

are borrowing money. A State is doing a provider tax. It covers their match, and then, they are sticking money in their general fund from our borrowed money. Why is this good?

□ 2010

Mr. Speaker, I am just going to skip to the last one because we need to tell the truth. With our great financial burden, we are elected. We are functionally the board of directors of the biggest enterprise in the world. We represent a quarter of the world's economy.

Does this body act like a board of directors? Do we pay attention to the math? Do we pay attention to how we take care of our customers, the American citizens? Do we pay attention to the reality?

Social Security, Medicare, and net interest account for 80 percent of the spending growth over the next nine budget years. If we do the 30 years, it is everything. If we do the 30 years, military and nondefense discretionary are scheduled to grow slower than tax receipts.

Are we even allowed to talk about these? Are we even allowed to tell the truth about the math?

Mr. Speaker, we have been collecting every article we can that talks about—and some of these are Republicans. Some of these are Democrats. Some of these are Conservatives. Some of these are just academic economists.

Here is one that talks about the growth of males of prime age in Medicaid. What is fascinating about this particular study is they spent an average of 6.1 hours per day, or 184 hours a month, on all socializing, relaxing, and leisure activities.

We get attacked for saying we are asking for work requirements. Understand how many States—my State already has an application in for work requirements. I think we already have work requirements—forgive me if I get this wrong—in ten others.

If we take a look at the chart, a number of the States had applications in. The applications were approved. Then the Biden administration took over, and something happened either through court or action here. They started rolling them back.

If I say right now there are 7 million males of prime age missing from the labor force, Mr. Speaker, if I come to you and say we want tax receipts to grow, that means we need participation in the economy.

If anyone wants to geek out, probably about 5 years ago the University of Chicago did an amazing study on what work requirements do in benefit programs. At the end of the decade, the participants are wealthier because they may get the benefit, but the work requirements changed their participation in the economy. It raised their skill set. They moved up in the economy.

In many ways, if we read the academic literature, those who oppose things like work requirements have to

read the literature. They are crushing people. They are destroying their economic futures, their ability to learn skill sets, and how to participate in the economy.

Maybe we have people around here that permanent poverty—that level of cruelty—is what is built into their political manifesto. I refuse to believe that. I believe we all want the right things.

Page after page of this data is here. We will have these trite debates and arguments based on feelings. Then we will wonder why tomorrow is no better than it was today and the day after that will be no better than the next day.

There is hope. There are ways to make this work. There are ways to stabilize the debt. There are ways to make this society much more prosperous. Prosperity is moral. I am wondering if we are intellectually capable of actually doing the work.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

NATIONAL GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. McCLELLAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.)

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today to co-anchor this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour, along with my distinguished colleague from Louisiana (Mr. CARTER).

For the next 60 minutes, members of CBC have the opportunity to speak directly to the American people on Gun Violence Awareness Month. It is an issue of great importance to the Congressional Black Caucus, Congress, and the constituents we represent.

Mr. Speaker, on March 7, 2023, I stood in the well and took my oath of office into this body. My children stood with me. My then 13-year-old son, who was very excited, impressed some people with his dance moves.

Less than a week later, my son, Jackson, showed up at school to find out one of his classmates was dead. He had killed himself accidentally using a loaded gun as a prop to film a music video. My son was devastated.

He was devastated again when 2 months later the school year abruptly came to an end when Shawn Jackson was shot and killed minutes after receiving his high school diploma.

These are 2 of the 46,728 people who died from gun-related injuries in 2023

alone. They were among the average 13,300 Black Americans who die of gun violence every single year.

Sierra Jenkins, Jahiem Dickerson, Devon Harris, Samiyah Yellardy, Tyshawn White, Jaiden Carter, Kenneth Cooper, Markiya Dickson, and Lorenzo Smith are just some of the names of people whose lives were ended by gun violence. Some were on purpose. Some were by their own hand. Some were accidental.

Too many of our communities are disproportionately impacted by this violence. We cannot allow this violence to become normalized. We must stand together to advance commonsense gun safety legislation, invest in community violence intervention programs, and address the root causes of gun violence.

