

Americans have seen more than 240 mass shootings in just 158 days. In the past week, a pregnant woman was shot at a picnic in Saginaw, Michigan, and a young boy was shot in Flint.

It does not have to be this way.

America is the only developed country in the world where this type of gun violence happens every single day.

And that is why I support these commonsense efforts to expand red flag laws; to raise the purchasing age for some semiautomatic weapons to 21 years of age; to crack down on gun trafficking and straw purchases; to address ghost guns, untraceable guns without serial numbers that can be bought and assembled at home; to restrict high-capacity magazines; and to ban bump stocks, devices that turn semiautomatic rifles into automatic weapons, into a machine gun.

I wrote this legislation back in 2017 after a mass shooter in Las Vegas was able to fire over 1,000 rounds in just mere minutes, killing 60 people.

While no single law will stop every tragedy, we can do what we can, and that is why I support this important legislation. I am glad the House passed it. The Senate should take it up now.

□ 1145

CHILDREN KILLED BY GUN VIOLENCE THIS YEAR

(Mr. CASTEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CASTEN. Madam Speaker, I will take a moment after the shootings this week just to read the names of the children under 10 years old in America who have been killed by guns so far this year.

Aiden, age 8.
Alice, a newborn.
Alyssa, age 6.
Amare, age 10.
Andres, age 9.
Antonio, who went by the nickname "Espn," age 7.
Arbrie, age 8.
Ariah, age 7.
Arlene, age 9.
Asa, age 8.
Ashton, age 2.
Autumn, age 3.
Avery, 3.
Bella, 4, and her sister, Brixx, was a newborn.
Bridger, age 10.
Bryson, 3.
Caleb, 5.
Cayden, 10.
Charlie, 10.
Charlotte, 9.
Charvez, 2.
Chloe, 7.
Clesslynn, 2.

Madam Speaker, I realize I am being gavelled out there, but there are 600 names on this list. I can't read these in 1 minute.

Are we going to act, or are we going to throw up useless thoughts and prayers? It is time to act.

GUN LAWS

(Mr. GROTHMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, America has been through a tough time the last few weeks due to serious incidents that happened in Buffalo and in Texas. But last week, I was down at the Mexican border, and I talked to some Border Patrol guys, who, because we were Congressmen, brought up what happens when we make it as difficult as possible for law-abiding people to own guns.

Right now, if you compare Mexico and the United States, Mexico has—per capita—about five times as many murders as they do in the U.S. Not 5 percent more, not 50 percent more, five times as many. I am sure the Mexican elected officials who passed those laws making it so difficult to get a gun thought they were going to have a peaceful paradise down there.

Right now, many people are running all over each other to say: Let's pass law. Let's pass this law. Let's take a look and see what happened in Mexico and whether the sole answer is more laws.

Meanwhile, I have a bill making it more difficult to bring guns into schools, and right now, that bill is not moving. I think that would have a good impact.

RECOGNIZING BETTY REID SOSKIN

(Mr. DESAULNIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize my friend, Betty Reid Soskin, as she finally enters retirement from the National Park Service at age 100. Betty has had too many jobs and too many accomplishments and too many compliments for just 1 minute, so I will share a few of the highlights of this remarkable woman's life.

During World War II, Betty was a file clerk for the Boilermakers Union A-36 in Richmond, California, an all-Black union auxiliary.

In 2004, she became a park ranger with the National Park Service assigned to the Rosie the Riveter Park in Richmond, California. In this role, Betty shared her story as a young Black woman working during the war and long held the honorable distinction of being the Nation's oldest National Park Ranger.

Americans came from all over the country to listen to Betty's voice. Betty has been recognized over the years for her advocacy and her commitment to social justice, including by President Obama as Glamour magazine's Woman of the Year, and recently, had a local middle school named after her.

Betty is an important part of our community and our country, and I am proud to call her a friend and a con-

stituent. Her leadership and passionate spirit are an inspiration to all of us, all who have been fortunate enough to know her and for all Americans who know of her.

Congratulations, Betty, and thank you for a wonderful life of service to our community and to our country.

COMPREHENSIVE GUN REFORM

(Mr. JEFFRIES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JEFFRIES. Madam Speaker, this week, House Democrats have led the effort to pass comprehensive gun violence prevention legislation to address this epidemic here in America. We will also ensure that the American people know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth with respect to the violent insurrection and attack on our Capitol to protect the integrity of our democracy.

At the same time, we continue to fight for good-paying jobs, to lower costs and ensure an economy that works for everyday Americans. We believe in a country where if you work hard and play by the rules, you should be able to provide a comfortable living for yourself and for your family, educate your children, purchase a home, and retire with grace and dignity. That is the great American Dream that we are fighting to preserve for the people.

SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RUTHERFORD), my friend.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT), my good friend, for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about a major problem facing our communities, and that is human violence. I have four children and four beautiful grandchildren who are school-aged.

Madam Speaker, I have to tell you, when I turned on the television set and saw what was going on in Uvalde, Texas, my heart sank. I saw my grandchildren in the faces of those children that I saw fleeing from that horrible violence that was being conducted that afternoon. It is too often that we turn on our TV sets and see images of schools locked down and grieving communities. Unfortunately, as I mentioned, we saw that unfold in Uvalde, Texas. Yet, every time tragedy strikes, we hear the same conversation, calls for bans on firearms, universal background checks, and red flag laws. That is how we spent the last two days in this Chamber, talking about partisan bills that are, number one, redundant—a lot of these laws already exist—or number two, they are laws that will infringe on the rights of law-abiding

American citizens. Ultimately, they won't fix the problem.

Madam Speaker, the problem is not guns. It is not gun violence. The problem is human violence. When I was sheriff, I used to explain to my community occasionally, when gun violence—as they would call it—would erupt, and they would ask me to talk about it.

Madam Speaker, I would tell the gentleman, Mr. GOHMERT, I would always make the point to them that I could take that weapon off my hip, put it on that podium, and it would never, ever become violent. Now, some human may come along and pick it up and use it violently, but that is a human violence problem. It is not a gun violence problem.

I carried a gun for 41 years. It never became violent. Yet, we see it over and over again. Humans are the cause of this violence. It is a cause of the grief that we are seeing today and feeling in Uvalde and Buffalo and so many other cities across America.

We see it over and over again. A tragedy happens, a gunman is identified, and what do we learn? Then we learn that they showed all sorts of dangerous behavior and telltale signs of violence long before becoming a mass shooter, a murderer, killing animals, making threats, threatening words, self-harm, cutting themselves—the list goes on and on; mental health issues that should have been addressed long before they became an active shooter.

Madam Speaker, but people don't want to talk about that in the wake of a tragedy. The fact is, we already have the tools to deal with these individuals once they are identified. We have the tools to stop these horrific events before they happen. One of the things, as sheriff, I used to tell my officers all the time is I don't want to be the best first responder to a mass casualty event. I want to prevent it before it occurs.

Madam Speaker, I saw firsthand, countless times, when people were a danger, we stopped them before they could hurt others. We put them in jail. We arrested them for making threats. We identified them and we identified the threats that they were making, and we stopped them from acting on those threats.

The challenge here, we must focus on identifying those who are a human threat to themselves and others and then intervene. Too many times after all of these events, we hear that conversation: Oh, I knew this guy. I am not surprised.

Those are the conversations that we hear afterwards. We must identify those suffering from severe mental illness and formally adjudicate them so they cannot buy a firearm. That law already exists. We need to start adjudicating those who are mentally ill and a danger.

And let me say this: Everyone that has a mental illness is not a danger. Many people suffer mental illness and are not a danger. But those that are, we need to adjudicate them as such so

that they can't go down and buy a firearm. Those laws are already on the books, but our community must do a better job of identifying those who need help and then get them the services and treatment that they need and deserve.

We could do this while also upholding basic due process rights. Our whole judicial process system is based on the assumption that people are innocent until proven guilty. But the ex-parte order issued through these red flag laws throws these fundamental rights out the window.

Red flag laws take away a person's Second Amendment rights and a lower evidentiary standard without the opportunity to even defend themselves in court. Ex-parte is almost a secretive process. It is going on without the accused's knowledge. And we see how well the ex-parte process worked in the FISA courts, didn't we?

The reason our judicial system works is because it is adversarial. We have people on both sides of the issue who are fighting it out in court, discussing the facts. Ex-parte, you hear one side of the story. That is all. And they want to use that to take away your Second Amendment rights. Then once deprived of those rights, now we have to prove that we are innocent.

This is backwards and ineffective at solving our violence problem. Before we quickly jump to pass bad legislation—like we just passed this afternoon—let's do a better job of enforcing the laws that are already on our books.

Before we rehash the same talking points and debate partisan messaging bills, let's work together on the areas where we need change. Let's work together to bolster our mental health system so we can better identify people suffering from mental illness and adjudicate them if they are a danger and provide them the treatment they need and deserve.

□ 1200

Let's work together to strengthen penalties for those who steal and traffic in firearms. Let's work together to secure our schools and make sure that our kids have a safe place to learn.

The STOP School Violence Act of 2018, which was signed into law by President Trump, when we drafted the language for that bill, the first concern that I had was identification of those who are a threat, and that is the first part of that law.

