

set out spreading disinformation and fear: agents coming out to get you.

They were wrong. They knew that was not the case, but they wanted to demonize IRS anyway. Instead, what happened? We saw improvements.

In one of the most immediate results from a bill I have ever seen, wait times are down to 4 minutes across the country. Tax returns are arriving without months-long delays.

In my own office, we had more than 250 cases open at any one time, trying to help constituents. Now that number is below 60.

Again, Republicans launched an attack on IRS funding during their manufactured debt ceiling crisis of the last few weeks.

Thankfully, their success against IRS was limited. They were able to claw back only a small portion of that funding that we set forward.

Still, their opposition is incomprehensible. Republicans say they don't like government, that government doesn't work. President Biden and congressional Democrats reveal that when we fund government properly, it does work.

I thank the IRS team for their hard work on behalf of my constituents and Americans all across this country.

A SCOURGE IN AMERICA

Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, every year in this country, 43,000 people, 44,000 people—in one year, as high as 49,000 people—die of gun violence.

Every single day, we lose people in this country to gun violence. Mr. Speaker, 54 percent of that horrific number is gun violence suicide.

This week the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force held a hearing, and we had six, eight, nine folks testifying before us: folks who had survived mass shootings; folks whose family members lost their lives due to gun violence and suicide; and folks who had accidental shootings take place in their communities that harmed and took the lives of others.

When we asked for a committee room in this Capitol in order to host that testimony and to learn something more about it, guess what happened?

It was Monday, a fly-in day, when these committee rooms are not busy. There was no room in the House for that committee to be hosted, so we had to go to the Senate.

Committee chair after committee chair of the Republican Party, the majority party, denied us access to a committee room to simply hear the testimony of those who know something sad and tragic all too well about gun violence.

We had the benefit of the Senate giving us a small committee room where we were stuffed in: advocates, victims, researchers, professors, and others.

That should tell you all you need to know, America, about the shame of gun violence in our country and why we are so hampered in dealing with it.

Gun violence death is preventable. It is an extraordinary scourge here in

America. Yet, we are blocked by Republican majority leadership who won't even give us a room to be heard.

PROCLAMATION TO HONOR BRUCE SPITZENGENEL AND GRANTWORKS

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

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Mr. Bruce Spitzengel and GrantWorks:

Whereas, 48 years ago, Mr. Bruce Spitzengel started working as a city planner for Texas City and a year later became the assistant planning director for Pasadena, Texas; these positions led to the founding of a company in 1979 that would eventually become GrantWorks, benefiting State, county, and city governments with services to facilitate resilient infrastructure facilities, economic development, and single-family and multifamily affordable housing; and

Whereas, GrantWorks provides the knowledge of both State and Federal programs to address the primary needs of local governmental localities to serve their constituents with facilities and housing components to create a more resilient future for their communities; and

Whereas, Mr. Spitzengel and his lovely bride, Jody, utilized the principles learned through years of experience to expand vital services not offered by other companies assisting more than 450 cities and counties across the State and recognizing the need to expand services to address disaster recovery assistance beginning with Hurricane Rita and continuing with Hurricanes Dolly, Ike, and Harvey, as well as other Federally declared disasters to this day; and

Whereas, GrantWorks' record of service continues by assisting with the acquisition and management of financial awards for resilient infrastructure, having managed over \$8 billion of assistance for local government and provided administration services for over 5,000 single-family units for low- and moderate-income houses; and

Whereas, recognizing the needs of others, Bruce and the GrantWorks' culture of service to those they serve, the company matched 100 percent employee contribution for many years supporting food pantries, and has assisted thousands of households with relief for medical debt; and

Whereas, GrantWorks created an ongoing scholarship program in recognition of a valued employee in her name, Betty Collier, upon her passing, to the Texas Municipal Clerks Association, a professional organization dedicated to serving the demands of excellence in Texas' local government; and

Whereas, since Hurricane Harvey made landfall in Rockport, Texas, on August 25 of 2017, GrantWorks contributed an executive staff member to assist the county for over 1 year with emergency management support at no cost; and

Whereas, GrantWorks to this day ranks number one in serving more Texas cities and counties with the widest range of program offerings than any other company in Texas.

