strawberry Capital of the World, and the state of Florida is the second largest strawberry producing state in the United States, with more than 10,000 acres of strawberries planted annually.

The Florida Strawberry Festival serves to bring the community together to celebrate the agricultural and historical legacy of the Florida strawberry. The festival is scheduled to take place over eleven days this year, and has provided family-friendly fun since 1930 and welcomes over 500,000 visitors from across the country to enjoy musical concerts, agricultural exhibits, parades, youth developmental programs, other forms of entertainment, and delicious strawberry treats.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize this treasured community tradition that has brought together countless participants, volunteers, and sponsors. I thank all of those who have given their time and resources to make the Florida Strawberry Festival such a cherished tradition in our community.

OATH OF CITIZENSHIP ON MARCH 9, 2018

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 5, 2018

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and sincerity that I take this time to congratulate twenty-five individuals who will take their oaths of citizenship on March 9, 2018. This memorable occasion will be held at the United States Courthouse and Federal Building in Hammond, Indiana.

America is a country founded by immigrants. From its beginning, settlers have come from countries around the world to the United States in search of better lives for their families. Oath ceremonies are a shining example of what is so great about the United States of America—that people from all over the world can come together and unite as members of a free, democratic nation. These individuals realize that nowhere else in the world offers a better opportunity for success than here in America.

On March 9, 2018, the following people, representing many nations throughout the world, will take their oaths of citizenship in Hammond, Indiana: Domingo Virruete, Bernadette Augustynski, Haroldas Vysniauskas, Jose Otoniel Campos, Maria Georgina Rivera, Jorge Robles, Humberto Morales Jr., Ernestina Caro, Omar Awad Sobih, Maria Francisca Aguiar, Katie Rizhkov, Haneen Mohammad Al-Zeer, Rania Shwqi Abudayyeh, Christine Nasr Mousa, Tannya Marisa Viramontes, Paul Alejandro Beltran, Jimmy Trang, Lissette Jesus Sayan Thompson, George Gonzalez, Luis Alberto Salazar, Ana M. Ramirez, Hina Naz Chaudhry, Beth Wanjiru Kavolu, Said Saad, and Karoline R. Stiglich.

Although each individual has sought to become a citizen of the United States for his or her own reasons, be it for education, occupation, or to offer their loved ones better lives, each is inspired by the fact that the United States of America is, as Abraham Lincoln described it, a country “. . . of the people, by the people, and for the people.” They realize that the United States is truly a free nation. By seeking American citizenship, they have made the decision that they want to live in a place where, as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution, they can practice religion as they choose, speak their minds without fear of punishment, and assemble in peaceful protest should they choose to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating these individuals who will become citizens of the United States of America on March 9, 2018. They, too, are American citizens, guaranteed the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We, as a free and democratic nation, congratulate them and welcome them.

RECOGNIZING NACDS RXIMPACT DAY

HON. MARKWAYNE MULLIN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 5, 2018

Mr. MULLIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Tenth Annual NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill. This is a special day where we will have the chance to recognize pharmacy's many contributions to the American health care system.

Organized by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) for the past decade, this event will take place March 7–8, 2018. This year alone, more than 400 individuals from the pharmacy community—including practicing pharmacists, pharmacy school faculty and students, state pharmacy association representatives and pharmacy company leaders—will visit us here on Capitol Hill. Advocates from all 50 states will share their views with us about the importance of supporting their access agenda—legislative priorities that will ensure that our constituents will continue to have access to more than 40,000 community and neighborhood pharmacies across the country and be better able to utilize pharmacists to improve health care quality while reducing the cost of care.

Patients have always relied on their local pharmacist to meet their health care needs and we as policymakers know our local pharmacists to be important community leaders. They are trusted, highly accessible health care providers deeply committed to providing high quality, convenient, and efficient health care services.

As demand for health care services continues to grow, pharmacists have expanded their role in health care delivery, partnering with physicians, nurses and other health care providers to meet their patients' needs. Innovative services provided by pharmacists do even more to improve overall patient health and wellness.

Pharmacists are highly valued by those that rely on them most—those in rural and underserved areas, as well as older Americans, and those struggling to manage chronic diseases. Pharmacy services improve patients' quality of life as well as health care affordability. By helping patients take their medications effectively and providing preventive services, pharmacists help avoid more costly forms of care. Pharmacists also help patients identify strategies to save money, such as through better understanding of their pharmacy benefits, using generic medications, and obtaining 90-day supplies of prescription drugs from local pharmacies.

Pharmacists are the nation's most accessible health care providers. In many communities, especially in rural areas, the local pharmacist is a patient's most direct link to health care. Utilizing their specialized education, pharmacists play a major role in medication therapy management, disease-state management, immunizations, health care screenings,

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

and other health care services designed to improve patient health and reduce overall health care costs. Pharmacists are also expanding their role into new models of care based on quality of services and outcomes, such as accountable care organizations (ACOs) and medical homes.

The pharmacy advocates of NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill will be promoting an access agenda. They know that we face difficult debates about the future of health care and the pharmacy community wishes to work with us to help in the effort to develop comprehensive and consistent approaches to public policy that put pharmacy's value to work for patients and payers. They understand well that the issues we are debating today are highly connected and vital to pharmacy, to all of health care, and to society as a whole.

I believe Congress should look at every opportunity to make sure that pharmacists are allowed to utilize their training to the fullest to provide the services that can improve care, increase access and lower costs. In recognition of the Tenth Annual NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill, I would like to congratulate pharmacy leaders, pharmacists, students, and the entire pharmacy community represented by NACDS, for their contributions to the health and wellness of the American people.