The second part of that law now is CPTED, crime prevention through environmental design, how we can stop those who may be coming to our schools to commit violence.

Let's work together to identify the signs of dangerous behavior and prevent these acts of violence before they even happen.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments. I know my friend mentioned he had been a sheriff. He has great expertise in knowing what he is talking about, and I appreciate his insights as a lawman.

Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure and honor to yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON), ambassador from Texas Tech University, where their slogan is "Guns Up," not because they are violent, but I have always taken it to mean they were ready to preserve and protect if the need arose.

Mr. ARRINGTON. Madam Speaker, I have never been more proud to be a Red Raider than after that introduction, I can tell you that.

I thank the gentleman, my fellow freedom-loving Texan, Representative GOHMERT, for yielding me the time. We will miss Representative GOHMERT in this Chamber and the fight that he brought every day for the people in this people's House.

I will lend my thoughts and sentiments on this issue of violence. As my colleague from Florida mentioned, human violence, sometimes perpetrated with guns, is a human problem, a problem of the soul, a problem of society, the degradation of our culture and our families. These are issues far deeper than legislation can reach, I can assure you.

I understand, because I am human, that we want to do something and that while that may be a human response, as lawmakers, we should ask the question not can we do something symbolic, can we do something to make the American people feel good, because that is not going to save a single elementary school child. We have to ask the question: What can we do that will actually work, and what can we do that will also preserve the rights of our citizens to protect themselves?

I think we often forget and fail to start this conversation with the genesis and the fundamental rationale for the Second Amendment. Our Founders knew good and well the abuses, the corruption, and the tyrannical force from a coercive central government. They wanted to make sure that not only could we preserve our happiness and our life and liberty from the crazy and the criminal; they wanted to make sure that we would have a last check on tyranny with an armed citizenry.

Folks, the Second Amendment is there, and we have preserved this experiment in liberty and democracy for 240-plus years, even though, in the 20th century alone, tens of millions of people have been slaughtered by their own government. We have preserved this great beacon of liberty, this shining city on a hill, because of that founding principle that the Second Amendment is the citizen's last check on an abusive government.

The Declaration of Independence says it best. It talks about the mission of a government that has the consent of the people to protect and secure the liberties of those people, and whenever any form of government becomes destructive of those ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it. But it goes further. It says when there is a

long train of abuses and usurpation, reducing the society to absolute despotism, it is the right and even the duty of the people to throw off that government.

Folks, that is the context to the Second Amendment. It is not just to give east Texans and west Texans a hunting license. And I think it is critical.

As we grieve with our brothers and sisters in Uvalde, and it is heart-breaking and unthinkable to see that tragedy play out and to see these families suffer, but I think it is incumbent upon mature lawmakers and leaders of the greatest and freest country in the world to take a deep breath and ask the question: Will these things that we are talking about with respect to gun control actually do anything to stop these crazy, murderous people from committing their crimes?

We need to let Uvalde grieve. We need to let the final report come out. We all need to be more vigilant.

Quite frankly, when we talk about 18- to 21-year-olds and extreme risk orders and all the litany of things that are being debated in this Chamber, we ought to let the States like Texas, along with their communities, figure out how to solve these problems and secure their schools and communities.

The Federal Government's mission at its core is to secure the liberties of the people and provide for a common defense. Let Texas figure this out.

My goodness, the very gun control laws that were passed out of this Chamber have been in place in cities and States with the highest gun-related crimes.

No more feel-good measures, no more infringing measures. Let's pray for Uvalde. Let's let Texas solve those problems. Let's protect the God-given, constitutionally protected rights of every American to defend themselves against the criminal and, God forbid, a coercive government.

God bless America, and I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the wise observations of my friend from Texas. I couldn't have asked for a better lead-in to the thoughts that I have on this very issue. Mr. ARRINGTON had some great insights.

I have an article here from, of all things, ABC News. Above the name of the author, Bill Hutchinson, is a quote from a police official saying: "It is worse than a war zone around here lately."

The article says: "At least 12 major U.S. cities have broken annual homicide records in 2021—and there is still 3 weeks to go in the year." This is from December 8, 2021. This article became more relevant because of the horrors that occurred in Uvalde.

Another quote, from Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney: "It is terrible to every morning get up and have to go look at the numbers and then look at the news and see the stories. It is just crazy. It is just crazy, and this needs to

stop." He said that after the city surpassed its annual homicide record of 500, which had stood since 1990.

"Philadelphia, a city of roughly 1.5 million people, has had more homicides this year"—this is 2021—"521 as of December 6) than the Nation's two largest cities, New York (443 as of December 5) and Los Angeles (352 as of November 27). That is an increase of 13 percent from 2020, a year that nearly broke the 1990 record."