Now, therefore, I, RANDY WEBER, Representative of Texas' 14th District, do hereby proclaim an official recognition of Bruce Spitzengel and GrantWorks, Incorporated, for tremendous work serving the needs of Texas families and local government.

PROCLAMATION TO HONOR STEVE MATARO, SERVANT BUILDERS, AND DSW HOMES

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I also rise to honor Steve Mataro:

Whereas, just over 35 years ago, Mr. Mataro founded Servant Builders as a recovery mission geared toward helping young men with addiction learn a trade in construction while rebuilding relationships with families and communities; and

Whereas, Servant Builders provided job training and placement assistance for over 200 men, enabling a better future for their entire families; and

Whereas, Mr. Mataro utilized the same principles learned through Servant Builders in launching DSW Homes in southeast Texas in 2009 to assist rebuilding homes following Hurricane Rita, often providing job training and assistance to the very men whose homes were being rebuilt; and

Whereas, lessons learned via Servant Builders are displayed in often accommodating low-income and elderly homeowners, driving clients to construction appointments, and even temporarily paying their rents; and

Whereas, now operating in four states and the U.S. Virgin Islands, DSW Homes currently completes an average of 1,000 homes annually in disaster-hit regions with a record of 15 days from demolition to completion for a total of 12,000 homes; and

Whereas, since Hurricane Harvey made landfall in Rockport, Texas, on August 25, 2017, DSW Homes has rebuilt homes for over 3,000 families throughout five recovery zones.

Now, therefore, I, RANDY WEBER, as the Representative of Texas' 14th District, and MICHAEL CLOUD, Representative of Texas' 27th District, on June 7 of 2023, do hereby proclaim an official recognition of Steve Mataro for tremendous work with Servant Builders and DSW Homes.

COMMONSENSE GUN SAFETY LEGISLATION

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

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, I share with you and with the American people a conversation I recently had with a group of children's doctors because it has haunted me ever since.

These busy doctors who work at some of our Nation's finest pediatric hospitals and practices took the time to travel to D.C. because they wanted to

help Members of Congress understand the ever-expanding and heartbreaking toll that gun violence is taking on children and our communities every day.

They came to D.C. to beg lawmakers, not for thoughts and prayers, but to pass commonsense gun safety laws that will help them stop this epidemic.

We now know that firearm injuries are the leading cause of death for children and teens, but they see it firsthand.

The stories these doctors shared of the injuries and death that they have to deal with on a daily basis were shocking, but what really struck me was the raw pain in their faces and in their voices as they shared those stories.

Think about it. These doctors have dedicated their lives to caring for children, and now they are reeling from the trauma of having to face day in and day out the toll that our Nation's gun violence is taking on those children, knowing that the lion's share of this pain and death is preventable if lawmakers only had the courage to act.

The stories these children's doctors told broke my heart. Today, I share their words with you. One said: "As a primary care pediatrician in Philadelphia, my heart stops every time I see on the news that a young person has been shot and killed. I fear they are my patient. I am sick that these young people that I watch growing up are being murdered on the streets by gangs. Something must change."

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Another said: "I am haunted by the image of a child's shoe. My patient, a young boy with autism, was at a community July Fourth celebration with his family when they heard shots. The family ran, and in the chaos that ensued, his shoe fell off and was lost. For weeks after the shooting, this child didn't have the words to describe what he was feeling, but he kept asking: 'Where is my shoe?' He was clearly impacted by the events and was having trouble sleeping. Although this child and his family were physically unharmed, the question, 'Where is my shoe?' is evidence of a child, family, and community traumatized yet again by gun violence."

Another is a neonatologist, a baby doctor. She said: "You might think I would never see my patients be impacted by gun violence, but sadly, I have seen too many families impacted by it. Mothers tell me about close calls they had with gun-related violence. After all, pregnant and postpartum women are more, not less, likely to experience abuse and assault. I have had patients who were born early, delivered frantically in an attempt to save their lives and those of their shot mothers. Patients have fathers, siblings, aunts, uncles, and grandparents who are disabled or dead because they were shot. I should not see this so often, babies whose lives start shrouded in trauma because we do not have background checks and red flag policies."

