

Dreamers through legislative action and to wield our power of the purse to ensure that the Department of Homeland Security does not make immigrant families and communities casualties of a reckless, indiscriminate detention and deportation machine.

Sincerely,

Luis V. Gutiérrez; Adriano Espaillat; Raúl M. Grijalva; Jerrold Nadler; Zoe Lofgren; Michelle Lujan Grisham; Judy Chu; Joe Crowley; Jan Schakowsky; José E. Serrano; Steve Cohen; Eliot L. Engel; Ted Deutch; Dina Titus; Nydia M. Velázquez; Lloyd Doggett; Carolyn B. Maloney; Linda T. Sánchez; Gene Green; Paul D. Tonko; Alcee L. Hastings.

Al Green; Albio Sires; Peter Welch; Barbara Lee; Adam Smith; Keith Ellison; Gwen Moore; Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.; Ben Ray Lujan; Maxine Waters; Bobby L. Rush; Elijah Cummings; Danny K. Davis; Eleanor Holmes Norton; Yvette D. Clarke; Robert A. Brady; Hakeem S. Jeffries; Grace F. Napolitano; Jared Polis; Norma J. Torres; Juan Vargas; Bonnie Watson Coleman.

Donald Norcross; Tony Cardenas; Kathleen M. Rice; Mark Pocan; Mark Takano; Darren Soto; Michael E. Capuano; Ed Perlmutter; Nanette Diaz Barragan; Grace Meng; Robin L. Kelly; Jimmy Gomez; Bill Foster; Joaquin Castro; Ruben Gallego; Brenda L. Lawrence; Robert C. "Bobby" Scott; Brendan F. Boyle; Donald S. Beyer, Jr.; Earl Blumenauer; Dwight Evans.

J. Luis Correa; Pramila Jayapal; Ro Khanna; Suzanne Bonamici; James P. McGovern; Joseph P. Kennedy, III; Jamie Raskin; Colleen Hanabusa; Jacky Rosen; John Lewis; Mark DeSaulnier; Val Butler Demings; Frank Pallone, Jr.; Ted W. Lieu; Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.; Salud O. Carbajal; Donald M. Payne, Jr.; John Yarmuth; Alan Lowenthal.

CELEBRATING PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this week our Nation celebrates Public Schools Week. It is a time when we acknowledge the diversity and success of our public schools and the sound education that they provide.

Strengthening America's public schools is the best way to ensure our children's future success and our country's prosperity. Ninety percent of American children attend public schools.

This week, supporters across the country will share stories of the many students, schools, and professionals who make public schools such a vital component of our communities. This includes parents who are working hard to improve educational outcomes for children. Advocates nationwide will share scores of stories about public school students and their successes.

Mr. Speaker, public school teachers truly make a difference in the lives of our students. They prepare them for a bright and successful future. It is their dedication to our students that builds strong public schools and, therefore, strong communities.

As a senior member of the Education and the Workforce Committee and a

product of public schools, I know the incredible role our schools play in communities across the Nation. Public schools today have much good news to share, from increasing graduation rates and reduced dropout rates to improved ratings given by communities on school performance.

In fact, public school graduation rates have risen from 79 percent in 2010–2011 to 83 percent in 2014–2015. This increase of the measured 5 years reflects that four out of five public school students receive a regular high school diploma within 4 years of starting ninth grade.

While the graduation rates varies among States, 34 States have reported graduation rates between 80 and 89 percent, with the highest being 91 percent in Iowa, followed by 90 percent in New Jersey. Based on data from the current population survey, the dropout rate has steadily decreased, from 10.9 percent in 2000 to 7.4 percent in 2010 and 5.9 percent in 2015.

Last year, 69 percent of recent high school graduates enrolled in a 2-year or 4-year college.

We are making progress, but we can do more.

In many communities, the school district is the largest employer. Teachers, busdrivers, administrators, cafeteria workers, coaches, and facilities management all depend on the school district, and all of these jobs contribute to the fabric of a community. Communities are stronger and schools are better when we all work together to support public education.

Public schools also make sure our kids receive at least one nutritious meal a day. More than 30 million school lunches are served each day, including 20 million free and 2 million reduced price lunches. For some students, it may be the only meal they receive will be the one at school.

