

a level of fear on the faces of the parents and children whom I spoke to that I have never seen before. This country has lived through mass shooting after mass shooting, rising rates of homicide, but there was something different in the eyes of these families as they once again had to contemplate the idea that our schools are no longer safe places, that our supermarkets are no longer safe spaces.

But they also were contemplating the idea that Congress was so caught up in its own politics, so addicted to backing into our own corners that we wouldn't be able to do anything meaningful about the thing that matters most to parents and to families in this country: the physical safety of their children. Think about it. What matters more to you than the physical well-being of your children? You would give away everything—your job, your car, the roof over your head—in order to guarantee that your children were safe from physical harm.

So the anxiety and the fear that I saw in Connecticut and that I think many of my colleagues saw when they returned to their States was not just for the safety of their children but also a fear about the ability of government to rise to this moment and do something and do something meaningful.

I believe that this week we will pass legislation that will become the most significant piece of anti-gun violence legislation Congress will have passed in 30 years. This is a breakthrough, and more importantly, it is a bipartisan breakthrough. I am glad to join my friend Senator CORNYN on the floor today to talk a little bit about the piece of legislation that our colleagues will be able to look at hopefully in a matter of moments and that this body will be able to consider this week.

I want to thank Senator CORNYN, Senator TILLIS, and Senator SINEMA in particular. It was a hard road to get to this compromise, but nothing worthwhile is easy. And nobody in a compromise gets everything they want. This bill will be too little for many; it will be too much for others. But it isn't a box-checking exercise. This bill is not window dressing. This bill is going to save lives. This bill is going to save thousands of lives. It is going to be something that every single Member of this Senate who votes for it can be proud of.

I want to tell you a little bit about it, and some of this has already been covered by my friend Senator CORNYN. First, let me talk about the provisions in this bill that change our Nation's firearms laws.

First, we are going to invest in the development of crisis intervention orders. We are going to give money out to States that they will be able to use to implement what are commonly called red flag laws. These are laws that allow local authorities and courts to take weapons, firearms, temporarily away from individuals who are threatening to hurt themselves or others.

We just saw Connecticut's red flag law be used just in the last month or so to take weapons away from a young man who was making threats to shoot up schools, potentially saving dozens of lives.

Under this bill, every State will be able to use significant new Federal dollars to be able to expand their programs to try to stop dangerous people—people contemplating mass murder or suicide—from being able to have access to the weapons that allow them to perpetrate that crime.

As Senator CORNYN said, we will also make those dollars eligible for a narrow range of other court-based anti-violence interventions—something that was very important to our Republican colleagues.

Second, this bill is going to make sure that no domestic abusers can purchase or own a gun. We are closing the boyfriend loophole. What we know is that in States that have taken this step already, there are 10 percent fewer intimate partner deaths. This is an incredibly important step forward. We know this provision alone is going to save lives of so many women who unfortunately die at the hands of a boyfriend or an ex-boyfriend who hunts them down with a firearm.

To be consistent with State felony restoration rights, this legislation will allow individuals to be able to get their right back after a period of time but only for first-time offenders and only if there are no crimes of violence in the intervening time.

This bill will provide for enhanced background checks for younger buyers. What we know is that the profile of the modern mass shooter is often in the 18- to 21-year-old range, and so this bill has enhanced background checks for those individuals, including a call to the local police department—a process that can take up to 3 days and up to 10 days if there are particular signs of concern that investigators need to perform followup on. That enhanced background check is going to make sure that younger buyers who are in crisis have another check performed—perhaps a short period of time in between their decision to buy a lethal weapon to perform a crime and their ability to get that weapon.

This bill has new criminal statutes banning gun trafficking and straw purchasing. This is incredibly important for our cities. We have a flow of illegal guns coming into these cities, and yet, for decades, for some reason, Congress has not given our Federal authorities the ability to interrupt these gun-running rings because we have no effective ban at a Federal level on trafficking and straw-purchasing. We will after we pass this law.

