

(Mr. HAGERTY) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 816, a resolution recognizing the 73rd anniversary of the signing of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Philippines and the strong bilateral security alliance between our two nations in the wake of persistent and escalating aggression by the People's Republic of China in the South China Sea.

AMENDMENT NO. 3263

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3263 intended to be proposed to S. 4638, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING):

S. 5055. A bill to require the United States Armed Forces to fully utilize applicable State extreme risk protection order programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I rise today to introduce the Armed Forces Crisis Intervention Notification Act.

This legislation is in response to the October 25, 2023, tragedy in Lewiston, ME. On that day, 18 Mainers were killed and 13 injured during the worst mass shooting in Maine's history. For 2 days, Lewiston and the surrounding communities were locked down and people were frightened as law enforcement searched for the shooter. It was a horrific event that Mainers will never forget, nor should we.

The phrase "Lewiston strong" continues to echo across our State as we remember those whom we lost nearly a year ago. The victims were enjoying time with their family and friends at a local bowling alley and a restaurant. They included four members of Maine's deaf community who had gathered at the restaurant that evening to play cornhole. They also included a 14-year-old high school honors student, an Army veteran who served tours in Iraq, and a volunteer coach for a youth bowling league. They were parents, husbands and wives, neighbors, coworkers, and friends. Lives were forever changed on that day as families continue to mourn the loss of their loved ones.

The shooter was a sergeant first class in the Army Reserve. In the aftermath of the shootings, I led the Maine delegation in requesting an independent review by the inspector general of the

Army to help us better understand what happened and what could have been done differently to help prevent this tragedy.

I said then that I wanted to use the results of that review—as well as the findings of a separate investigation by the Army Reserve and the independent commission established by the Governor of Maine—to inform potential Federal legislation that could help prevent future shootings.

The Army Reserve and the Army inspector general released their reports in July, and the independent commission appointed by the Governor released its report just last month. I commend the commission for its thorough report, and I thank the chairman of the commission, former chief justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court Daniel Wathen for his leadership.

All of these investigations revealed that there were numerous missed opportunities to potentially intervene and prevent this horrific tragedy. In many instances, there was a clear lack of effective communication and coordination. For example, the independent commission concluded that the local sheriff's office was "justified in pointing out that the Army Reserve did not share all relevant information it had about [the shooter's] behavior." In its report, the commission went on to explain that had Army Reserve personnel "presented a full and complete accounting of the facts, the [sheriff's office] might have acted more assertively."

The findings of these investigations into the Lewiston shootings also serve as a stark reminder that members of our Armed Forces are not immune from mental illness.

So, today, I am introducing legislation that is designed to help address these significant issues. If enacted, my bill will move us closer to achieving our goals of making our communities safer and ensuring that servicemembers in crisis get the assistance they need to prevent injury to themselves and to others.

This bill is premised on my belief, which is supported by the findings of the investigations, that State crisis intervention programs should be fully utilized by our military when appropriate and with adequate due process protections. This can only happen, however, if relevant information is shared in a timely and effective manner.

The Armed Forces Crisis Intervention Notification Act would facilitate that kind of communication and coordination between the Armed Forces and the relevant State, county, and local authorities that was lacking during the months leading up to the mass shootings in Lewiston.

Specifically, this bill would direct the Armed Forces to fully utilize State crisis intervention programs in certain circumstances where the risk of harm is the greatest—namely, when a servicemember is determined to be unfit to

possess military firearms due to that member making serious, credible threats of violence against themselves or against others or when a servicemember has been involuntarily committed to a hospital that specializes in caring for people with mental illness. "Fully utilize" is defined in the bill to mean taking action available to third parties under a State crisis intervention program and providing relevant material facts to appropriate law enforcement or judicial personnel.

In the case of the Lewiston shooter, Robert Card, the Army Reserve determined that he should not have access to military weapons and facilitated his treatment at a mental hospital, but regrettably, it did not provide civilian law enforcement in Maine, where he resided, or in New York, where he was training, with all of the relevant information that it had. This bill would direct that such information be provided to the appropriate authorities through an established process so that the authorities can make fully informed decisions about whether to take additional steps pursuant to a State crisis intervention program.

The bill also facilitates information sharing by directing the branches of our Armed Forces to fully participate in judicial proceedings authorized as part of a State crisis intervention program. This means that the branches of our Armed Forces would be required to produce upon request evidence as part of those proceedings.

This provision is especially meaningful. If this bill had been law prior to the shootings and Maine law enforcement had initiated proceedings under the State of Maine's yellow flag law, the Army would have been directed to produce evidence that could have resulted in the shooter losing possession of his personal weapons—the weapons that he used to murder 18 people—and at the same time, he could have received additional treatment for his severe mental illness.

I have worked for months to carefully craft this legislation, which also reflects the findings and recommendations of the three separate investigations I previously described. While drafting this bill, I solicited input from the relevant stakeholders—including the Army, veterans service organizations, and sportsman's groups, including the National Shooting Sports Foundation and the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine.

Responsible gun ownership is part of the heritage of many Maine families. The Sportsman's Alliance of Maine has long been an effective voice in our State for preserving this heritage and protecting the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding Americans, while recognizing that there are extreme circumstances in which action must be taken to intervene in order to prevent gun-related violence. I thank them for their thoughtful input and advice.

The product of this collaborative and consultative process is a bill that is

carefully constructed. It is a bill that is designed to save lives.