Year after year, we go back to our districts. We go to vigils. We watch the news. We see tragedies. We come back here. We stand for a moment of silence. We give our thoughts and prayers. Nothing changes. The overwhelming consensus of the American people is that we have to do something.

As a State legislator, I focused on addressing the root causes of gun violence. I thought there would be bipartisan support for that. To a certain extent, there was.

□ 2020

I championed investment in the creation of a Firearm Violence Intervention and Prevention Fund with Delegate Marcia Price from Newport News when I was in the State senate. This program and fund would provide a pathway to research demographics and trends and implement evidence-based solutions to address the root causes of gun violence.

That is because gun violence in Richmond, Virginia, is different from gun violence in New Orleans, Louisiana. It is different from gun violence in New York City. It is different from gun violence in Newark, New Jersey. We need to get at the root causes.

For too many of our young people, the root causes are that access to guns is very easy and that they weren't taught to regulate emotions. Things that in my age were settled on the playground with a fist are now settled with a gun. Mr. Speaker, you can call someone a name on social media, and the next thing you know, you are shot dead. We need to do something to address that gun violence.

I was proud to come to Congress to try to continue to work on that, but in April, the Trump administration terminated nearly 400 grants from the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs that support everything from victim services to substance use, from mental health treatment to juvenile justice and child protection.

These are grants that were used to address the root causes of gun violence in our communities. There have been deep cuts to the Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative, the largest source of Federal funding

for community violence intervention, funding authorized by Congress in 2022 that has invested \$300 million in community violence programming and research. Now, about one-half of those investments have been cut.

All this does is invite tragedy back into our communities. We can't let it happen.

As far as Black people and the communities that we represent, we are only 14 percent of the U.S. population, but we represent 60 percent of all firearm homicide victims. A Black person in America is 11.5 times more likely to die from gun violence.

While gun violence became the leading cause of death of all children for the first time in 2020, it has been the leading cause of death for Black children since 2006.

We must do more. We must do more because I can't tell you, Mr. Speaker, how difficult it is when every time there is a mass shooting, every time someone is shot going to the grocery store, playing in a park, going to the movie theater, turning in the wrong driveway, showing up at school after graduation, on and on, every time it happens, my son and my daughter look at me, and they ask: Am I next?

Do you know how difficult that is, Mr. Speaker? Do you know how hard it is, Mr. Speaker, when your children who know someone who has died from gun violence have to spend their days in school in active shooter drills rather than learning?

Enough is enough, Mr. Speaker. We must do more. Thoughts and prayers are not enough.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CARTER), my colleague from New Orleans.

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to be here to co-anchor this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour for the month of June. I thank my esteemed colleague and dear friend, Congresswoman JENNIFER MCCLELLAN, a Democrat from Virginia's Fourth District, for her outstanding leadership and for leading this incredible hour.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight during National Gun Violence Awareness Month not just with sorrow but with a sense of urgency. I rise tonight during the National Gun Violence Awareness Month to shake the core of our very beings.

I want to be abundantly clear that this is not about taking away anyone's Second Amendment right to bear arms. Mr. Speaker, don't be fooled by the gun manufacturers that want to continue to put profits over people, over children, and over people's lives.

I am from the South. I am a gun enthusiast. I do believe in the Second Amendment, but I am a responsible gun owner. I am trained to use my firearm. I understand the importance of proper storage, protection, and training. I understand the importance of having reasonable waiting periods and the importance of being familiar with

your weapon and making sure it is never left where children or untrained people can gain access.

Yes, the Second Amendment stands, but our common sense stands, too. We must protect communities and make sure that firearms never find their way into the hands of people who are ill-trained, who have ill intent, and who seek to cause the damage that we have seen with our mass shootings.

For far too long, our Nation has tolerated an epidemic that is killing our children, our friends, and our future. Gun violence has ravaged this country. While every American feels the impact, Black communities bear the brunt. Black communities die from gun violence at 2.7 times the rate of our White counterparts. Let me say that again: 2.7 times the rate.

Over 13,300 Black lives are lost every year to gun violence. That is not a statistic. That is our sons, our daughters, our neighbors, and our church members. That is an entire generation lost.

