

RECOGNIZING DETECTIVE CHRISTOPHER DRURY OF SACRAMENTO COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

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

Mr. KILEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer congressional recognition to Detective Christopher Drury of the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department.

Detective Christopher Drury began his career in 2011 and was hired as a deputy sheriff on call. He was assigned to the Sacramento County Main Jail. Detective Drury was hired as a full-time deputy sheriff in 2013, where he remained assigned to the main jail.

In February 2015, Detective Drury was transferred to the Court Security Division, where he remained until he was transferred to the North Patrol Division in December 2015.

Detective Drury was selected to the Rancho Cordova Police Department in 2017. The Rancho Cordova Police Department is a contracted city that is fulfilled by the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office. While assigned there, Detective Drury regularly interacted with the community during his shift and answered numerous calls for service.

Detective Drury quickly became known for his tremendous work ethic and commitment to the community. His proactive enforcement of violent crime prevention was highly appreciated and noticed by his supervisors.

In 2019, Detective Drury was selected to be a narcotics detective in the Impact Bureau. The Impact Bureau focuses on large-scale drug trafficking, which operates from Kern County to the Oregon border. Additional duties include the dismantling of drug clandestine labs.

While assigned to the Impact Bureau, Detective Drury has worked several major narcotics investigations, which have led to the seizure of hundreds of pounds of methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, and fentanyl. He continues to dismantle large-scale drug trafficking organizations and positively interacts with the community in numerous ways.

Despite having this very demanding position, in his off time, Detective Drury actively contributes to the community. He was a regular volunteer at his children's elementary school. He also volunteers for Sacred Heart Home Tour, which is an organization that raises charity proceeds to help individuals attend private Catholic school. The organization raises roughly \$200,000 a year for the charity.

Finally, Detective Drury is involved with the nonprofit Sponsoring True Advocacy for Challenged Youth, or STACY. This nonprofit is an organization advocating for children with special needs and their families through diverse programs and partnerships in the greater Sacramento area.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons and more, I am honored to include Detective Christopher Drury of the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office in the Third District of California's Police Honor Roll.

GUN VIOLENCE IN OUR COUNTRY

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

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, in the 10 years since the Sandy Hook shooting, the NRA has spent more than \$100 million to help elect Republicans who will make it easier to sell more guns so we can kill more kids—\$100 million.

They have gotten what they paid for because we have had 189 more school shootings and 279 people killed on school grounds since Sandy Hook.

Some of my colleagues may be happy about that, but I am angry, and my constituents live in trauma.

Mr. Speaker, I had a student in my district who wrote in to tell me: "We are tired. We are exhausted. We are sick of going to class and any public area and forming an escape route."

I had another constituent who asked me: "How many children and teachers are going to have to be killed by guns before our government takes action?"

The honest answer is that I don't know. In the wake of these shootings, I have to tell them that I work with people who wear AR-15 lapel pins on the floor of the House, people who send holiday cards where their whole family cosplays as Rambo. They actually believe that our Founders envisioned and designed a country where you have a right to shoot innocent strangers dead, but no American has the right not to get shot.

Five months into this year, America has already had 199 mass shootings. Sometimes, we have a moment of silence on the floor afterward, but quite frankly, there are too many to keep up. I am not proud of this, but we ignore most of them. The American people can't.

I had a mother who wrote to me saying: "Each day, as I send my two children off to school and daycare, I find myself fearing that it may be the last time I will see them."

Another wrote to say: "I am the parent of a 5-year-old. I cannot believe that we are living in a country where 5-year-olds die like soldiers at the mall and where another mother will come home today without her child. I do not feel safe in public places. I have no peace while my child is at school, and because I am a teacher, I don't feel safe at work either."

Five months into this year, we have had 15,166 deaths due to gun violence. Yet, my colleagues across the aisle have not allowed a single bill to come to the floor to address that risk.

After the shooting at Covenant Elementary in Tennessee, I got this message from Meaghan, a student teacher. She said:

"After working in over five schools now, I have loved every moment of my

teacher education experience, meeting so many amazing students and faculty members that have shaped my mind the way I hope to for my own students one day. And each day I have gone in, I have to admit, I have silently wondered if I would come out, if our kids would come out, if my peers would come out, if my teachers and mentors would come out.

"I have caught myself dozing off and imagining what I would do if someone came into our room with a gun. I have imagined every person in that room with bullets in them and blood splattered from the walls to the floors.