It is important to note once again that this proposal protects the due process and Second Amendment rights of servicemembers. It would not create a Federal crisis intervention program or impose new requirements on States or alter existing State programs or direct States to adopt such crisis intervention programs. The bill preserves the ability of States to craft their own crisis intervention programs. The Armed Forces would simply operate within each State's framework, provided that the State programs adhere to the due process and Second Amendment protections already specified by Congress in the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act.

Moreover, if a current or former servicemember seeks to regain possession of his or her firearms through a judicial proceeding, he or she would be entitled to evidence from the military that could be helpful to his or her case.

This legislation also does not affect the military's existing authority to disarm servicemembers of their issued weapons in a broad range of situations that are unrelated to a serious, credible threat of violence or involuntary commitment to a mental hospital.

We often search for something good to come from a terrible tragedy. After shoppers were killed in Buffalo, NY, and schoolchildren and teachers were murdered in Uvalde, TX, we came together in this Chamber to pass the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. I was honored to be part of that effort, which I believe has saved lives. Indeed, in June, the Department of Justice announced that it had charged more than 500 defendants under the provisions of that law that target unlawful trafficking and straw purchasing of firearms. I coauthored those provisions to help take dangerous criminals off the streets, and that is exactly what is happening.

Nothing that we can do can take away the pain, the shock, and the understandable anger felt by the families who lost loved ones last October, but we can and we should take legislative and administrative actions in response to the Lewiston tragedy. By taking such actions, we have a chance to help servicemembers in crisis. We have a chance to help protect our neighbors, our families, our communities. We have a chance to save lives.

Let me end by thanking my colleague from Maine Senator KING for co-sponsoring this legislation. I urge the rest of our colleagues to join us in this important effort.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 817—DESIGNATING THE WEEK BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 8, 2024, AS “NATIONAL DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS RECOGNITION WEEK”

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. WARREN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Ms. SMITH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 817

Whereas direct care workers, including direct support professionals, personal assistants, personal attendants, in-home support workers, and paraprofessionals, are key to providing publicly funded, long-term support and services for millions of individuals with disabilities;

Whereas direct support professionals provide essential services that ensure that all individuals with disabilities are—

- (1) included as a valued part of the communities in which those individuals live;
- (2) supported at home, at work, and in the communities of the United States; and
- (3) empowered to live with the dignity that all people of the United States deserve;

Whereas, by fostering connections between individuals with disabilities and their families, friends, and communities, direct support professionals ensure that individuals with disabilities thrive and provide an alternative to institutional care;

Whereas direct support professionals build close, respectful, and trusting relationships with individuals with disabilities and provide a broad range of personalized support to those individuals, including—

- (1) helping individuals make person-centered choices;
- (2) assisting with personal care, meal preparation, medication management, and other aspects of daily living;
- (3) assisting individuals in accessing the community and securing competitive, integrated employment;
- (4) providing transportation to school, work, religious, and recreational activities;
- (5) helping with general daily affairs, such as assisting with financial matters, medical appointments, and personal interests; and
- (6) assisting individuals in the transition to living in the communities of their choice;

Whereas there is a critical and increasing shortage of direct support professionals throughout the United States, a crisis that was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, bringing uncertainty and risk to individuals with disabilities;

Whereas direct support professionals do not have their own Standard Occupational Classification for the purposes of Federal data collection, including data produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor;

Whereas the Director of the Office of Management and Budget should, as part of the current revision of the Standard Occupational Classification system, consider establishing a separate code for direct support professionals as a healthcare support occupation;

Whereas the direct care workforce, including direct support professionals, is expected to be among the fastest growing occupations in the United States;

Whereas many direct support professionals—

(1) may be the primary financial providers for their families;

(2) are hardworking, taxpaying citizens who provide a critical service in the United States; and

(3) continue to earn low wages, receive inadequate benefits, and have limited opportunities for advancement, resulting in high turnover and vacancy rates that adversely affect the quality of support, safety, and health of individuals with disabilities; and

Whereas the Supreme Court of the United States, in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, 527 U.S. 581 (1999)—

(1) recognized the importance of the deinstitutionalization of, and community-based services for, individuals with disabilities; and

(2) held that, under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), a State must provide person-centered, community-based service options to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week beginning September 8, 2024, as “National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week”;

(2) recognizes the dedication and vital role of direct support professionals in enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities;

(3) appreciates the contribution of direct support professionals in supporting individuals with disabilities in the United States and the families of those individuals;

(4) commends direct support professionals for being integral to the provision of long-term support and services for individuals with disabilities;

(5) acknowledges the nearly 2,000 comments regarding supporting the inclusion of a Standard Occupational Classification category for direct support professionals; and

(6) finds that the successful implementation of public policies affecting individuals with disabilities in the United States can depend on the dedication of direct support professionals.

SENATE RESOLUTION 818—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR AND CELEBRATING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SERVICEMEN'S READJUSTMENT ACT OF 1944

Mr. CARPER (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. BOOZMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 818

Whereas, on July 28, 1943, in seeking a solution to integrate returning members of the Armed Forces into civilian life, President Franklin D. Roosevelt called for a comprehensive set of veterans benefits during a fireside chat saying, “While concentrating on military victory, we are not neglecting the planning of the things to come Among many other things we are, today, laying plans for the return to civilian life of our gallant men and women in the Armed Services.”;

Whereas, on June 22, 1944, in demonstration of the full support of the United States for the transition of members of the Armed Forces to civilian life, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (58 Stat. 284, chapter 268), commonly known as the “GI Bill of Rights”;

Whereas the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 was the culmination of the tireless work and advocacy of veterans service organizations and Members of Congress;

Whereas the Act made immediate financial support, transformative educational benefits, and home loan guarantees available to