

Afghanistan for nearly 17 years—the longest war in American history. Our troops are now in Syria under what I believe are questionable authorities, and the administration has indicated that it may broaden that military mission even more.

The time is long overdue for Congress to reassert its constitutional role in determining when and where our country goes to war. I am very proud to be working with Senators LEE, MURPHY, and others on this vitally important issue.

Thank you very much.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

#### GUN VIOLENCE

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the mass murder in Florida this month, and I rise to ask a simple question that millions of Americans in every part of this country are asking at their kitchen tables right now: Is Congress finally going to do anything meaningful about gun violence? When will enough be enough? What will it take for this body to move beyond the same talking points that we hear after every mass shooting and actually do something to prevent more deaths? Will Congress finally see what the vast majority of Americans see—gun owners and non-gun owners alike—that America's gun problem isn't going away unless Congress musters up the courage to take it head-on, or will Congress continue to give the lipservice of thoughts and prayers and then do absolutely nothing?

We have to act because once again there was a massacre on American soil. Once again it was inside a school. Once again American children were gunned down. We keep living through a nightmare of gun violence that repeats itself in schools, movie theaters, churches, nightclubs, concerts, and every single day on the streets of cities in every State around this country—Sandy Hook, Aurora, Charleston, San Bernardino, Orlando, Las Vegas, Sutherland Springs, and most recently, Parkland, FL.

We can help stop this. We have the power to help stop this. The question is whether Congress has the political will to do it, whether this institution will finally put families first, our children first, and stand up to the gun manufacturers and the NRA.

I urge every Member of Congress to reflect on why they first ran for office. We are here as public servants to serve the people who sent us here, not to serve the gun industry's profits, not to serve the organizations and companies and lobbyists who demand political retribution when we do the morally right thing. Does Congress have the will to act? Does Congress have the basic courage this country needs? I am sorry to say, I don't know, but we can put it to the test.

There has been a lot of talk—more than normal even—about our need to act in this Chamber. So I will say this to my colleagues: Let's make this time

different. Let's listen to the children from Stoneman Douglas High School. Let's seize this moment. Let's take action.

I implore my colleagues to listen to what the country is saying about gun violence today, listen to the families, listen to the survivors from Parkland and tune out all the other noise. I did. It is possible.

Ten years ago, I had an A rating from the NRA, just like many of my colleagues today, but then I met the mother of Nyasia Pryear-Yard. Then I met her classmates. Nyasia was an honor student from Brooklyn. She was dancing with her friends, having fun, loving life. She was killed by a stray bullet in her community. Now I have an F rating from the NRA.

I don't understand how, after meeting with all of these families, after meeting with all of these children whose lives have been destroyed and torn apart by gun violence—I don't understand how any public servant would not vow to do what is necessary to make sure it never happens again.

It is what we do after a terrorist attack, rightfully so. It is what we do as a country. We come together. We say never again, and we do whatever it takes to protect our country. We have to have the very same sense of urgency now.

Plain and simple, it is a lie to say we have to choose between protecting law-abiding gun owners' rights and protecting our children from being murdered by assault rifles. It is a false choice to say we cannot end gun violence without violating people's constitutional rights. It is time for Members of Congress to stand up for what is right for America and do what is right for our communities, and say no to the NRA.

I commend one of our colleagues in the House of Representatives—a Republican from Florida and an Army veteran—who is seeing this crisis differently now too. He wrote:

I know that my community, our schools, and public gathering places, are not made safer by any person having access to the best killing tool the Army could put in my hands. I cannot support the primary weapon I used to defend our people, being used to kill children I swore to defend.

That is what leadership looks like.

I implore my colleagues in the Senate to see our gun violence problem differently. See it with your heart. See it for what it is. It is a matter of national security, of public health, of public safety that will never go away unless Congress does its job.

So, once and for all, let's pass laws that actually are meaningful, that actually can do something, not just something simple so we can say we did something and move on. I strongly agree with my colleagues that we need to improve the mental health system. Let's make those investments, but it should not stop there.

We have to address the fact that we have weapons of war on our streets

today. We have to address the fact that it is so easy for people to buy a gun—people who should never have that privilege. Let's vote to ban semiautomatic assault rifles.

Congress has already banned fully automatic weapons. Congress has already recognized that some weapons have no place in the civilian world, and a weapon of war that was designed for military use, that can fire up to 100 rounds in 1 minute or 100 rounds if you just add a bump stock, a weapon that can completely outgun a police officer has no place in the civilian world.