The article goes on and talks about all these shootings in our major cities. In fact, these aren't considered mass shootings. They don't meet that definition as commonly used.

From worldpopulationreview.com, the top 10 cities in the United States with the highest murder rates—and that is murders per 100,000 people—number one is St. Louis; number two, Baltimore; number three, New Orleans; number four, Detroit; number five, Cleveland; number six, Las Vegas; number seven, Kansas City; number eight, Memphis; number nine, Newark; and number 10, Chicago.

Now, all of those cities have Democrat mayors. Las Vegas has an independent who was a Democrat until 2009 when he announced now being an Independent.

We also, in 2021, had 16 cities hit record-high homicide rates. Again, rates normally are calculated in murders per 100,000 people. Rochester, New York, had 80. Philadelphia had 524. Louisville, Kentucky, had 179. Baton Rouge had 115. That was an unofficial number but, apparently, accurate or close to accurate. Austin had 88. Indianapolis had 258. St. Paul had 35. Portland, Oregon, had 84. Albuquerque had 107. Tucson had 92. Columbus had 179. Jackson, Mississippi, had 129. Atlanta, Georgia, had 150. New Haven, Connecticut, had 25, which is a tremendous number for a small city. Macon, Georgia, had 52. Milwaukee had 190.

Additional cities with high homicide rates, naturally, Chicago had 797 homicides in 1 year, yet Mayor Lightfoot, prominent Democrat that she is, doesn't want to get to the root causes of that.

□ 1215

Black lives matter. There is absolutely an inordinate number of Black lives that are taken in these Democrat-controlled cities.

New York, New York had 481. It is just tragic what has gone on. So what is different? We have had guns in America. In fact, not only have we had them from our founding, if it were not for guns in America we would not have had a founding, starting perhaps with Lexington Green.

People in America had guns and they defended themselves and they defended their liberty. That is how we came to have what I believe is the greatest country in the history of the world. I know there are a lot of schools that are teaching how terrible this country is, but I hear over and over from people

that come here to the United States from other countries, and they say: You have got to protect your freedom because if you lose your liberty, your freedom here in America, there will be nowhere else in the world anyone can go to be free.

Historically, countries don't go fight for other people's freedom, yet, this country has. We fought the bloodiest war with the biggest loss of life here on our own soil for the freedom of people who were slaves. Yes, I know States' rights were a big part, but let's face it, slavery was at the bottom of it all.

Countries don't do that. This one did. You even had the Founders do something that Founders don't do historically. They condemned themselves in their own founding documents by saying all men are created equal, they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights.

Thomas Jefferson himself put the grievance in the declaration. There was disagreement on it. Here he was a slave owner, yet, the most offensive, longest paragraph of the grievances was because King George had allowed slavery to ever start. The problem, or the wrong, that was being done through that institution, it was wrong. Yes, I know it has always been here on Earth.

As I understand, there may be 40 million or more people in slavery right now today in our modern world, but it doesn't make it right anywhere and it needs to stop. This country had people who were Founders that condemned themselves by putting that language in there because they knew what was right.

This is an unusual country. I know Solomon's Israel was an absolutely amazing place, supposedly the wisest man to ever live. Of course, he had so many wives and that creates problems. More opportunities. More liberty here than anywhere. Yet, we have spent the week hearing over and over about the need for gun control.

The first time I was asked if I supported gun control years ago, I said: Well, of course I do. We were taught in the Army that the most effective gun control back then was—I believe there were eight steady hold factors—which was the best way to control your gun while firing—the steady hold factors were taught.

They don't teach that in the Army anymore, as I understand it. Kids have grown up around guns in America and we didn't have mass shootings. There is something going on here. I know I was condemned roundly this week, yesterday, talking about—we had friends across the aisle who made clear they didn't want to hear any more about prayer. They wanted to do something. They didn't seem to care if it was wrong. They wanted to do something.

Well, John Lott, Jr., had this article on May 26 in Newsweek. I am just touching on certain parts.

He said: "Just as with so many of these attackers"—talking about the shooter in Uvalde—"the man who attacked Robb Elementary School picked

a place where people were banned from carrying concealed handguns. For example, the perpetrator of the Buffalo shooting from a couple of weeks ago wrote in his manifesto: 'Areas where carrying with a concealed weapon 'are outlawed or prohibited may be good areas of attack.' "

He put that in the manifesto in case people just were too dense to understand that it draws shooters if they know they have got soft targets.