In 2023 alone, firearm homicides in Black communities rose by over 23 percent, suicides by 50 percent, and unintentional shootings by 11 percent. These are not isolated tragedies. This is a pattern, a crisis, an epidemic.

Yet, this Congress remains stuck in neutral. It has been 3 years since the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act was signed into law by President Biden.

Did I say bipartisan? Yes, it was bipartisan. I voted for it. I stood proudly with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to take this important step.

Let's be honest. It was just that, one step. It was a step that needs to be followed up with more steps, more action, more help, and more signals that we are bigger and better than the gun lobby.

Since then, since that one step, mass shootings have surged. Right now, families are afraid to go to the mall, the movie theater, schools, grocery stores, concerts, and places of worship. No one feels safe because, oftentimes, nowhere is safe.

The Gun Violence Archive has already reported that 133 mass shootings have happened this year, and it is only the first week of June.

Every shooting leaves behind a shattered family, a traumatized community, and a ripple effect that lasts generations.

Let's be clear. Black Americans are not just victims of community violence. We are also disproportionately impacted by rogue police violence, police shootings, and shootings of unarmed men and women, often young people.

The truth can't be ignored when we talk about gun violence in our country. Accountability must be a part of our reform.

We know that thoughts and prayers after these tragedies are important and powerful, too, but words alone can't do it. We must put our well-wishes and our prayers into action.

I recognize that at this moment, we demand action because words alone

won't stop a bullet. I know that being silent wouldn't stop a bullet. I know being complicit won't stop a bullet. I know pointing fingers won't stop a bullet. I know running from the scoring of the NRA won't stop a bullet.

I know what can stop a bullet. It is men and women in this body standing up together and saying that enough is enough. That is because these lives are not just Black, not just White, not just Democrat, not just Independent, and not just Republican. They are Americans. They are our children, our seniors, and our neighbors. They are our friends, and they are our colleagues.

Wake up. This is not about us against them. This is about us fighting an epidemic. It is an epidemic that is literally killing our community.

□ 2030

Today, I said to my colleagues across the aisle, do not look away. Come to the table. Work with us. The cost of inaction is measured in lives lost in our neighborhoods, in our classrooms, and in our communities across the country.

To my Republican colleagues, do not look away. Do not wait until the next shooting is in your neighborhood. Do not wait until it is your constituent, your relative, your friend, your fraternity brother, your sorority sister, your neighbor, your colleague, your loved one.

Mass shooters don't care about your party. They don't care about your socioeconomic status. Unfortunately, they often think of hate based by race, based by who you are, by who you choose to love, by who you choose to worship.

This is America, and these are all things that are a part of our strength. Let's not allow them to push us into the corner and fight against each other. We should not live like this. Gun violence is not a political issue. It is a human issue.

The time for reform is not tomorrow. The time for reform is not next year. The time for reform is now, and the people who must do it are us.

Let's rise to this moment. Let's demonstrate to the American people that while Republicans and Democrats may disagree philosophically on many things, let us agree that gun violence is no way for Americans to have to live.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, Claudia Quatey, a 16-year-old who dreamed of becoming a nurse, killed by gun violence.

Cecilia Thomas, a 5-month-old, shot and killed in Chicago, a 5-month old.

I now yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY).

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative MCCLELLAN and Representative CARTER for inviting me to speak tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today because there is a gun violence epidemic in America.

I have spoken loudly and clearly on gun safety again and again and again, shooting after shooting. Moments of silence have never been enough.

Thoughts and prayers have never been enough.

Americans need real action by Congress to end gun violence. That means universal background checks, funding and support for community violence intervention organizations, safe storage laws to prevent unintentional shootings, and an assault weapons ban.

We know the solution is to end gun violence, and yet the Trump administration and this legislative body refuses to act. Instead, President Trump and Republicans reversed the progress we have made these past few years.

On day one in the Oval Office, President Trump shut the doors of the White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention. Since then, he continues to pour salt into injury after injury.

The Department of Justice terminated over \$66 million in grants that were already designated by Congress to community violence intervention programs.

CVI organizations are led by trusted community members who offer job training, mental health resources, de-escalation tactics, and more to keep our neighborhoods safe.

CVI strategies are proven, evidence-based solutions to gun violence, and yet the Trump administration decided they are inefficient.