Will my colleagues vote with me to ban semiautomatic assault rifles?

Then, let's vote to ban the high-capacity magazines that go with them. They are made for wars; they are not made to be in our schools, not in our cities. High-capacity magazines let killers fire dozens of rounds without having to frequently stop and reload. They are designed to let someone fire bullets at as many people as possible in the shortest amount of time.

Let's vote to ban high-capacity magazines, and let's vote to pass universal background checks. That is something that is so commonsense, so obvious. Too many people who should not get their hands on these weapons are easily able to get them, and there are so many loopholes that allow people to buy semiautomatic assault rifles online, where there are no background checks. They allow people to buy semiautomatic assault rifles at gun shows, where there are no background checks.

It simply doesn't make sense that every person who buys a firearm doesn't go through a basic background check system. Do you know who agrees with that? Ninety-seven percent of the American people. I can't think of any other issue where there is such near-universal agreement across our entire population.

So let's do what our constituents are demanding from us—not what the NRA is demanding from us—and vote to pass universal background checks. When we do it, let's make sure the effort is actually sincere. If we are only voting on universal background checks, when it is tied to the issue of concealed carry reciprocity, then that is not a sincere attempt to fix our broken background check system. If Congress is saying we will only pass universal background checks if we pass a new law that says a stranger from one State has to be allowed into my State or your State when he has a gun hidden under his jacket, that is an insult to 97 percent of the American people who want Congress to pass universal background checks now.

Then, let's finally vote to overturn the outrageous law that has banned the Centers for Disease Control from even studying the issue of gun deaths. The CDC can study any other cause of death—heart disease, cancer, car crashes, plane crashes—unless it involves a gun. Don't you think it is strange that when we debate this issue, the two

things related to gun violence that Congress has actually banned in recent years are research—research on gun violence—and a ban on the ATF from using computers to keep records? Let's vote to allow the CDC to conduct research on gun violence so we can finally have the information and the data we need to fight gun violence as effectively as possible.

Let's also pass a law that finally makes gun trafficking a Federal crime. Over and over again, law enforcement officers keep finding illegally obtained guns being used in crimes. Numerous NYPD officers have been killed by guns that were illegally obtained by criminals, and there is literally no Federal law to stop someone from loading his truck with guns in Georgia, driving up I-95, and selling them in a parking lot in the Bronx directly to criminals and gang members.

I have a bill that would make this illegal. It is called the Hadiya Pendleton and Nyasia Pryear-Yard Gun Trafficking and Crime Prevention Act. It is bipartisan, because both parties agree that gun trafficking is a source of gun violence in our cities.

This bill is named after Nyasia, whom I mentioned earlier, and another teenager from Chicago who was also killed by a stray bullet. Both guns in those crimes were trafficked. So let's pass this bill and finally make gun trafficking a Federal crime.

If we are not trying to solve this problem now, then we are failing as elected leaders. Congress must solve America's gun violence crisis now. It is urgent. Our country is demanding it. Americans deserve more from Congress than just banning bump stocks, just fixing NICS, which, while I strongly support both of them, will not do enough on their own. So let us not fail our country again.

I would like to ask our colleagues to immediately vote to ban semiautomatic assault rifles and bump stocks, to pass a universal background check system and close all of the loopholes, to allow the CDC to research gun violence as a cause of death, to close the gun show loophole, and to finally make gun trafficking a Federal crime.

I yield the floor.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, it was 2 weeks ago yesterday that the tragic incident in Parkland took place—one of many that have impacted our country over the last decade and beyond. That community in Parkland, FL, and the residents of the State of Florida whom I represent—and, frankly, the entire Nation—have demanded not just action but immediate action.

We know—and anyone who watches this process is well aware—that there are deep differences on how far and how much we should restrict the Second Amendment right of every American.

We know there are deep differences about whether some of those proposed restrictions work. I imagine those debates and those differences will not be easily resolved and will continue, but I also know there is widespread support and agreement that we must act now—as soon as possible—to do everything we can to prevent another tragedy like Parkland from happening anywhere else ever again. That is a consensus position. No matter where one falls on this debate, no matter how one feels about how far or how restricted restrictions on gun sales in America should be, no matter what your views are on that, I don't know of anyone who is in favor of school shootings, and I don't know anyone who is in favor of seeing another one happen. There is common ground in that regard.