Finally, we clarify under this bill who needs to register as a federally licensed gun dealer. One of the individuals who sold a weapon to a mass shooter in Odessa, TX, should have been licensed as a Federal dealer, but he wasn't, and he sold the gun to a per-

son who was prohibited from buying the gun because of his mental health history, without a background check. We will clarify in this law that individuals like that need to register as Federal firearms dealers, and they need to perform background checks.

As Senator CORNYN said, this bill makes a historic investment in mental health—a historic investment in mental health. Thanks to DEBBIE STABENOW and ROY BLUNT, we are going to be able to expand the certified community health center model nationally. That literally means millions of people in this country in underserved areas who have no access to mental health are going to be able to get it after we pass this bill.

We have significant new funding in this bill for school-based health centers to make sure that kids are better served, especially those kids who are in crisis.

We have help in this bill for pediatricians who are trying to do telehealth consults with behavioral health professionals who are trying to get more training on mental health so they can help their patients.

Finally, we make investments in school and community safety, funds to help schools make their campuses safer places but also funds for community-based programs that are doing good work in cities from Boston to Hartford to Dallas interrupting cycles of violence in our communities.

For 30 years—murder after murder, suicide after suicide, mass shooting after mass shooting—Congress did nothing. This week, we have a chance to break this 30-year period of silence with a bill that changes our laws in a way that will save thousands of lives. It is a compromise. It is a bipartisan compromise. It is a path forward to the way that both Republicans and Democrats can work together to address some of the most vexing, most difficult challenges this Nation faces.

We have a chance to show parents and kids and families that we take their safety seriously and we are prepared to do not just something but something that saves lives in order to protect them.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the de Alba nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Ana Isabel de Alba, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of California.

VOTE ON DE ALBA NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the de Alba nomination?

Mr. MURPHY. 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. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 234 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Booker	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	Kelly	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Sinema
Casey	Luján	Smith
Collins	Manchin	Stabenow
Coons	Markey	Tester
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murkowski	Warnock
Feinstein	Murphy	Warren
Gillibrand	Murray	Whitehouse
Graham	Ossoff	
Hassan	Padilla	Wyden

NAYS—45

Barrasso	Grassley	Portman
Blackburn	Hagerty	Risch
Blunt	Hawley	Romney
Boozman	Hoeven	Rounds
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Burr	Inhofe	Sasse
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Shelby
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	Lummis	Thune
Cruz	Marshall	Tillis
Daines	McConnell	Tuberville
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Paul	Young

NOT VOTING—2

Cramer	Toomey
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PETERS). 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

UKRAINE

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I come to the floor again today to update people on what is happening in Ukraine as Russia continues its illegal, unprovoked, and brutal assault on that country and talk more about what we can do here in the Congress and as Americans to help the people of Ukraine during this desperate hour. This will be the 16th consecutive week I have come to the floor to discuss the invasion while the Senate has been in session.

We are now on the 118th day of this war on Ukraine. In response, the bravery and effectiveness of the Ukrainian defenders has been unbelievable, truly impressive, but not surprising because they are fighting to defend their homeland, their families, and their freedom.

They have shown again and again the power that comes with that. Just 4 days ago was another example of Ukrainian tenacity and success against a much bigger and better armed Russian army. Last Friday, Ukrainian military officials announced that they struck and sunk a Russian vessel in the Black Sea using two Harpoon anti-ship missiles supplied by the West. The ship was carrying personnel and anti-aircraft equipment to Snake Island, which the Russians invaded early on and used as an outpost to assist in their blockade of Ukraine.

This action marks the first time that Ukraine has destroyed a Russian vessel with a new, Western-supplied armament. It is an example of what we can do, the United States and other allied countries, 42 of us who are helping Ukraine, giving them the tools they need to defend their homeland.