Another said: "As a pediatric emergency physician, I face the effects of gun violence daily. I tell devastated parents that their toddler has been fatally shot by a sibling playing with a handgun. I scramble to rapidly transfuse blood into children caught in the crossfire of gang violence. I exit trauma bays covered in the brain matter of teenagers who have made the tragically final decision to end their lives with a gun. And if I am lucky, I find a moment to grieve these losses before moving on to the next patient in need of my care, a child struggling with depression after losing a family member to gun violence. This is my reality. It is heartbreaking, and it must stop."

Finally, one said: "I am also a mother, a mother who spends sleepless nights googling bulletproof backpacks every time an AR-15 has turned other mothers' children into sitting ducks at their schools. I should not have to worry that someone with a mental health disorder can go to a store, buy a weapon of mass destruction, and, that same day, shoot my little boys as they sit sounding out letters. But because of our laws, that dull, familiar fear rears its head often when I drop them off at school. It doesn't have to be this way."

She is right. They are right. It doesn't have to be this way. It must stop. We don't have to live this way.

There are laws that could help turn the tide, and this shouldn't be a partisan issue. Children are being shot every day regardless of their family's party affiliation.

Mr. Speaker, our communities are begging the Republican majority to come to the table and find common ground to pass comprehensive, commonsense, and constitutional legislation that will end this epidemic.

The American people overwhelmingly support background checks, safe storage, red flag laws, and limiting access to assault-style weapons because they understand the Second Amendment is not a suicide pact.

GUAM THANKFUL FOR SUPER TYPHOON MAWAR HEROES

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

Mr. MOYLAN. Mr. Speaker, as Guam continues to recover from the wrath of Super Typhoon Mawar, I want to take this time to thank the many selfless heroes who worked and continue to work endless hours to ensure that our community reaches normalcy, or at least some degree of it:

The crews from the Guam Power Authority and the Guam Waterworks Authority continue to work till the wee hours of the morning to ensure that power and water are restored in homes and businesses, as these represent the first step toward normalcy;

The men and women from the Department of Public Works, along with the Guam National Guard and even the Hawaii National Guard, who have and

continue to remove debris throughout the island;

Our hardworking men and women in healthcare, many of whom worked bravely throughout the storm and who had to pull various roles, inclusive of ensuring that the floors didn't get flooded in the rooms of their patients, as the storm extended its stay in Guam;

Our brave men and women in public safety, who, just as many of our healthcare workers, braved and worked throughout the storm and today continue to ensure that the many dark streets and neighborhoods are well patrolled from the "sakis";

Our Federal partners from FEMA, SBA, HHS, Army Corps of Engineers, and the list goes on and on, many who got to the island prior to Mawar, and those who came in after, who are fulfilling many roles, inclusive of ensuring that the basic necessities, such as water, MREs, generators, cots, tents, and so much more get to the community and, of course, assisting the island residents in applying for the many Federal benefit programs available;

The mayors and the vice mayors of our 19 municipalities and their staffs, who I thank for their diligence, hard work, patience, and, most especially, their heart in not only caring for their constituents but also fighting for them;

Our brothers and sisters from the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, including Governor Arnold Palacios, Lieutenant Governor David Apatang, and Congressman Kilili Sablan, for opening your hearts and helping the people of Guam. We are, indeed, One Mariana Islands Strong;

To our educators and the staff at Guam Agriculture, Port Authority of Guam, Guam Airport Authority, Guam Customs and Quarantine Agency, Guam Fire Department, the EMTs, and so many others in the public sector who continue to strive to help with Guam's recovery; and

Our military partners, including Rear Admiral Benjamin Nicholson, and our business partners, including various organizations, who were and are all critical toward the path for recovery.

On behalf of a thankful nation and island community, and from the sacred Halls of this House of Representatives, I thank the many who worked prior, during, and after the storm to ensure that our people were safe, prepared, and on the path toward recovery. Many left behind their families, homes, and, in some cases, personal recovery to help our community overcome this latest challenge. Their selfless efforts and resiliency will never be forgotten.

God bless them. God bless Guam. God bless these United States of America.

HONORING THE LIFE OF BERT BOECKMANN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from