Mr. Speaker, a child's opportunity for success should not be left to chance. Every child needs a quality, well-equipped school right in their neighborhood where they can learn, be inspired, and thrive.

Public education has always been the great equalizer in the United States, and I am grateful for the contributions of our public schools. I know that, together, we will continue to work to strengthen them for our most precious resource: our children.

Happy Public Schools Week.

GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, today, thousands of students across the Nation are walking out of their schools to demand real action to end the tragedy of gun violence. Young men and women across the country—children, really—from coast to coast and in the heartland of America are standing up and speaking out for change. Members of

Congress will meet some of them on the west front lawn to join them in saying this: Enough is enough.

Mr. Speaker, I thank our distinguished colleague from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH) for his extraordinary leadership, whether it is with the students, with legislation on the floor, or in the community at large to help make the difference.

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Here we are, community after community, reeling from the horror of gun violence, perpetrated against our children, our families.

Our hearts ache for those in Orlando, San Bernardino, Mother Emanuel Church, Las Vegas, Sutherland Springs, Parkland, Newtown. The list is a very long one, and it is, in addition, on the streets and in the homes across our country.

There has been too much violence and too much pain. This should not be a political issue. The American people overwhelmingly want action. A full 97 percent of Americans support requiring background checks for all gun buys, including 97 percent of gun owners. There is a commonsense, bipartisan path forward in the Congress. We can take action today on comprehensive background checks without the dangerous Concealed Carry Reciprocity bill, allowing the CDC to study gun violence, and gun violence restraining orders that empower law enforcement to intervene when someone is a threat to themselves or others.

We should all be listening to the American people on both sides of the aisle, and we should allow the House to vote on bipartisan gun violence solutions. The families and students suffering from the heartbreak of gun violence deserve real leadership in this body, not a Republican White House and Congress that are saying one thing and doing another. It is deeply disappointing that, just days after embracing the need for commonsense, bipartisan gun violence prevention, still we have nothing coming forward.

House Democrats have filed discharge petitions to force votes on the Thompson-King bipartisan background check bill with 200 cosponsors. Two hundred cosponsors for a background check bill. That is a start. That is remarkable. And also the Background Check Completion Act. Democrats will continue to press for bipartisan progress to reduce the epidemic of gun violence in our Nation.

Let me say, as we go out in a little bit to join the students who are doing their walkout across the country, an enormous thank-you to them. An enormous thank-you to them. While we have sympathy for everyone who has loss of life because of gun violence across the country—they are always in our prayers, in our thoughts, and in our determination to make a difference—the eloquence, the courage, the determination of these young people in Florida to come forward in such

an eloquent and articulate way. They have been on the other side of a gun. That shouldn't happen to our children.

So while we all respect the Second Amendment and what that means for our country, and while we all want to do something very important, we must listen. And what the kids are doing is on top of a lot of positive action taken by the Bradys, taken by every town, taken by our former colleague Gabby Giffords and her initiative, The Promise of Newtown, and all over the country. So much activity has happened, and now it has hopefully culminated at a place where the children, with how savvy they are about social media and the rest, identifying with each other across the country, will be the tipping point that will make the difference to make our country safer.

We thank them for what they are doing, for their leadership. We also thank them for taking their grief and turning it into action to save lives. And to remember how important, in all of this, the vote is.

And so I say to my colleagues, there isn't one of us in here whose political survival compares in the slightest bit to the survival of our children. These kids have the courage to come forward. We have to have the courage to vote and take action to save lives. Ninety-five percent of the American people support us supporting legislation to do just that.

As we pray and have our moments of silence, let's act upon those sentiments with real action, again, to make a difference. Again, I salute the kids, the young people. I look forward to seeing them on the steps outside on the west lawn. We will gather in the rotunda. All Members are invited to gather in the rotunda, to go outside and associate ourselves and sing the praises of these young people for their courage.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MIKE MABIN

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a man who touched so many lives in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

Mike Mabin, a lifelong resident of lower Bucks County, Pennsylvania, was a man who took immense pride in his community and selflessly gave back to it every chance he could. A successful businessman, Mike was the president and CEO of PennFab, Inc., in Bucks County. And as a member of the St. Mary Hospital Advisory Board and the vice chairman of the Bucks County Industrial Development Authority, Mike cared deeply about and worked tirelessly for all of his neighbors in our community.