By the way, the Ukrainians have now sunk so many Russian ships that the head of the Odessa Oblast military administration remarked that Ukraine is creating "an underwater brigade at the bottom of the Black Sea."

Despite these successes in the Black Sea, Russia has taken the upper hand in the critical area east of Ukraine called the Donbas. The Donbas region is this area of Ukraine in eastern Ukraine where Russia has really focused its forces. Previously, you recall they took Crimea in 2014, and they took a part of the Donbas—Donbas and Donetsk areas. Now they are trying to take the entire Donetsk region and more.

Although the Ukrainians are fighting valiantly in this area of the Donbas, they are simply being outgunned by the Russians, who have longer range and very accurate Russian missiles. The stakes are really high right now. The fate of a sovereign country to remain free hangs in the balance. But not only that, if Vladimir Putin is successful here in the Donbas in taking more than he already controls, I think it would be naive to believe he will stop there. Based on his own words, he won't stop there. The Baltics could be next. He already has a puppet dictatorship here in Belarus. These countries—Baltics, Poland, Romania, where I was recently, Moldova—they are all concerned and rightly so. We cannot allow him to achieve these goals.

Last Wednesday, the Senate Ukraine Caucus, which I cofounded along with Senator DICK DURBIN, hosted six members of the Ukrainian Parliament, or Rada, leaders in the Parliament who came to talk to us, along with Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States Oksana Markarova. They offered a very blunt view of the current war, which we have now heard many times over these past several weeks.

Ukrainian soldiers are fighting very hard to defend their homeland, but Russia is incrementally advancing, killing 100 to 500 Ukrainian soldiers every day, as well as dozens of civilians, and destroying cities in the

Donbas area with a steady barrage of missiles. Russia is sitting back and firing these guided missiles with impunity because the shorter range Ukrainian missiles can't reach them.

The delegation of Ukrainian Parliament leaders included David Arakhamia, one of Ukraine's lead negotiators with the Russians. He told us the Russians are essentially delaying negotiations until Russia has secured control over this whole area of the Donbas, and then they will pretend to engage in negotiations while taking that time to recover their combat power and prepare for yet another offensive.

Russia must not be allowed to continue to gain ground in the Donbas. We have to get the Ukrainians what they need to protect themselves, the weapons and equipment they need to be able to succeed so they can have negotiations with the Russians but on their terms, not the Russians'.

There is a solution to the Ukrainians being outgunned. Over the past several years, Ukrainian officials have specifically requested the advanced weapons rocket artillery systems. The United States operates one such system. It is called the HIMARS, or High Mobility Artillery Rocket System. We have hundreds of these in our inventory, many of which are not with Active units. They are superior to Russian artillery in almost every respect—mobility, reload time, accuracy, and most importantly, range. Yet, during Ukraine's hour of need, it has taken us too long to respond, and we are providing too few units to make a serious impact.

Three weeks ago, the administration did announce they would send HIMARS to Ukraine but just four units.

With the time it takes to train Ukrainian soldiers on how to operate this platform, the systems will not be combat ready until at least this week, according to press reports. So we announced it a few weeks ago, but every day brave Ukrainians have been dying and Donbas cities have been systematically destroyed and the countryside has been conquered step-by-step.

We must act more quickly, and we must do more. The Wall Street Journal editorial board recently expounded on this argument in very stark terms when they said:

How many rocket systems do our friends need? [Well] a . . . military adviser [from Ukraine] told [a reporter recently]: "If we get 60" systems "then the Russians will lose all ability to advance anywhere, they will be stopped dead in their tracks. If we get 40 they will [be able to] advance, albeit very slowly with heavy casualties; with 20 they will continue to advance with higher casualties than now."

We are providing four.

When I met with the Rada, they told me that they would need at least 48 advanced rocket artillery systems to have a meaningful impact. So, again, so far we have only provided four. My hope is, based on conversations I have had with the administration, that more are coming. But any new units announced won't reach the battlefield