What I have tried to do, over the last couple of weeks, is undertake efforts to determine what changes in Federal law not only could have prevented this attack but could prevent future ones. In that vein, I have met with State and Federal law enforcement investigators involved not just in this case but in gun laws in general. I have met with students and with teachers from Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School, including two teachers who were injured in the attack. I have met with school board administrators. I have met with the community at large, including an appearance last week at a nationally televised townhall. I have been in contact with several of the parents of the victims who lost their lives. I have also spoken to experts in firearm sales. I have spoken to a number of federally licensed firearm dealers who talked about some of the frustrations they have with our existing law and their inability to address people who ultimately turn out to be individuals who should not own any gun of any kind.

So based on these meetings, based on all of this input, and based on all of the other research that is out there leading up to now, the first thing I want to say is, I actually believe this attack could have and should have been prevented if current law had been fully enforced.

This killer was a well-known danger to the school district. He was a well-known danger to the Broward Sheriff's office. He was a well-known danger to his neighborhood. He was also the subject of two separate and specific warnings to law enforcement agencies: a call to the Broward Sheriff's office last November, a call to an FBI hotline in January.

In essence, we are always telling people, if you see something, say something. People saw something and people said something and other people saw it as well over a course of time. Yet somehow this deranged and violent individual was able to pass a background check and purchase not 1 but 10 separate firearms, and this deranged and violent individual was ultimately able to walk right into the school a few minutes before dismissal and take the lives of 17 innocent Floridians.

This tragedy is the result of a massive multisystemic failure—a failure involving Federal agencies, State agencies, and local authorities who all failed to both identify the threat he posed and coordinate a response to stop him before he took action. It is this failure I hope we will focus on by addressing the shortcomings and vulnerabilities in our current laws and in our current policies. We may still have a debate on the broader issues of regulating gun sales, but irrespective of that debate, we still must and should do this.

So today I wanted to come here for a few minutes and announce a comprehensive plan—not a simple bill you just vote on and move on but a series of measures I believe could prevent these attacks before they happen and that also help schools protect their students and their teachers. I believe these ideas should all enjoy bipartisan support, and, if passed, could and should help prevent the next potential mass shooting.

These are ideas I outline not just because they work, but because I believe we can get the votes to pass them. Sixty votes in the Senate, a majority in the House, and the signature of a President—that is what it takes to turn an idea into a law, and these ideas I am about to outline both work and, I believe, could enjoy that widespread support.

One of the things we have learned is, our schools are woefully unprepared to prevent an attack before it occurs. Furthermore, during my visits to the site of the attack and my followup meeting with teachers at the school, I learned of various changes to school facilities and practices which could have stopped this attack or improved the response. Therefore, I will be joining later today with Senator ORRIN HATCH and others in introducing the STOP School Violence Act.

If passed, this law would provide Federal grants to do some important things that would have been really helpful in this case: strengthen school security infrastructure of the school, provide school training for everyone—administrators, teachers, even students—to be able to identify threats and to report them. Something that really would be helpful is the creation of a school threat assessment and crisis intervention team. There is a successful program in Los Angeles that does this. That is a team that is a coordination between law enforcement, other State agencies, school districts and the like where they are all talking to each other about students and former students who may pose a threat of violence and intervene before they act.

A second issue we identified is that even if law enforcement, school administrators, or family members believe an individual poses the risk of committing an act of violence, they have very few options to prevent them from purchasing any gun or taking away the guns they already have.

Therefore, I intend to present a new law—perhaps in coordination with others who are working on it now—that will lead to the creation of gun violence restraining orders, something that will give law enforcement and close family members the option of obtaining a court order to prevent gun sales or remove guns from individuals who pose a threat. To be clear, the due process in such a situation would be on the front end, not on the back end.

The third issue we uncovered is, Federal law appears to discourage school systems from reporting dangerous students to law enforcement. I don't support criminalizing all school misconduct, but a student who has threatened violence, who has exhibited violent behavior needs to be reported to law enforcement. A student who has committed a crime by issuing a threat of death using social media—a crime under Florida law—that needs to be reported, but under Broward County school policies, pursuant to something called the PROMISE Program, reporting a student, a dangerous one, to law enforcement is the sixth step—step 6—in their plan. Therefore, I intend to propose changes to the Federal Youth PROMISE Program so a school district plan under this program does not delay and does not discourage law enforcement from being alerted to dangerous and violent or hazardous behavior.