A proud veteran of the U.S. Coast Guard, Mike was proud to be an American and deeply valued service to country. His advocacy was instrumental in

making sure that Congress passed the Fairness to Veterans Act, as he wanted to make sure that all those who courageously served our Nation were given opportunities here back home.

I ask all my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in sending our deepest condolences to Mike's wife, Marion, along with his children: Heather, Michael, and Jillian. May they take comfort in knowing that Mike made a positive and significant difference in so many lives, and he will be remembered for his patriotism, his loyalty, and his friendship.

GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, there are so many important issues and such little time, but today I want to stand in solidarity with my colleagues, with parents, with students, and with Americans across the country who are calling for action to address the crisis of gun control.

Over the weekend, I had the opportunity to connect with nearly 150 students and their parents in my district at a townhall meeting. I listened to their personal worries and worst fears. I heard their thoughts and the solutions they want decisionmakers here in Washington to consider. I felt the emotional strain of wondering if their own classrooms were safe.

Above all else, I heard the question: Why? Why can't we limit access to military-style weapons specifically built to maximize damage? Why can't we improve the background check process? Why won't Congress act? Why? Why?

The President recently set forth a series of empty proposals that continue our practice of shrinking away from these questions. Arming teachers, school personnel, and volunteers is dangerous, ill-conceived, and does nothing to solve the problems we have with gun violence. To keep our children safe, we need fewer guns, not more.

And in backing away from his initial pledge to limit access, the President again prioritized the interests of the National Rifle Association over the pleas of countless students, teachers, and parents. In fact, he is the one who has demonstrated that he is afraid of the NRA.

The wish for safe spaces to learn was clear in the comments I heard from my constituents on Saturday: young people who want to walk through the hallways of their schools feeling nurtured instead of afraid. Stashing pistols in their teachers' desks will not bring them that feeling.

If the administration or the leaders controlling what we debate here on the floor of Congress were actually interested in protecting our schools, we would be debating legislation to

strengthen background checks, we would be working on increasing the firearms purchasing act to the age of 21, we would be banning assault rifles, we would be limiting and tracking excessive ammunition purchases, and much, much more.

There are bills in our hopper to do all of these things. They are ready, and they are waiting for debate, including my own bill. All we need is for the Speaker of this House to show the will, determination, and courage to put young lives ahead of the gun lobby.

While much of my townhall meeting was centered on anxiety and fear, I left the event filled with an overwhelming sense of pride and hope, pride in a generation of future leaders who have endured an endless and unbearable stream of school shootings and are stepping up to the plate to hold their leaders accountable. Some of these students were born at a time when that is all they have seen in their lifetime are these mass killings at schools.

I hope that we can finally agree on a path of action and their voices will be heard. I will continue to lift these voices here with my colleagues and fight with them for action and change because that is what a better deal is for all Americans.

REMEMBERING PEARSE LYONS

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

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life and legacy of Dr. Pearse Lyons of Lexington, Kentucky, who passed away on Thursday of last week at the age of 73.

Dr. Lyons was a pioneer, the ultimate dreamer and innovator, a larger-than-life contributor to human progress, and his legacy will forever be remembered. Dr. Lyons, originally from Ireland, is truly the embodiment of the American Dream. He came to the United States in the late 1970s and launched his own business in Lexington in 1980, named after the initials of his daughter, Aoife. Alltech was founded with an initial investment of just \$10,000.

Today, Alltech is a multibillion-dollar international business with operations in animal feed, meat, brewing, and distilling with more than 5,000 employees worldwide. Dr. Lyons was honored as the Business Person of the Year by Business and Finance magazine. He received the Ireland-U.S. Council Award for Outstanding Achievement, and Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny recognized him with a St. Patrick's Day Science Medal in recognition of creating a global business based on scientific research.

As impressive if not more so is the impact Dr. Lyons and Alltech have had on Kentucky and, in particular, central Kentucky. Dr. Lyons was the driving force behind bringing the Alltech 2010 World Equestrian Games to Lexington, the first time the games had been held