"I know you all get these messages in your offices. Do you read them? Do you understand the fear, the trauma, and the death that your inaction has caused? Is it worth the NRA money? Do you even care?"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

HONORING MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS ON GUAM

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

Mr. MOYLAN. Mr. Speaker, as we observe National Nurses Week, I rise to honor our medical professionals on Guam and the incredible work they do for our island community.

Nurses are an integral part of our healthcare system, providing patients with compassionate care and support. Shown next to me are some of Guam's nurses tending to the well-being of our island residents.

As the backbone of our healthcare system, nurses work tirelessly around the clock to ensure everyone receives the best possible treatment.

Oftentimes, they sacrifice their own well-being and comfort to provide excellent care to their patients. This can mean working long hours, dealing with difficult individuals, or managing stressful situations.

Not to forget, on Guam and everywhere else, nurses were at the forefront of the fight against COVID-19, putting their own lives at risk to save others.

Today and every day, we honor our nurses for their hard work and dedication.

Happy National Nurses Week.

CELEBRATING GUAM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S 99TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. MOYLAN. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, the Guam Chamber of Commerce celebrated its 99th anniversary. That is nearly a century of promoting the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the island of Guam.

The Guam Chamber of Commerce has taken the initiative in extending and fostering trade and commerce on island, developing and protecting the many industries that call Guam home, advocating for probusiness policies, and providing forums for business entities to grow.

Their Armed Forces Committee has tirelessly continued a decades-long tradition of walking the Halls of Congress and knocking on doors to promote mutually beneficial and responsible military growth in Guam.

As someone who has spent many years in the private sector and proudly sat on the board of directors of this prestigious organization many years ago, it is my honor to stand here in these sacred Halls of democracy to congratulate the Guam Chamber of Commerce on their historic milestone of celebrating 99 years.

On behalf of a thankful nation and island, I commend them for their many services toward both Guam's business community and the people of Guam.

HONORING AND RECOGNIZING GUAM'S CENTENARIANS

Mr. MOYLAN. Mr. Speaker, as our island and Nation celebrate and honor our senior citizens, or manamko, as we refer to them back home, I will to take this time to recognize a handful of centenarians on Guam, who will be celebrating a birthday spanning 100 years or older this year.

This list includes:

Ms. Rosario Flores Leon Guerrero, who is celebrating her 103rd birthday.

Ms. Teodora Andrade, who is celebrating her 102nd birthday.

Ms. Josefina de la Concepcion Diaz, who is celebrating her 101st birthday.

Ms. Lillian Leon Anderson is celebrating her 100th birthday this year.

Also celebrating birthday No. 100 is Ms. Magdalena Perez Taitano Fausto.

Sadly, we recently lost Ms. Victoria Robeniol Rebugio, who would have celebrated her 101st birthday in December of this year.

On behalf of a great nation and a loving island community, and from these sacred Halls of democracy and history, please join me in honoring Guam's centenarians and wishing them a happy birthday.

DANGEROUS RAIL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about an extremely dangerous situation in rail corridors across America. This includes the busy mainline rail corridor between Pittsburgh and Chicago that cuts across northern Ohio, including most of my district.

In northern Ohio, rail is the spine of our economy. To stay competitive in today's economy and avoid expensive supply chain delays, industrial and agricultural America must think big about modernizing rail solutions. Our Nation must prioritize rail safety, give people more transportation options, and expand access to national and international markets.

In the past year, three significant train derailments by Norfolk Southern have taken place in Ohio. In October 2022, a 21-car derailment occurred in

my district at Sandusky, where Norfolk Southern has dragged its feet for over half a year in cleaning up the mess. That job is still not finished. This rail corridor again drew national attention with the major derailment earlier this year in East Palestine, Ohio.

The imperative topic of rail safety has many clear and sometimes deadly impacts on students across our Nation.

□ 1030

I include in the RECORD a recent ProPublica news article which highlights the risks for students in Hammond, Indiana.

[From the ProPublica]

AS RAIL PROFITS SOAR, BLOCKED CROSSINGS FORCE KIDS TO CRAWL UNDER TRAINS TO GET TO SCHOOL

(By Topher Sanders and Dan Schwartz, ProPublica, and Joice Sterman, Gray Television/InvestigateTV)

Jeremiah Johnson couldn't convince his mother to let him wear a suit, so he insisted on wearing his striped tie and matching pocket square. It was picture day and the third grader wanted to get to school on time. But as he and his mom walked from their Hammond, Indiana, home on a cold, rainy fall morning, they confronted an obstacle they'd come to dread:

A sprawling train, parked in their path.