House Republicans are complicit in the Trump agenda to endanger public safety. In the dead of night, Republicans added a provision to their budget that would deregulate gun silencers, allowing any and all private sales of silencers. The deregulation of gun silencers is reckless and outrageous. Silencers are not something out of a movie. They cause real pain in our communities.

In 2019, a gunman attached a silencer to a handgun that he used to kill 12 people in Virginia Beach. Survivors of the shooting said they did not flee because they didn't identify the muffled sounds as gunshots.

If the cost of American lives does not move my colleagues across the aisle, then perhaps they will be attentive to the fact that the deregulation of silencers will cost American taxpayers nearly \$3 billion. Americans cannot afford the cost of gun violence, not in dollars, in pain, or in grief. Black Americans, in particular, bear a disproportionate weight of that grief.

This past weekend, I joined survivors of gun violence in an environmentally-friendly balloon release to honor the 46,000 lives lost to gun violence every year. They have lost daughters and sons, nephews and nieces, siblings, mothers and fathers to gun violence.

One daughter's name is Hadiya Pendleton. Hadiya was a bright student involved in marching band and volleyball. She was on top of the world when she led her marching band in President Obama's second inauguration. Just one week later, she was shot and killed in a park in Chicago.

Hadiya should have turned 28 years old yesterday. Hadiya's friends and

family started the Wear Orange movement to raise awareness of gun violence. Now the orange color has become a beacon for activity and advocacy against gun violence.

Since they started the Wear Orange movement in 2015, I have introduced the Wear Orange Resolution every year to honor Hadiya.

I ran for office because I couldn't stand by and watch as Congress did nothing as children like Hadiya were ripped away from families. While gun violence became the leading cause of death for all children and teenagers in 2020, it has been the leading cause of death for Black children since 2006.

I swore my first oath of office just 3 months after Hadiya was shot in the Second District. Since then, I have never, ever stopped fighting for her, and I will never stop until we end gun violence once and for all.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. T'Yonna Major, a 9-year-old gymnast until gun violence cut her life short.

Kingston Campbell, a 6-year-old killed when shooters were firing into his home.

They can't speak for themselves. We speak for them.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE), Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman JENNIFER MCCLELLAN and Congressman TROY CARTER for anchoring the Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour.

I rise tonight with my colleagues of the CBC to recognize Gun Violence Awareness Month and to bring attention to the impact of gun violence on Black communities around our Nation.

For decades, gun violence has been an epidemic that has had disproportionate and devastating impacts on Black communities. In fact, the facts are sobering and clear. On average, more than 13,000 Black people die from gun violence each year. In the United States, Black Americans die from gun violence at nearly three times the rate of White Americans.

In 2023, firearm homicides against Black Americans rose over 23 percent. In that same year, firearm suicides in Black communities increased 50 percent, and unintentional shooting deaths rose 11 percent. In the 5 years since the police murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, police shootings of Black Americans have continued to rise.

These are not simply statistics. These are the heartbreaking stories of tragedy and loss that should shake our collective conscience as Americans of goodwill.

From the racist murder of nine parishioners at the Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, to the racist mass shooting at the Tops grocery store in Buffalo, New York, that claimed the lives of 10 people, to countless police shootings of unarmed

Black men, women, and children, our Nation has, unfortunately, bore witness to far too many horrific acts of gun violence against Black communities.

This crisis of gun violence requires action, not thoughts and prayers as the American people have become far too accustomed to hearing from many of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle. Instead of working to pass legislation to keep our communities safe from gun violence, the Republicans included in their reconciliation package a provision that calls for the elimination of registration and ownership requirements for silencers that have been in place since the National Firearms Act went into effect in 1934.

□ 2040

By contrast, when House Democrats were in the majority in the 117th Congress, the Congressional Black Caucus was instrumental in passing the most significant piece of gun reform legislation in nearly 30 years with the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, which was signed into law by President Joe Biden.

With that historic legislation, we took meaningful steps to protect our children, keep our schools safe, and reduce the overall threat of gun violence around our country by extending background checks for firearm purchases, clarifying licensing requirements, funding red flag laws and crisis intervention programs, and weakening the boyfriend loophole.