Fourth, we need to strengthen background checks. That is why I have joined with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle pushing for the immediate passage of Fix NICS—something that will require all Federal agencies and incentivize every State to fully report relevant information to the national background check database—because a background check is only as good as the information that is on it. This deranged killer was able to buy guns on 10 separate occasions because he would have passed any background check because none of this stuff that was known about him was reported to that system.

Fifth, we must begin to prosecute the purchase of guns by people prohibited from doing so. Next week, I hope to be joining a bipartisan group, led by Senators TOOMEY and COONS, in filing the “Lie and Try” bill, which will require the FBI to notify States when someone who is not allowed to buy a gun, tries to buy a gun and fails the background check, so they can be investigated, so they can be prosecuted.

In addition, we will be presenting a new law to provide more prosecutors to go after straw purchases, which is where someone buys a gun on behalf of someone else because that someone else could not pass the background check.

Now, there are some additional reforms that I am open to: the possibility of looking at age limits on semiautomatic rifles, the notion of looking at what could be done with high-capacity magazines. We will continue to explore and look at those. These reforms do

not enjoy the sort of widespread support in Congress that the other measures I have announced do, and, in order to successfully pass, these ideas will have to be crafted in a way that actually contributes to greater public safety but also do not unnecessarily or unfairly infringe on the Second Amendment right of all law-abiding adults to protect themselves and their families, to hunt, or to participate in recreational shooting.

Ultimately, there are things we can do that have widespread, bipartisan support that we can act on, that we can get passed, that will actually make a difference. These are impactful things.

I urge the Senate and the House, all of my colleagues here, do not hold hostage a piece of legislation that would work and that we all support because it doesn't have everything you want. There are things we can act on and do, and there are things we can continue to argue over, debate, and perhaps do in the future, but on the things we agree on—and they happen to be things that could have prevented this attack and will prevent future attacks—let's get those done. I have outlined those here today. There may be others, but we owe it not just to the victims and the families of Parkland but to all Americans everywhere; for this attack may have happened in Southern Florida, but there is no reason it can't happen somewhere else and, I fear, will happen somewhere else if we do not fix the deficiencies and the flaws in our policies, in our laws, and in the way they are enforced.

We have learned from this incident what is wrong with our system. Let us fix it. We have an opportunity to do so while we continue to debate and work on the issues we do not agree on. That is what I hope we will do, and that is what I commit to doing everything I can to achieve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Quattlebaum nomination?

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The result was announced—yeas 69, nays 28, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 42 Ex.]

YEAS—69

Alexander	Boozman	Cochran
Baldwin	Burr	Collins
Barrasso	Capito	Coons
Bennet	Carper	Corker
Blunt	Cassidy	Cornyn

Cortez Masto	Inhofe	Portman
Cotton	Isakson	Reed
Crapo	Johnson	Risch
Cruz	Jones	Roberts
Daines	Kaine	Rubio
Donnelly	Kennedy	Sasse
Enzi	King	Scott
Ernst	Lankford	Shaheen
Fischer	Leahy	Shelby
Gardner	Lee	Sullivan
Graham	Manchin	Tester
Grassley	McCaskill	Thune
Hassan	McConnell	Tillis
Hatch	Moran	Toomey
Heitkamp	Murkowski	Warner
Heller	Nelson	Whitehouse
Hirono	Paul	Wicker
Hoeven	Perdue	Young

NAYS—28

Blumenthal	Harris	Schatz
Booker	Heinrich	Schumer
Brown	Klobuchar	Smith
Cantwell	Markey	Stabenow
Cardin	Menendez	Udall
Casey	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murphy	Warren
Durbin	Murray	Wyden
Feinstein	Peters	
Gillibrand	Sanders	

NOT VOTING—3

Flake	McCain	Rounds
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the remaining votes in this series be 10 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

### CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Karen Gren Scholer, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Texas.

Mitch McConnell, Thom Tillis, John Cornyn, John Kennedy, Richard Burr, Mike Lee, David Perdue, Steve Daines, James Lankford, Pat Roberts, Johnny Isakson, Jeff Flake, Lindsey Graham, Patrick J. Toomey, Marco Rubio, Tom Cotton.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Karen Gren Scholer, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Texas, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator