

provides safe, affordable, identity-affirming housing for those in need, especially, again, our LGBTQ+ young people.

This month, as we celebrate Pride Month, we recognize and honor the legacy of Ruth Ellis and the incredible advocacy of the Ruth Ellis Center and their team.

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF KOVENER'S KORNER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. HOUCHIN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. HOUCHIN. Mr. Speaker, Kovener's Korner Ice Cream has been a summertime staple in Seymour, Indiana, for decades. In fact, Kovener's Korner opened in 1949 as one of Seymour's very first drive-in restaurants, serving up sweet treats and their famous chocolate malt-flavored ice cream.

During its 75 years in business, this family-owned brick store on 2nd Street has employed hundreds of Hoosiers, with the majority being young adults in high school or college.

As we celebrate their 75th season, I am bringing well-deserved appreciation all the way from the House floor. I thank them for not only their delicious ice cream, but their commitment to the community and a summertime tradition for generations of families in Seymour.

We are proud to have so many special small businesses in southern Indiana, and Kovener's Korner is an exceptional example.

□ 1015

REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS OF EMANUEL AME CHURCH MASSACRE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce that I have just filed a discharge petition on the resolution providing for the consideration of H.R. 2403, the Enhanced Background Checks Act of 2023.

Saturday, June 17, will mark 8 years since the massacre at one of the country's most historic churches, Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina.

That racially motivated attack took nine parishioners' lives and injured three others as they participated in a Bible study. It also exposed a loophole in our firearm background check system known as the "Charleston loophole," that allows individuals to purchase firearms prior to an approval of their background check.

Tragically, that very loophole enabled the gunman, who I might add was not eligible to purchase a firearm, to acquire a firearm and commit that horrendous act.

The Brady Act mandates criminal background checks for all gun sales at licensed firearm dealers through the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, NICS. Though most checks process within minutes, and 97 percent are completed within 3 business days, if NICS has not completed its background check in 3 days, regardless of the reason, the dealer can proceed with the firearm sale.

In Charleston, just because a gunman's background check had not been completed within the 3 days, the shop had already sold the gun before he was deemed to be ineligible.

Every year, thousands of weapons are purchased through this loophole that otherwise should be prohibited due to criminal records or other factors—more than 5,200 in 2021 alone. Though this problem was discovered too late for the 12 victims at the Emanuel AME Church, we must narrow this loophole to prevent future tragedies.

Since 2015, I have introduced the Enhanced Background Checks Act, and it passed the House in the 116th and 117th Congresses. This bill provides the FBI with crucial additional time to complete the background check on a potential firearms purchaser before a licensed dealer can transfer a gun.

If a background check has not been completed after 10 business days, a purchaser may request an expedited review by the FBI. This request for an expedited review will trigger a more intensive FBI investigation, designed to resolve the case within an additional 10-business-day period.

If the additional 10 business days elapse without a response from the NICS system, only then may the dealer sell or transfer the gun to the purchaser. Transactions for prospective purchasers who do not request an expedited review cannot proceed until their background check is resolved.

While I would hope that House Republican leadership would recognize the harm caused by the Charleston loophole and would bring this bill to the floor for a vote, this discharge petition would make that happen even if they remain unwilling. With strong support in the Democratic Caucus, we just need a handful of Republican colleagues willing to put partisanship aside and do the right thing for the American people.

I would respectfully ask that they reflect upon the nine parishioners who lost their lives at Emanuel AME Church 8 years ago. I hope they will conclude that to prevent lives from being needlessly lost in the future, they must ensure that the Enhanced Background Check Act of 2023 be enacted into law to finally close the Charleston loophole. That starts with signing this discharge petition.

Madam Speaker, I close my comments by indicating that on Saturday, while I will be pausing in the morning to say a prayer for the families of these nine souls, I will go to Bethel AME Church in Columbia to celebrate the

homegoing of Ms. Elise Martin, who when she lived in Charleston and came into my life, often worshipped at Emanuel AME Church.

Fortunately, the good Lord allowed her to live for 108 years. The pastor of Emanuel AME Church lost his life.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOSEPH COSTNER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. HOUCHIN). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and the dedicated service of Joseph Costner who entered eternal rest on March 26, 2023.

Throughout the duration of his life, Mr. Costner unfailingly answered the call to serve his country and his community. He was raised in Lawndale, North Carolina, and he joined the Army at the age of 18 where he dedicated the remainder of his life to fighting for the country he loved proudly and profoundly.

First, serving in the Korean war, Mr. Costner later completed two terms in Vietnam, where his unwavering courage resulted in numerous medals of honor, including the Presidential Unit Citation and the Bronze Star.

He eventually retired after 26 years with the rank of chief warrant officer 4 specializing in Army intelligence.

Following his retirement from the Army, Mr. Costner continued to serve his country for the next 17 years with the Defense Investigative Service where he rose to regional director in Roanoke, Virginia.

His dedication to serving his country and his people was perpetual, and he spent the last 27 years of his life with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program in Rock Hill, South Carolina, where he prepared taxes free of charge for low-income, disabled, and elderly citizens of his community.

Within Rock Hill, South Carolina, and the greater community, Mr. Costner was widely referred to as a hero, a role model, and most of all, a friend.

He was greatly loved and cherished by his wife of 60 years, Helen; his three children; five grandchildren; great-grandson; and countless friends.

Mr. Costner set the gold standard for over 70 years of service dedicated and committed to his country for which he will long be remembered. For all that, we join in saying good-bye to a hero.

IN MEMORY OF CHIEF LUTHER REYNOLDS OF CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MACE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Chief Luther Reynolds, the city of Charleston's police chief who died recently to cancer. He

was an exceptional leader and dedicated public servant who served the Charleston community and beyond.

His legacy will leave a testament of courage, service, and love, and I offer my deepest condolences to Chief Reynolds' family, his wife, his children, his friends, and the Charleston Police Department. We mourn his untimely passing and honor his unyielding spirit.

I have very fond memories of Chief Reynolds. In fact, he was the guy that called me when my house got spray-painted at 7:30 in the morning, making sure that I was aware and that it was safe and sound and would be protected.

There are so many instances of threats that I have had on my life and my family's life where Chief Reynolds was there for us each and every day. He was a neighbor, he was a friend, and he was a protector of the city of Charleston.

We remember his dedicated service and his commitment to our community.

REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS OF EMANUEL AME
CHURCH MASSACRE

Ms. MACE. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize some of the comments made by my colleagues today.

Four days from now will be the anniversary of Mother Emanuel, a day that was a very dark day in South Carolina's history where nine Black church members of Mother Emanuel were murdered in cold blood by a white supremacist, by a young man who wanted to commit evil atrocities on our State and our Nation.

I recognize those individuals: Clementa Pinckney, who was a pastor and State senator; Cynthia Graham Hurd; Susie Jackson; Ethel Lee Lance; DePayne Middleton-Doctor; Tywanza Sanders; Daniel Simmons; Sharonda Coleman-Singleton; and Myra Thompson.

As a State lawmaker, I believe that we need to strengthen our background checks, because in the State of South Carolina, the reason that the killer was able to purchase that gun, though he was ineligible, was because of our weakened background systems. We have dozens of databases across the State that don't talk to one other about the criminal information of bad guys who are trying to purchase a gun. It is an issue that I worked on as a State lawmaker, and it is something I am advocating for today in Congress.

I hope that we can find a way to strengthen our background checks so that bad guys who are breaking the law and shouldn't be able to buy a gun, don't have the ability to commit such atrocities as those committed at Mother Emanuel.

We stand South Carolina strong and Charleston strong, and I recognize our heroes from that day.

RECOGNIZING BERKELEY COUNTY ADULT
EDUCATION GRADUATES

Ms. MACE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Berkeley County Adult Education graduates.

As a high school dropout, as someone who understands how challenging it

can be to finish education, I congratulate the adult education graduates.

From my home county and Berkeley County, I offer a heartfelt congratulations to this graduating class. They have demonstrated exceptional persistence and have overcome so many hurdles that life has thrown their way.

They are an aspiring example of learning at any age and under any circumstances. Their perseverance prevails, their determination reaps rewards, and their learning is lifelong—something that everyone can commend today.

Madam Speaker, I extend my best wishes for their future endeavors in everything that they do.

SOUTH CAROLINA'S AQUARIUM TURTLE
RELEASES

Ms. MACE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize South Carolina's aquarium releases of their turtles. We are celebrating the release of two loggerhead turtles, named Bea and Pluto, by South Carolina Aquarium's Sea Turtle Care Center in Charleston.

The turtles were found in distress, each missing a flipper, and underwent extensive rehabilitation to recover.

Despite their physical challenges, the turtles displayed remarkable resilience and this is something that the Coast of South Carolina certainly is proud of.

Madam Speaker, I offer gratitude to the Sea Turtle Care Center team led by Melissa Ranly.

NEW SUMMERVILLE FIRE CHIEF

Ms. MACE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the new Deputy Chief Brent Melcher taking over the fire chief for Summerville from Richard Waring on June 23.

We thank Chief Waring for his 30 years of service to Summerville and Dorchester County. We also recognize that Chief Melcher wants to continue the strong family atmosphere in the department and expansion into Nexton.

Melcher has served Summerville since the year 2000. I recently was able to connect and meet with him and was very proud of his achievements of Summerville's new fire chief.

SPECIAL BOND FORMED AT MUSC SHAWN
JENKINS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Ms. MACE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the special bond formed at MUSC Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital.

A story of resilience and friendship among three young boys: Bennett, Jackson, and Marcelino formed a strong bond at Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital as they awaited their heart transplants.

Despite their medical challenges, they have supported and comforted one another. Their friendship demonstrates the power of human connection during difficult times.

RECOGNIZING ISABELLA
HEINBAUGH-MCCROSKEY, ME-
DINA COUNTY VETERAN ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

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

Mr. MILLER of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Brunswick, Ohio, resident Isabella Heinbaugh-McCroskey.

In 2016, Isabella began placing wreaths at the Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery.

In 2019, having noticed that local veterans were not being recognized properly, Isabella walked the West View Cemetery grounds, at which point she located 185 unmarked veteran graves. Isabella then solicited donations and gathered volunteers to place the wreaths on the graves of each veteran.

To educate the public, Isabella coordinated a Wreaths Across America mobile trailer visit where the public learned more about the program. She welcomed home and honored more than 25 Vietnam veterans at this event.

Now, as just a freshman in high school, Isabella continues to work with Brunswick VFW to coordinate flag retirements and Veterans Day ceremonies, and she is a clear example of how women lead us.

We thank Isabella for her incredible devotion to our veterans and congratulate her on being recognized as the 2023 Medina County Veteran Advocate of the Year.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 29 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

The heavens tell of Your glory, O God. The firmament proclaims Your handiwork. Each day announces Your benevolence and every night provides wisdom gleaned from the day.

Holy God, Your creation speaks of Your goodness, Your kindness, and Your mercy. Would that our voices be so pure. Would that our speech reflect Your concern for the world. Would that our words—the very thing creation does not have—prove as illustrative of Your steadfast love and patience.

Every word that comes from Your mouth, O God, is pure and powerful.