

offense. There is bipartisan agreement that we should strengthen the penalties for straw purchasers to deter this dangerous conduct. This, again, is practical common sense.

We should also add common sense and consistency to minimum age requirements to purchase guns. You have to be 21 to buy a handgun. You also have to be 21 to purchase alcohol or even cigarettes. But under our Federal laws? Just 18 to buy a shotgun or rifle, including an automatic rifle like those used on battlefields, like the ones used in Buffalo and Uvalde. And if we cannot find enough common ground to ban military-style assault rifles, we should at least raise the age at which they can be purchased from 18 to 21.

All of these proposals are practical common sense; they should be the least that Congress can do to help prevent the next mass shooting. But we have a problem. We have a problem in the United States when the leading cause of childhood death in 2020 was firearms. Think of that. Our children and our grandchildren—and the leading cause of death is firearms.

We have a problem when we cannot stand up—and together—to respond to the fears of our children. We have a problem when we cannot push aside the interests of the NRA and the gun industry or of the Gun Owners of America or other pressure groups that tell us that Democrats are “coming for your guns.” Of course, some of the gun industry will say that because it boosts their sales. It boosts their sales, and children die.

I am a Democrat. I am a gun owner. I have been both, nearly my entire life. I have also been a prosecutor and prosecuted cases and went to death scenes at 3 in the morning and seeing people shot. I am also parent and a grandparent. I am a U.S. Senator. I am the Dean of the Senate, and I am a proud Vermonter. In my home State, we have a long tradition, dating back to our founding, of hunting the land. Ownership of our firearms is part of that. I have also heard from more than 1,000 Vermonters since Uvalde, urgently telling me that something must be done.

When is it enough? Everywhere Marcelle and I went last week in Vermont, we heard, When is enough enough?

I have spent months—or actually years—listening to my friends on the Republican side in Congress talk about protecting children. Who will step up now and who will step in to say enough? If we are to protect our children, we must be the adults with the courage to listen to their fears and to act to alleviate them. We are the adults who must protect our children. We must protect our children. If we do nothing, we are not protecting them.

This isn't about politics. This isn't about the moneyed interests of pressure groups, lobbying Congress without acknowledging the tragedies in our world today. This isn't even about you

or me, Mr. President. This is about the thousands of people who are killed through gun violence every year and the countless family members forced to sorrowfully move on in their absence, saying, Why our family? Why our loved one? Why my parents? Why my children? Why my brother? Or why my sister? Why? In this, the greatest country on earth, our horrific record of gun violence.

In no way is this about revoking the Second Amendment, but about applying practical common sense safeguards to help mitigate the violence.

Yet again, I ask, as I have since I have been in the Senate, and the American people ask: When is it enough? When is it enough? I join those who pray for the victims, but I especially join those who pray that Congress will have the courage, Democrats and Republicans alike, to finally do something meaningful.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

#### GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today, the House oversight and reform committee heard from a witness who, by all means, should never ever have had to come before the Congress, Miah Cerrillo, an 11-year-old girl who survived the shooting in Uvalde, TX.

Our House colleagues will also hear from Felix and Kimberly Rubio, the parents of 10-year-old Lexi, who was killed in the shooting. You can just imagine their broken hearts.

They will also hear from the only pediatrician in Uvalde available to treat the victims on that awful, awful, awful day.

I hope every single Member of the House and Senate pays attention to these proceedings. God knows, many in Congress need to listen to what these witnesses have to say.

We need to listen, and Congress needs to act, because across every neighborhood, every school, every city, every town—urban, suburban, rural—Americans are wondering the same thing: When is Congress going to act to stop the violence?

Now, that is precisely what we are working on right now in the Senate. It will be hard to believe, after hearing what these witnesses have to say, that the Senate cannot find a way to come together and act on gun violence.

Over the past week and a half, my Democratic colleagues, led by the efforts of Senators MURPHY, SINEMA, BLUMENTHAL, MANCHIN, COONS, HEINRICH, and others, have been holding good faith talks with Republicans to see if we can arrive at an agreement on gun violence legislation.

As I have said, these bipartisan talks deserve the space they need to produce meaningful results, and so I hope my colleagues continue to make progress toward an effective agreement—hopefully, by the end of the week.

The overwhelming consensus of our caucus, among the gun safety violence prevention advocates and among the American people, is that even if we can't get everything done, that getting something real done is worth pursuing.

Let me repeat that. It is an overwhelming consensus in this caucus, among the broad panoply of gun groups, gun safety groups, and among the American people: Get something done. Get something real done, even if it is not everything that many of us would wish for.

Given the other side's long-held refusal to do anything meaningful on gun violence, we know how difficult this is. But that is all the more reason for us to explore every realistic opportunity to getting something real done.

We know we won't get everything we want. The debate for gun safety will continue after this moment, but we have a moral obligation right now to try and get something meaningful—something meaningful—done for the American people in the name of those who have died.

This is not a partisan issue. Gun safety is overwhelmingly backed by a large majority of Americans, a majority of Democrats, Republicans, Independents. It is bipartisan because all Americans know the same thing: We stand alone in the developed world in the number of mass shootings that take place every year. We stand alone among the developed nations in the world in that on any given day, another school, another grocery store, another hospital, another concert, another neighborhood can suddenly become a site of unimaginable tragedy.