While we have made strides toward commonsense gun reform, more needs to be done to keep our communities safe. During this National Gun Violence Awareness Month and throughout the year, the Congressional Black Caucus recognizes the critical need for reforming our gun safety laws to protect all of our communities.

Our caucus remains committed to meeting this crisis with the urgency of now to end the senseless acts of violence that take thousands of innocent lives every year. That time for reform is now.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. De'Evan McFall, he dreamed of being an NFL player until gun violence took his life at 11.

Zahmire Lopez, he had dance moves and rap skills until gun violence took his life at 8.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN).

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for co-anchoring this very important Special Order hour.

Mr. Speaker, every 7 hours, a child is killed by gunfire in the United States. Thus far in 2025, nearly 100 American children did not make it to their 12th birthday because they were killed by gunfire.

Every single child lost is an unfathomable tragedy. Families are destroyed, and communities are left in anguish, but the cycle of death and

grief is far more prolific in the Black community. Black Americans die by gun violence at a rate 2.7 times greater than their White peers, including a 50 percent increase in firearm suicides in 2023.

Communities across our country face this daily reality, but too many powerful people here in Washington, D.C., feel too comfortably removed from it. They will call for a moment of silence and then move on, and nothing will happen. Rather than committing to fight this uniquely American terror, they will find any excuse to do nothing. It is video games. It is mental health. It is anything but guns.

Congress has the power to act to keep our young people safe from their leading cause of death: gun violence. We also have a moral obligation to act to free our society from the fear that comes with dropping our children and grandchildren off at school or the mall or the movies or even a house party.

Enough moments of silence. These moments of silence don't save a single, solitary life.

Now is the moment in time that we must act to save our generations.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Sir Antonio Brown, a 6-year-old killed near his Kansas City home by guns.

King, a Georgia 9-year-old killed by another child handling an unsecured gun.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. FOUSHEE).

Mrs. FOUSHEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman MCCLELLAN and Congressman CARTER for anchoring this Special Order hour to bring attention to one of the most pressing and pervasive challenges confronting our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today with urgency, grief, and determination during National Gun Violence Awareness Month, a time for us to recognize the heartbreaking toll that gun violence continues to take on communities across the country.

I am deeply saddened that this past Sunday in my home State of North Carolina, there was a mass shooting where at least 80 shots were fired, killing 1 person and injuring 11 others.

Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident. Gun violence is a public health epidemic that affects Americans and ravages communities in every ZIP Code in every State. Yet, year after year, we see the same devastating trend: Black Americans are dying from gun violence at nearly three times the rate of White Americans.

Each year, more than 13,000 Black lives are lost to this epidemic. They are mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, friends, and neighbors whose futures are stolen, whose communities are left grieving, and whose absence is deeply felt every single day.

Tragically, the violence does not end there. For years, Black Americans have faced a persistent and disproportionate risk of being killed in police encounters involving firearms. Let me

be clear: No one in America should have to fear for their lives in our schools, our stores, our places of worship, our streets, or anywhere in our communities.

Yet, while this crisis and disparity continues to grow across the country, some in Congress are moving in the wrong direction. Again, my colleagues just shared that, just a couple of weeks ago House Republicans voted along party lines to pass the so-called One Big Beautiful Bill Act, which included a provision to deregulate silencers. Due to the dangers they pose, these devices have been highly regulated for nearly 100 years, and this provision would make it easier for individuals to use firearms with less risk of detection, further endangering our communities already suffering from gun violence.

This is not the type of comprehensive gun reform legislation that the American people need or deserve. A majority of Americans support universal background checks, closing loopholes in gun sales, red flag laws, and safe storage legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: What are we waiting for? The oath of office that all Members of Congress took demands that we protect the American people. Yet, every day that we delay, lives are lost.

I urge my Republican colleagues to join House Democrats, the Congressional Black Caucus, and the House Gun Violence Prevention Task Force in advancing meaningful, commonsense reforms that will save lives, reduce violence, and protect all Americans.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Jakobe Fanning, a 16-year-old killed in a South Carolina shooting.

Izaiah, a 16-year-old in Maryland shot near his high school.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. MCIVER).

Mrs. MCIVER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on an issue that has devastated families and communities across this country: gun violence.