IN HONOR OF LOGAN GROSZ AND SEAMUS CASEY'S SELECTION AS WYOMING'S TOP YOUTH VOLUNTEERS, AND SADIE HOGAN AND MICKAYLA VANNATTER AS DISTINGUISHED FINALISTS BY THE PRUDENTIAL SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY AWARDS

HON. LIZ CHENEY

OF WYOMING

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 5, 2018

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Logan Grosz and Seamus Casey for being honored as Wyoming's top youth volunteers by the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, and Sadie Hogan and Mickayla Vannatter for being recognized as Distinguished Finalists.

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards is a nationwide program that recognizes four middle level and high school students from each state for their outstanding volunteerism. Each year, two students are selected as the State Honorees, and two as Distinguished Finalists. This year's honored students are committed to service and to going above and beyond for their communities.

Logan Grosz was selected as the High School State Honoree for Wyoming for his dedication to supporting the Children's Hospital Colorado. As a patient and its Champion for the State of Wyoming, he organizes and runs fundraisers that have raised over \$7,500 for the hospital and its other patients.

Seamus Casey is this year's Middle Level State Honoree for his support of the Folds of Honor Foundation. Last summer, he designed and completed his own triathlon, raising \$10,000 for the Foundation's scholarships for family members of fallen or disabled servicemen.

Sadie Hogan was recognized as a Distinguished Finalist for her leadership in a project

that compiled and distributed sacks of food and toiletries to homeless members of her community.

Mickayla Vannatter was recognized as a Distinguished Finalist for her program that encourages children at her school to choose inclusion over bullying.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my congratulations to Logan, Seamus, Sadie, and Mickayla. They have set excellent examples for their friends and families, and I appreciate all they do to support the great state of Wyoming and our great country.

GUN VIOLENCE

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 26, 2018

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss the issue of gun violence in America.

This Valentine's Day, February 14, 2018, marked the thirtieth mass shooting in our country this year, when a mentally unstable 19-year-old opened fire on Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida with an AR-15 military style weapon, killing 17 individuals and injuring 15 others.

We extend our deepest sympathies to all those affected by this tragedy and recognize the skill and heroism of the law enforcement officers and first responders who came to the aid of others.

We commend the efforts of those who are working to care for the injured and investigate this horrific incident.

We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to the families of the fallen, and to all those affected in the community of Parkland, Florida and in the United States.

The horrifying events in Parkland mark the 378th mass shooting in the U.S. since 2017, and the 30th this year, according to Gun Violence Archive.

Mass shootings are a near daily occurrence in America, but what happened in Las Vegas on October 1, 2017 stands out: It was the deadliest such incident in U.S. history, with more than 58 killed and 515 injured.

A mass shooting is defined by Gun Violence Archive as any incident in which four or more are shot and/or killed in a single event, at the same general time and location not including the shooter.

Recent U.S. mass shootings include:

Las Vegas, 2017: 58 killed; 515 wounded
Orlando, 2016: 50 killed
Virginia Tech, 2007: 32 killed
Sandy Hook, 2012: 27 killed
San Ysidro, 1984: 21 killed
San Bernadino, 2015: 14 killed
Edmond, 1986: 14 killed
Fort Hood, 2009: 13 killed
Columbine, 1999: 13 killed
Charleston, 2015: 9 killed

There were more than 11,600 deaths linked to gun violence in 2017, which is roughly equivalent to nearly four 9/11 attacks in terms of the total number killed on September 11, 2001.

Comparatively, more than 15 thousand were killed by gun violence in 2016, and there were 383 mass shootings.

It is horrifying to admit that gun violence now seems to be a staple of American life.

The United States ranks No. 1 in the world in terms of firearms per capita—with 88.8 guns per 100 people—and it has the highest homicide-by-firearm rate in the developed world.

The problem is so endemic that gun violence is now the third leading cause of death for children in the U.S.

An average of 1,297 children die annually from gun-related injuries.

Guns are linked to roughly 33 thousand deaths in the U.S. per year; about two-thirds of them are suicides.

According to Pew Research Center, a majority of Americans (across partisan lines) support gun policy proposals such as barring people with mental illnesses from buying guns; prohibiting gun purchases by people on federal no-fly or watch lists; and background checks for private gun sales and sales at gun shows.

America has six times as many firearm homicides as Canada, and nearly 16 times as many as Germany.

United Nations data shows that America far and away leads other developed countries when it comes to gun-related homicides.

America has 4.4 percent of the world's population, but almost half of the civilian-owned guns around the world.

In December 2012, a gunman walked into Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, and killed 20 children, six adults, and himself.

Since then, there have been at least 1,518 mass shootings, with at least 1,715 people killed and 6,089 wounded.

The fairly broad definition of "mass shooting" includes not only shootings in which four or more people were murdered, but shootings in which four or more people were shot at all (excluding the shooter).

Even under this broad definition, mass shootings make up a tiny portion of America's firearm deaths, which totaled more than 33,000 in 2014.

On average, there is more than one mass shooting for each day in America.

Whenever a mass shooting occurs, supporters of gun rights often argue that it is inappropriate to bring up political debates about gun control in the aftermath of a tragedy.

For example, former Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal, a strong supporter of gun rights, criticized former President Barack Obama for "trying to score cheap political points" when Obama mentioned gun control after a mass shooting in Charleston, South Carolina.

But if this argument is followed to its logical end, then it will never be the right time to discuss mass shootings.

Under the broader definition of mass shootings, America has nearly one mass shooting a day.

So if Congress is forced to wait for a time when there is not a mass shooting to talk gun control, Congress could find itself waiting for a very long time.

The time for responding to mass shootings with thoughts and prayers has long since passed.

The time for responding with effective legislation is now.

I have called upon this Administration to secure the passage of H.R. 4268, the "Gun Safety Not Sorry Act," legislation I have introduced that would impose a 7-day waiting, or "cooling off," period prior to the purchase or