Americans, many for the first time, are thinking: I am going to be shot, whether they are in a supermarket, their kids are in a school, or anywhere else.

And we stand alone in that year after year, the plague of mass shootings in this country has been met by inaction. When other countries have faced these mass shootings, they have acted, and they have acted well.

Why aren't we?

The American people are tired and angry of the same thing happening again and again. They are tired of nothing getting done. They are tired of the greatest country in the world being paralyzed and not acting in a right way, mainly because people on the other side of the aisle haven't joined us.

But I urge my colleagues now, let's get something done. The sooner we act, the greater chance we have of preventing another senseless mass shooting in America. Let's break this cycle of gun violence, and let's end the days when parents, doctors, and children have to come to the U.S. Capitol in order to beg their elected representatives to take action.

#### JANUARY 6 HEARINGS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now, on FOX News and January 6.

Tomorrow evening, the House Select Committee will hold its first public hearings on the insurrection of January 6. It will be a watershed moment for what has now been a 10-month investigation to uncover the truth of what happened on that terrible, terrible day in our Nation's history.

The American people need to see January 6 for what it was—a deliberate, organized, and violent attempt to reverse a free and fair election. It was a profane and grotesque assault upon American democracy. Worst of all, it was part of a larger effort from the hard right to erode our constitutional order from within.

Just a couple of days ago, someone was arrested who said he was within 20 feet of me and was trying to get me as we left this Chamber.

These hearings will be essential viewing. They are a direct look into the dark soul of the hard right, and every single American needs to know the truth of what happened that day.

Every major broadcast and cable network will cover these proceedings live—every network except one, that is: FOX News.

In one of the most cowardly journalistic decisions in modern memory, FOX News, one of main amplifiers of the Big Lie about January 6 and about the election, has stated they will not broadcast Thursday's hearing.

After giving the likes of Tucker Carlson a blank check to spread conspiracy theories and White supremacist views night after night, it is beyond repugnant that FOX News refuses to cover the investigation into the deadliest attack on our democracy in modern history.

It is a disgusting and treacherous decision, one that will gravely harm our democracy, one that deliberately will conceal the truth from a large portion of the viewing public.

Let me say it once again. FOX's decision not to air live proceedings on January 6 is cowardly and is tantamount to hiding the truth from the American people.

FOX News has an obligation to report the facts of the January 6 investigation so their viewers can learn the truth, especially after FOX News was one of the main propagators of so many of the Big Lies.

Are they a real news station? They don't seem to be. I hope they reverse this awful decision.

#### HONORING OUR PACT ACT OF 2021

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, finally, on the PACT Act, today, the Senate is going to adopt a motion to proceed to Honoring our PACT Act, and my colleague from Montana, chair of our Veterans' Committee, who has worked so hard on this, will speak about that shortly, in a moment.

The PACT Act is one of the most important veteran healthcare bills this Chamber has considered in decades. Yesterday, the Senate invoked cloture on the motion to proceed by a whopping 86 votes.

Three and a half million veterans—three and a half million—have been likely exposed to toxic chemicals in the line of duty since 2001. Over the years, these toxic exposures have led to terrible healthcare complications that have cut too many lives short and burdened far too many of our Nation's heroes.

Tragically, many of our Nation's veterans have been unable to access the care they need because of outdated VA rules that dictate eligibility for benefits. The PACT Act would fix that for some of the biggest reforms to the VA ever.

It is a no-brainer to move forward on a bill to take care of veterans who have been exposed to toxins in the line of duty. We cannot let dilatory or destructive amendments stand in the way of the need of our veterans' dire and crucial needs.

Again, last night's vote was overwhelmingly bipartisan. There is no reason for us not to pass this important, vital, sensible bill A-S-A-P. Every one of us in this Chamber has heard from a military servicemember who is struggling to afford quality healthcare, and this is one of the best steps the Senate can take to improve the lives of those who have given their all for our country.

Veterans service organizations across the country are urging the Senate to act, so let's get this bill passed with the same bipartisan good will that has characterized the negotiations to date.

I yield the floor.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### HONORING OUR PROMISE TO ADDRESS COMPREHENSIVE TOXICS ACT OF 2021—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 3967, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to H.R. 3967, a bill to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

#### HONORING OUR PROMISE TO ADDRESS COMPREHENSIVE TOXICS ACT OF 2021

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3967) to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

AMENDMENT NO. 5051

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 5051.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Montana [Mr. TESTER] proposes an amendment numbered 5051.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask to dispense with any further reading of the amendment.

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

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of June 7, 2022, under "Text of Amendments.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

AMENDMENT NO. 5065 TO AMENDMENT NO. 5051

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 5065.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER] proposes an amendment numbered 5065 to amendment No. 5051.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask to dispense with further reading of the amendment.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To add an effective date)

At the end add the following:

#### SEC. \_\_\_\_ . EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect on the date that is 1 day after the date of enactment of this Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, the Senate is on the verge of honoring our commitment to our country's toxic-exposed veterans and their families through the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our PACT Act.

Look, generation after generation of veterans have been exposed to toxic substances during their time in service, dating all the way back to World War I and every conflict since then.

And they have returned only to face yet another battle here at home when