John Lott says: "Teachers and staff can carry concealed handguns in about 30 percent of Texas school districts, so we don't need to guess how the policy would work. Nineteen other States also allow concealed carry in schools. Since the year 2000, there has yet to be a single case of someone being wounded or killed from a shooting, let alone a mass public shooting, between 6 a.m. and midnight at a school that lets teachers carry guns.

"While there have not been any problems with armed teachers, the number of people killed at schools without concealed carry has increased significantly over the course of the last decade.

"Biden's speech Tuesday night contained one misleading or false statement after another. Instead of trying to bring the country together, it politicized the attack. When mentioning the Sandy Hook, Parkland, Santa Fe, and Oxford school shootings, Biden claimed that there were 900 instances of gunfire at schools over the last 10 years. But someone committing suicide in a car parking lot at 2 a.m., two gangs fighting over drug turf in a parking lot after school hours, and an accidental discharge in a firearms training class are not remotely similar to the sort of shooting that happened Tuesday. Even including lone suicides, accidental discharges, including those by police, and gang fights, the number—as compiled by my organization, the Crime Prevention Research Center, is about half of what Biden claims it is: 470.

"Since 1998, there have been a total of nine attacks similar to the Robb Elementary School shooting. Nine is nine too many. But once you adjust for population, there are many other countries, from Germany to Russia to Finland, that have comparable rates of school shootings.

"Biden says that we need common-sense gun laws, but what he proposes simply will not help. He doesn't seem to realize that over 92 percent of violent crime in America has nothing to do with guns. Focusing on so-called 'assault weapons' is not only not going to stop mass public shootings, but it won't make a difference in reducing murders at large.

Madam Speaker, one murder is too many.

"Only a small share of murders are committed with rifles, let alone 'assault rifles,' and that share has grown even smaller over time. The percentage of firearm murders committed with rifles was 4.8 percent prior to the Federal

'assault weapons' ban that took effect in September 1994.

"When the ban was in effect, from 1995 to 2004, the figure stood at 4.9 percent." Up a tenth of a percent with the so-called assault weapons ban in effect. "And since 2004, it's been even lower. Based on these numbers, it's hard to argue that the ban did anything at all.

"When we passed the assault weapons ban, mass shootings went down. When the law expired, mass shootings tripled," Biden claimed. In fact, there was no drop in the number of attacks with 'assault weapons,' and virtually no change in total mass shootings, during the 1994 to 2004 ban."

We know from the rules of the House—I can't say anybody lied, including the President, but whoever is putting those words in his teleprompter sure was because that just didn't happen, it misrepresented the truth—I am sure not intentionally.

"Biden asked Americans why people need 'assault weapons' to hunt deer. But, in reality, many so-called 'assault weapons' are nothing more than small-game hunting rifles. The AR-15 platform has just been made to cosmetically resemble a military-grade weapon."

For people that know weapons, it fires a .223 round. It is just 3/1000ths bigger around than a .22.

We were taught in military science—and I had an Army scholarship at Texas A&M—that Vietnam had gone to the M-16, now the M-4, same basic gun. It fires the same size round—or in the metric system, 556. We were taught that, gee, it is a higher speed, but the rounds are lighter weight, therefore, our military can carry more of them. We were also taught it certainly is not more lethal than what was being used before with the 7.62 round.

John Lott says, "The Uvalde tragedy will inevitably lead to a push for so-called 'red flag' laws or extreme risk protection orders. You would never know this from the media coverage, but the Federal Government and every State already have laws on the books that deal with people who are a danger to themselves or to others. These laws are commonly known as 'Baker Act' statutes, though they go by different names in different States. They typically allow police, doctors, and family members to have someone held for a mental health examination based upon a simple reasonableness test—effectively amounting to an educated guess."

Further down: "When faced with legal bills that can easily amount to \$10,000 for a hearing, few people find that it makes sense to fight 'red flag' laws just to keep their guns. Judges will thus initially confiscate a person's gun on the basis of a written complaint and 'reasonable suspicion.' When hearings take place weeks later, courts overturn a third of the initial orders. But since few defendants have legal representation, the actual error rate is undoubtedly much higher.

"When people pose a clear danger to themselves or to others, they should be confined to a mental health facility. If someone is really suicidal, simply taking away his gun won't solve the problem anyway. If anything, 'red flag' laws harm people who need genuine help; absent such laws, a person contemplating suicide might speak to a friend or family member and be dissuaded from that tragic course of action.

"It is well past time that we address these mass public shootings. But let's come up with proposals that matter—starting with eliminating 'gun-free zones'."