Lamira Samson, Jeremiah's mother, faced a choice she said she has to make several times a week. They could walk around the train, perhaps a mile out of the way; she could keep her 8-year-old son home, as she sometimes does; or they could try to climb over the train, risking severe injury or death, to reach Hess Elementary School four blocks away.

She listened for the hum of an engine. Hearing none, she hurried to help Jeremiah climb a ladder onto the flat platform of a train car. Once up herself, she helped him scramble down the other side.

ProPublica and InvestigateTV witnessed dozens of students do the same in Hammond, climbing over, squeezing between and crawling under train cars with "Frozen" and "Space Jam" backpacks. An eighth grade girl waited 10 minutes before she made her move, nervously scrutinizing the gap between two cars. She'd seen plenty of trains start without warning. "I don't want to get crushed," she said.

Recent spectacular derailments have focused attention on train safety and whether the nation's powerful rail companies are doing enough to protect the public—and whether federal regulators are doing enough to make them, especially as the companies build longer and longer trains.

But communities like Hammond routinely face a different set of risks foisted on them by those same train companies, which have long acted with impunity. Every day across America, their trains park in the middle of neighborhoods and major intersections, waiting to enter congested rail yards or for one crew to switch with another. They block crossings, sometimes for hours or days, disrupting life and endangering lives.

News accounts chronicle horror stories: Ambulances can't reach patients before they die or get them to the hospital in time. Fire trucks can't get through and house fires blaze out of control. Pedestrians trying to cut through trains have been disfigured, dismembered and killed; when one train abruptly began moving, an Iowa woman was dragged underneath until it stripped almost all of the skin from the back of her body; a

Pennsylvania teenager lost her leg hopping between rail cars as she rushed home to get ready for prom.

In Hammond, the hulking trains of Norfolk Southern regularly force parents, kids and caretakers into an exhausting gamble: How much should they risk to get to school?

The trains, which can stretch across five or six intersections at a time in this working-class suburb of 77,000, prevent students and teachers from getting to school in the morning. Teachers must watch multiple classrooms while their colleagues wait at crossings; kids sit on school buses as they meander the streets of an entirely different city to be dropped off a half-hour late. Brandi Odom, a seventh grade teacher, estimates that at least half her class is delayed by trains multiple times a week.

The adults entrusted with their safety—parents and teachers, police and fire officials, the mayor—say they are well aware of the pressures on students' minds when they face a blocked crossing on foot. They know some are hungry and don't want to miss breakfast; the vast majority in this 86 percent Black and Latino district qualify for free or reduced-price meals at school. And they know that many of their parents commute to work an hour away to Chicago, trusting older brothers or sisters to pick up or drop off their siblings.

"I feel awful about it," said Scott E. Miller, the superintendent. His district has asked Norfolk Southern for its schedule so that the schools can plan for blockages and students can adjust their routines. The company has disregarded the requests, school officials said.

Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr. said that his experience with the rails has been similar, and that company officials have reminded him the rails "were here first," running through Hammond before it was even a city. "To them, I am nobody," he said. "They don't pay attention to me. They don't respect me. They don't care about the city of Hammond. They just do what they want."

In written responses to questions, a spokesperson for Norfolk Southern said children climbing through their trains concerns the company.

"It is never safe for members of the public to try to cross the cars," spokesperson Connor Spielmaker said. "We understand that a stopped train is frustrating, but trains can move at any time and with little warning—especially if you are far from the locomotive where the warning bell is sounded when a train starts."

He said trains routinely sit in Hammond for a number of reasons: That section of track is between two busy train intersections that must remain open; Norfolk Southern can't easily move a train backward or forward, because that would cut off the paths for other trains, which could belong to other companies. And Hammond is a suburb of Chicago, which is the busiest train hub in the nation, creating congestion up and down the network.

He said Norfolk Southern is working to identify an area where trains can stage further down its line and to have less impact on the community. The company will also review its procedures to see whether its trains can give louder warnings before they start moving. (ProPublica reporters witnessed trains in Hammond start moving without warning.) Spielmaker said that train schedules vary so much that giving Hammond one might not be helpful. He said that the company is in "constant communication" with local officials, and that representatives will discuss any proposed fixes with Hammond.

Rail companies around the country could better coordinate their schedules, parking trains far from schools that are in session.