For years, gun violence has been an unchecked epidemic. In the Black community, the toll has been heartbreaking and more deadly. Still, very little meaningful action has been taken to stop the hurt.

Our communities continue to be ravaged, while too many remain silent. We cannot continue to treat this as normal. There is nothing normal about burying children. There is nothing normal about the weapons that turn schools, churches, and neighborhoods into battlegrounds. I am here for the next generation to say: They deserve better than this.

□ 2050

They deserve a future where they never have to say enough is enough because we will have already done what is necessary.

I, along with my CBC colleagues, will not stay silent. We will continue to demand comprehensive gun reform, background checks, closing loopholes, and a ban on assault weapons because our lives and our children's lives depend on it.

The time for reform is now. Let's do what is right. Let's do what is just. Let's do what is necessary before another name is added to another list.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, Serabi Medina lost her mother to gun violence, and then at 9, she was killed on her way home with ice cream for her father, cut down by gun violence by a neighbor.

Mr. Speaker, how many more? How many more children on the way to school, at school, at the bus stop, at the grocery store, in the park, in front of their house, in bed? How many more? How many more children have to die before we act?

How many more women stuck in domestic violence situations who try to get out, who get protective orders against their partner only to have that partner go get a gun and kill them? How many more?

How many more people, desperate, take their own life because getting a gun is so easy, much easier than getting the mental health treatment that they need? How many more?

How many more thoughts are we going to need? How many more prayers? Mr. Speaker, enough is enough.

When I was a kid in the late 1970s and early 1980s, I think the biggest thing that my mom worried about when I went to school was whether I would eat the lunch that they served. Do you know what it is like to put your child on a bus and wonder if they are going to come home?

Do you know what it is like to go to a park to celebrate a birthday, and your child doesn't come home? Too many people do. Too many Black people do. Too many people in our communities are disproportionately impacted by this public health crisis.

Even when we find bipartisan agreement—I was able to find bipartisan agreement to get a fund created in the Virginia government, a gun violence prevention grant fund, yet the Federal funding that was available to fund the programs that are proven to address the root causes of gun violence are being cut. It makes no sense.

Every day, our children see this. They are traumatized by the mass shooter drills. They are traumatized by the friends who are there one day and gone the next.

Every single time my son sees a story of someone dying because of a gun, he asks me, "Am I next?" I say to him, "Jackson, I am doing everything in my power to make sure you are not."

I can't do it alone. The Congressional Black Caucus can't do it alone. We need 218 people in the House and 60 in the Senate who are willing to do something more than thoughts and prayers.

We need a President and an administration that says enough is enough.

If you don't want to do anything to actually take the guns off the street, then at least invest in the root causes of violence because it is too easy for someone desperate enough to take their life to get a gun and do it. It is too easy for somebody who wants to start a race war to get a gun and walk into a church where people pray with him, and he shoots them dead. Enough is enough.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your attention. I thank the Members of the Congressional Black Caucus who joined me tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

151 DAYS WITHOUT A VOTE TO LOWER COSTS

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. OLSZEWSKI of Maryland was recognized for 30 minutes.)

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OLSZEWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous material into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCDOWELL). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

Mr. OLSZEWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues of the Congressional Black Caucus for their remarks on an issue that is pressing and timely for all of us. I really appreciate the ways in which so many of you have lifted your voices on the scourge that is gun violence in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I rise for this Special Order because here we are, now 151 days since the beginning of this 119th Congress, and American families have seen zero relief. Nothing has been done to help them as costs continue to rise, despite promises from the administration and the GOP congressional majority to lower prices on day one. Instead, this Republican majority is poised to make things worse through the reconciliation process.

Just one awful and cruel example is pushing \$300 billion of cuts to food supports. In doing so, congressional Republicans will make groceries even more expensive for the 42 million households already struggling to put food on the table every day. Twenty thousand of those families live in my district. Eighty percent of those households include a child, a senior, a disabled person, or a veteran. Let that sink in.

SNAP isn't a luxury. It is essential. It provides \$6 a day in food assistance to hungry Americans, just \$6. It is a small amount, but it is enough to lift up millions out of poverty and create a foundation of health and well-being. Just \$6 can create a pathway to opportunity.