□ 1230

It also is worth noting, although some say assault weapon bans would reduce mass shootings and they think an assault weapon would be an automatic weapon—you hear that over and over, Madam Speaker. Actually, automatic weapons are already illegal and unavailable to the general public. Assault weapons are only available to the military. Though you have people who are vying for gigs on CNN or MSNBC who may say otherwise, but people who actually are not don't have an ulterior motive. They know an AR-15 is most often used as a defensive weapon.

I have heard why more people like an AR-15 with such a small round as a defensive weapon at home is people who don't fire weapons often end up twitching before the gun is fired which is extremely harmful to the accuracy. The AR-15, because the round is so small, it doesn't have much of a kick at all, and so people who are not used to using guns actually can be more accurate and find it more helpful.

We have people here saying that you shouldn't have more than five rounds. Yet, if you have multiple people coming into your home threatening your family, Madam Speaker, and they will each have guns most likely, then you need that.

Of course, I had a guy last time, some years back, when there was talk by Democrats about eliminating or making illegal multiple rounds in a magazine, and I had a guy over in the Rayburn Building who told me, I know you all are looking at banning multiple rounds in magazines. I am from Georgia. We don't want that because we find that, generally speaking, it takes over 50 rounds to bring down a drone.

I thought he was kidding, but he didn't smile. So that was news to me. That is the only time I have heard that request for multiple rounds in a magazine.

But the "Updated Assessment of the Federal Assault Weapons Ban: Impacts on Gun Markets and Gun Violence, 1994 to 2003," the Department of Justice concluded this: "Should it be renewed, the ban's effects on gun violence are likely to be small at best and perhaps too small for reliable measurement. Assault weapons were rarely used in gun crimes even before the ban."

According to recent data from the FBI between 2015 and 2019, you were twice as likely to be killed by hands or feet than you are to be killed by a rifle.

That is really amazing and shocking.

Our society, if you go back to a Supreme Court case in the late 1800s, they reviewed pages and pages of evidence and said that they didn't think there was any question that the United States was a Christian nation—not that everybody in the United States was a Christian, of course not, never has been. But that Christian and Judeo-Christian principles had a major effect on our founding and on the country up through those times.

I would agree with President Obama when he said we are not a Christian nation. I think the Supreme Court was right back in the late 1800s, and I think President Obama was right when he said that we are not now.

So what is the answer?

What is amazing to me is we have people deeply concerned—and I have friends across the aisle. I know their heart, and I know how desperately concerned they are about these shootings, and they want to stop them.

But if you look at the data, Madam Speaker, and you look at the cold, hard facts, the number one State in the Nation for gun control laws is California.

This article is from AWR Hawkins from June 5, 2022:

“An FBI report on active shooter incidents in 2021 shows that California was the number one State for such incidents, with six incidents total.

California is also number one for gun law strength, the Mike Bloomberg-affiliated Everytown for Gun Safety noted.

According to the FBI, there were 61 ‘active shooter incidents’ across the country in 2021 and 12 of the incidents met the definition of mass killing’.”

Madam Speaker, California—where our Speaker is from—led the Nation with six of those 12 active shooter incidents:

California has universal background checks, an assault weapons ban, a high-capacity magazine ban, a 10-day waiting period on gun purchases, they have got the red flag laws, gun registration requirements, good cause requirements for concealed carry, a ban on carrying a gun on a college campus for self-defense, a ban on K-12 teachers being armed on campus, a background check requirement for ammunition purchases, and a limit on the number of guns a law-abiding citizen can purchase in a given month, among other controls.

Additionally, ammunition purchases are only allowed if made through a State-approved vendor.

Yet, as a friend mentioned at the beginning of our hour here, Madam Speaker, you have got more shootings in Mexico.

As this article from “American Wire” by Melissa Fine indicates that: “According to the National Shooting Sports Foundation, retailer surveys revealed a 58 percent increase in gun sales to African Americans, a 49 percent increase among Hispanic Ameri-

cans, and firearm sales to Asian Americans jumped by 43 percent.”

According to this article there is a guy named Juan Ramireo, who immigrated from Mexico as a teenager, said: “As a Mexican immigrant, I feel that people are waking up.”

Ramireo, who legally immigrated to the United States when he was 13, said, The Second Amendment is a large reason why people feel safer here in the U.S. and in their homes at night. He said that as a kid—of course, living in Mexico—he knew what it was like to feel helpless. Nobody wants that feeling.

He said, “I saw my mom and grandmother go through several struggles and feelings of fear in our small Mexican town. It was difficult. But after moving here to the U.S., it's a new world. I go to bed with no worry about defending myself and my family.”

That is because he and his family have guns.

So what makes a difference?

We heard in our hearing in the Judiciary Committee from some Democrats that they didn't want to attribute any effect to social media. They didn't want us to attribute any effect to violent video games or to Hollywood or to mental illness or to godlessness or to fatherlessness or to drug use.

Yet we need to talk about these things. We really need to talk about these things.

We were told that they didn't want to hear anything more about prayers. And I know some media has made a big deal of that. But the fact is before prayers were eliminated in schools we didn't have the kind of mass shootings we do today.

I read a quote from a man named A.A. Hodge who was the principal of the Princeton Seminary and a professor of systematic theology back before the turn of the century of 1900. In fact, it was a few months before his death in 1886. Jim Garlow had quoted Reverend Hodge.

He warned a few months before his death, “I am as sure as I am of the fact of Christ's reign that a comprehensive and centralized system of national education, separated from religion, as is now commonly proposed, will prove the most appalling enginery for the propagation of anti-Christian and atheistic unbelief, and of anti-social nihilistic ethics, individual, social and political, which this sin-rent world has ever seen.”

George Orwell commented, “Sometimes the first duty of intelligent men is the restatement of the obvious.” He said, “The further a society drifts from the truth, the more it will hate those who speak it.”

I am getting a lot of hate.

“The most effective way to destroy people is to deny and obliterate their own understanding of their history.”

We are getting a lot of that in this country: eliminate our history, lie about our history, and tear down our history and our statues.

When the truth is you learn from good history and you learn from bad history, Madam Speaker, and if you don't get all of it or you get inaccurate history, you don't learn anything accurate.

Orwell said, “Free speech is my right to say what you don't want to hear.”

He said, “In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act.”

But as he talked about history and the ministry of truth that rewrote history every day like a disinformation board, he said, “The past was erased, the erasure forgotten, and the lie became the truth.”

We have seen a lot of that and not from Republicans.

Orwell said, “So much of left-wing thought is a kind of playing with fire by people who don't even know that fire is hot.”

He said, “Threats to freedom of speech, writing and action, though often trivial in isolation, are cumulative in their effect and, unless checked, lead to a general disrespect for the rights of the citizen.”

He said, “Whoever controls the image and information of the past determines what and how future generations will think; whoever controls the information and images of the present determines how those same people will view the past.

“He who controls the past commands the future. He who commands the future conquers the past.”

Orwell defined journalism as “printing what someone else does not want printed. Everything else is public relations.”

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We have got a lot of public relations in this town.

From the Gulag Archipelago, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn had an interesting quote. He said, “Remember Lenin's words: ‘An oppressed class which did not aspire to possess arms and learn how to handle them would deserve only to be treated as slaves.’”

That is Lenin. And the system he created in the Soviet Union resulted in the second most murders by a government in the history of the world, second only to Mao Tse Tung in China.

Whitaker Chambers—I waited too many years to read his book, Witness. But he says—because he did a lot of analysis. He was an atheist. He had had a troubled family life and loved the idea of communism; but eventually saw what communism really was and decided he didn't want any of it; eventually became a Christian.

But he said: “. . . the moment man indulged his freedom to the point where he was also free from God, it led him into tragedy, evil and often the exact opposite of what he had intended. In human terms, there was no solution for the problem of evil.”

He said: “. . . the crisis of the Western world exists to the degree it is indifferent to God. It exists to the degree

in which the Western world actually shares communism's materialist vision, is so dazzled by the logic of the materialist interpretation of history, politics, and economics, that it fails to grasp that, for it, the only possible answer to the Communist challenge is to choose either faith in God or faith in man."

Well, what Lenin had to say about that issue, he said, "Every religious idea of God, even flirting with the idea of God, is unutterable vileliness." And that came after Dostoyevsky analyzed what this crazy guy named Marx had to say. And Dostoyevsky took great issue with it. And at one point, he said: "The problem"—Dostoyevsky—"The problem of communism is not an economic problem." Of course, some of us know it is an economic problem. But his point is it is not the biggest problem.

He said, "The problem of communism is the problem of atheism."

And back during the summer I was an exchange student to the real Soviet Union in the seventies, it was nauseating to walk into a church, and where you would have seen a gorgeous stained glass window of Jesus—I remember one came in, and I have seen a picture depicting Jesus surrounded by the children where he—the quote was: "Suffer the little children to come unto me," except it was Lenin sitting there with the children around him. They had destroyed the stained glass window of Jesus and had Lenin; which goes back to what Dostoyevsky had to say, the problem of communism, socialism, progressivism, the big problem is ultimately government has got to be God; and that doesn't work out well.

Natan Sharansky, an amazing man, he said: "A lack of moral clarity . . . is why people living in free societies cannot distinguish between religious fundamentalists in democratic states and religious terrorists in fundamentalist states. That is why people living in free societies can come to see their fellow citizens as their enemy and foreign dictators as their friends." A lack of moral clarity. And that is not being taught in too many of our schools.