Instead, Republicans want to take away food from hungry people, not to balance the budget, because we know this bill actually increases the deficit by nearly \$3 trillion, and not to better serve our veterans, because this bill actually reduces funding for our vets. Republicans in Congress are doing this in order to fund tax breaks for the wealthiest of individuals and big corporations.

Early in my career, I was a public school teacher. I know that a hungry kid cannot learn. That is why, when I became Baltimore County executive managing a \$5 billion budget that I had to balance every year, I prioritized food security and especially prioritized food security for our children.

We leveraged our very modest SNAP dollars and braided it with additional State and local funding to ensure that all kids in Baltimore County, regardless of income level, could now receive a free breakfast or lunch at every single public school—no stigma, no strident rules. We just feed hungry kids.

We feed them in the summer, too, having expanded the summer SNAP program to keep kids fed even when school isn't in session.

As a result, behaviors improved, and test scores went up, too. That was no surprise because research has proven time and time again that kids who receive SNAP benefits in school have higher graduation rates. Access to healthy foods helps develop memory, social skills, and emotional stability. All of these are critical to academic success.

A quality education is the key to opportunity. It empowers our SNAP recipients to lift themselves out of the cycle of poverty.

Under these Republican cuts, Maryland and our counties would take on 50 to 75 percent of the administrative costs of SNAP.

□ 2100

The types of expansions we made in Baltimore County and expansions that have happened across this country will likely vanish overnight.

In fact, the Urban Institute says that as many as 18.3 million children will lose access to free school meals under these cuts.

Food banks will be overwhelmed. Children will go hungry, and it will have a domino effect: a domino effect on their education, a domino effect on healthcare costs and healthcare outcomes, and a domino effect on our economy.

A Department of Agriculture report called SNAP an economic stabilizer. One billion in new SNAP benefits would lead to an increase of 1.54 billion GDP. In other words, 54 percent above and beyond the new benefits. That seems like a much better investment to me than borrowing \$4 trillion to finance tax cuts for the ultrawealthy.

I am so grateful to all of my colleagues who are joining me tonight who are speaking about the importance

of SNAP and feeding our young people. We represent rural districts and urban districts, communities of means and communities without. There isn't a single Member of Congress who does not represent families who rely on SNAP's food supports to make ends meet.

We all represent families that are getting squeezed by higher costs, who are too scared to check their retirement accounts, who are putting off having prescriptions filled, or who are falling behind on rent. It is simple: These cuts will lead to suffering and we must stop them.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. MCCLELLAN), who just co-anchored an incredible Special Order hour herself.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, my father-in-law was a teacher and he talked about how in the morning when he would come into work, he could tell the kids that hadn't eaten at home and for them often the first meal they would get was the free or reduced breakfast and lunch.

He would say: You can't learn if you are hungry. When you get the sugar high of eating some of what they serve in schools as your first meal and then you crash around 2 o'clock in the afternoon when it is time for the history lesson, you are not going to learn much.

The SNAP cuts in the big, billionaire bonus bill are literally going to take food off of the table for 42 million Americans, a third of them children. For the first time ever, it is going to force States to pay up to, I think it is, 25 percent of the cost.

In Virginia alone, that is going to be \$450 million. That in and of itself may not sound like a lot, but Virginia is also facing a hole blown in its budget through cuts to Medicaid.

Virginia now is being forced to implement work requirements it decided not to implement because when it looked at the other States that did, the administrative costs of the work requirements cost more than the cost to provide care.

These States are facing significant cuts to rental assistance and affordable housing funding. Oh, by the way, these are the same people who are now going to get their healthcare stripped away, who get their food benefits stripped away, who are going to get their rental assistance stripped away.

I did a little math—and I lost my sheet, so I am going on memory for this math, which is dangerous for me—I found it. To qualify for SNAP, a household's gross monthly income must be below 130 percent of the Federal poverty line and their net monthly income below 100 percent. What is that?

For a household of one, that is net \$1,255. For a household of four, that is net \$2,600 a month. The average rent in Creighton Court in the city of Richmond, which is public housing, for a two-bedroom unit is \$1,103. For Gilpin