Ronald Reagan told the Alabama Legislature in 1982: "To those who cite the First Amendment as reason for excluding God from more and more of our institutions and everyday life, may I just say: The First Amendment of the Constitution was not written to protect the people of this country from religious values; it was written to protect religious values from government tyranny."

John Adams said, "The general principles on which the Fathers achieved independence were the general principles of Christianity." He wrote this to Thomas Jefferson toward the end of his life.

Adams said, "I will avow, that I then believed, and now believe, that those general principles of Christianity are as eternal and immutable, as the existence and attributes of God."

And I have gotten mail before saying, How dare you bring these things up on

the House floor? Because people are not taught our history. The fact is, the Bible has been quoted more times—many, many times more than any other book throughout our history, but it is quoted less and less these days. We have got our work cut out for us.

But it appears the Supreme Court is starting to understand, for them to become oligarchs, monarchs, and rule from Mt. Olympus across the street here, is not the best way to decide things better left for the legislature, after a great debate. And that is what we need to do.

And we really need to look at what is different now than when we didn't have mass shootings like we do now. And I think we will come to the things that Natan Sharansky, Whitaker Chambers, Dostoyevsky, John Adams, Ronald Reagan, and so many of our founders understood.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

SAVING SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Madam Speaker, I appreciate you and the staff's patience as I am racing up the elevator.

We are going to do something that is new to me today. And please wave at me if I start machine gun speaking.

And I have gotten teased about it a bit, so this week, I got to become the ranking member for the Republicans, that is sort of the senior Republican over Social Security in the Ways and Means Committee. And it is an area I have had a fascination with since I got here because, you know, it is \$1 trillion a year, and it is running out of money.

So, the last few times I have come behind these microphones, I have turned to my brothers and sisters on the left and begged them to stop doing what they are doing because we have showed board after board after board after board of how many people they are hurting, the working poor, the poor, the working middle class. It is just being destroyed by Democrat policies.

And I appreciate the virtue signaling. I understand maybe for many of them they didn't understand the most basic economics of what inflation was going to do and crushing people.

But now, all of a sudden, I have the responsibility—I take this really seriously. How do you save Medicare? How do you save Social Security?

And it is not a game, and it is not just little adjustments here. You talk to groups, even fellow Members, and they somehow think a little adjustment here, waste and fraud. A little adjustment here. We are talking trillions.

Remember, our best math right now is functionally, over the next 30 years, just Social Security and just Medicare,

when you add them together, and then the financing costs, are close to \$120 trillion short. So functionally, every dime of future debt is the shortfall of Medicare and Social Security.

It is demographics. We got old. At the end of this decade, 22 percent of us are 65 and older. A country like Japan, it is 30 percent. Japan has dramatically higher savings rates.

At the end of this decade, 22 percent of our neighbors will be 65 or older. And we functionally have nothing set aside for that.

Medicare is moving to being 100 percent general fund. The Medicare trust fund, the part A, the hospital portion, we got a good number a couple of days ago, so now it is gone in about 5 years. And we have no idea how we replace that because the model right now, as it is written in statute, is hey, just stop paying doctors and hospitals. That is going to work really well, isn't it?

And we will see here, the actuarial report for Social Security got extended out a bit. But functionally, in a decade, our parents, our grandma and grandpa, the model is at this moment, 27 percent cut. And that isn't the true story. It is much, much, much darker.

And I am going to do my very best here. And look, I have got to be honest; I am only partially through starting to dig through the numbers that Keith handed me, and we are trying to understand the Medicare actuaries and the Social Security actuaries. They just published their report, but it is based on data that may be as much as a year out of date. They have missed much of the inflation cycle so—one of the benchmarks was February this year. Well, think about what has happened to inflation since then.

And I am going to do my best right now to present the cruelty, just the cruelty of what the left has done to the poor, but particularly to the elderly poor.

And once again, I will give them credit. I don't think it was meant, but there is a misunderstanding here of what inflation does, because it is not just today. It is not just this year.

We are trying to build a model here of how many of our brothers and sisters who are older at the end of this decade are going to be living in poverty because of what this place did this last year.

So my best model right now is about 22 percent of our brothers and sisters who are 65 and over are living in poverty today. And it is a back of the napkin math, and I may be wrong. God, I hope I am wrong.

But if inflation stays substantially above the mean for a few more years, it is going to be a third of our retirees who are going to be living in poverty. This is what they did.

And so, in past weeks I have come behind the mike and said, here are ideas to knock down inflation. If inflation is too many dollars chasing too few goods, let's make more goods.