

people want. Over 90 percent of Americans want universal background checks. Mr. Speaker, 60 percent support an assault weapons ban, 75 percent support red flag laws, and over 83 percent support gun safety storage.

Some of my Republican colleagues will argue that guns don't kill people. People kill people. Anyone who does this must have mental health issues.

This is all the more reason for the background checks and the red flag laws. We cannot continue to act like nothing is wrong in America. We have a problem with gun violence and mass shootings in our country, and Congress must finally act.

Will enacting these laws eliminate mass shootings, gun violence, or suicides completely? No, but common-sense gun laws like this will make a difference, and it is a start.

This past weekend was one of the worst that I can remember. I spoke about the Brown University shooting and mentioned the soldiers in Syria. We also lost a great American and artist in Rob Reiner and his wife, Michele, this past weekend due to an act of violence.

Mr. Speaker, I must say I was appalled by the President's response to his death. It was nothing more than shameful and disrespectful and unbecoming of the person who is supposed to be the leader of our country.

I also send my condolences to the Australian people who suffered through their own mass shooting this past weekend, a mass shooting that was a hate crime that targeted the Jewish community in Australia with 15 people dead, including a 10-year-old girl and a Holocaust survivor.

Fortunately, in Australia, they are already talking about how they can change things to prevent this from happening again. I can only hope there will be similar action in our own country and Congress will finally act. If history proves us right, I very much doubt it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities towards the President.

CONGRATULATING TEXAS TECH RED RAIDERS

(Mr. ARRINGTON of Texas was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, as we say in west Texas: "Sun's up. Guns up." Our Texas Tech Red Raiders have gone through this football season, guns ablazing, and have taken the Big 12 by storm. They posted a historic 11-win regular season with an average victory margin of more than 35 points and their best year since 2008.

Now, after securing their outright Big 12 championship, the Red Raiders are knocking on the door of their first-ever national championship.

I congratulate Coach Joey McGuire, his tremendous staff, and the out-

standing student athletes at Texas Tech, all of whom represent the spirit of west Texas: tenacious, relentless, and 100 percent class and character.

Mr. Speaker, Texas Tech, I would argue, is America's team. It is a Main Street university in middle America made up of mostly kids from working families. It is a heartland culture that reflects our Nation's traditional faith and family values.

Like our pioneering fathers who braved the harsh elements to settle the Great Plains of west Texas, Red Raiders know how to work, how to fight, and never quit. They don't expect anybody to give them anything. They don't waste time complaining about being underrated or underestimated.

They know that respect is earned and not given. They know it is not about pleasing the crowd or the pundits. It is about giving their best to each other, to themselves, and to their university that they love.

I am proud to be a Red Raider. I am honored to represent Texas Tech in Congress. I am fired up for the country to know more about west Texas, the food, fuel, fiber, and football capital of the world.

Mr. Speaker, as for me and my house, we will be in Miami on New Year's Day with a lot of proud and rowdy Red Raiders cheering on America's team to win it all.

Guns up. Go, Red Raiders. Let's win that national championship.

BUILDING PEACE WITH HONOR

(Mr. HOYER of Maryland was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, this Chamber will soon be empty as Members leave for the holiday without having taken action to aid Ukraine, our friend, our ally, and a courageous people who want to be free.

The trenches in Donbas will not be empty, however. Ukrainian medic stations and hospitals will not be empty. The air-raid shelters beneath Kyiv, Odesa, and Kharkiv will not be empty.

Mr. Speaker, this administration is sleepwalking toward the edge of an abyss that will be difficult to escape. Neville Chamberlain once did the same. He returned from Munich and hoisted a piece of paper above his head that bore his signature and that of Adolf Hitler.

Without consulting Czechoslovakia, Chamberlain traded a fifth of its territory in exchange for Hitler's word that he would not invade. Chamberlain said that it would secure peace with honor, a peace for our time. Within 5 months, the Nazis occupied every square inch of Czechoslovakia. Within a year, they had added Poland. Within 2 years, German bombs were falling in London.

Just a few days after Chamberlain brandished Czechoslovakia's death warrant, Winston Churchill said: "The German dictator, instead of snatching the victuals from the table, has been content to have them served to him course by course."

Mr. Speaker, in that case, Hitler was the dictator. In our case, it is Putin.

Another dictator now hungers for his next course. Vladimir Putin did not stop with his invasion of Georgia or his campaign to separate Transnistria from Moldova. He did not stop with his 2014 annexation of Crimea, though perhaps he would have if America and the United Kingdom honored the Budapest Memorandum.

It is foolish and dangerous to think he will stop at the Donbas. The Russian bear is about to take its next bite, and Donald Trump is setting the table. Trump, Witkoff, Hegseth, VANCE, and Rubio have done everything to appease Putin, short of putting on a Russian uniform.

Their 28-point peace plan last month was a Russian menu. What concessions did Trump demand from Ukraine? He demanded it forfeit a fifth of its territory—including the land that Russia does not occupy—to its invader; that it cap the size of its military; and that it forego its right to join NATO, which I believe is the only measure that can truly guarantee Ukraine's security.

What has he demanded from Russia in exchange? Nada, zip, nothing. He has demanded no economic reparations for Ukraine, no requirement that Russia return the Ukrainian children it abducted, and no accountability for the war crimes Putin has committed. He has asked for Putin's promise not to invade again, one he has yet to make and one he would never keep.

This administration acts as though we have no leverage in this situation, as though NATO's \$1.8 trillion defense expenditures, 3.5 million troops, and combined GDP of \$54 trillion mean nothing.

America is not impotent, nor is NATO, nor is the West in this fight against fascism, and neither is this Congress. Over 300 of us in every one of 12 votes has cast its vote for Ukraine; the majority of Republicans on all but one of those votes.

We only need three more Republicans to sign onto the bipartisan discharge petition Ranking Member MEEKS and I put forward to bring the Ukraine Support Act to the floor for a vote. That legislation would undermine Russia's war machine and give Ukraine the support it needs to win this fight actually and psychologically.

Mr. Speaker, this House has taken twelve votes on past bills supporting Ukraine. An average of 80 percent of our Members have voted for every one of those. Yet we stand silent. We have not acted. We cannot build "Peace with Honor" on a promise from Putin. We can only achieve peace by awakening to our own power and to our own influence.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues, each of them who has supported Ukraine continuously in the past on almost every vote, to sign the discharge petition now. Let us not go home silent in the face of tyranny.

**CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS SPIRIT
IN SPOKANE, WASHINGTON**

(Mr. BAUMGARTNER of Washington was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. BAUMGARTNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the Christmas spirit in eastern Washington.

As a boy, I remember Christmastime in eastern Washington, sledding in my boyhood home of Colton, Washington, going on shopping trips with the family to Toys “R” Us in Spokane, and perhaps stopping off to go sledding in Manito Park or visiting Riverfront Park. Indeed, it is the best of America.

That spirit of Christmas continues in Spokane and in eastern Washington with its spirit of generosity and service. This year, Spokane has been selected as one of just 126 cities worldwide to host the Light the World Giving Machine, innovative vending machines in reverse that will allow families to purchase meals, warm clothing, hygiene items, or even chickens for neighbors in need here at home and around the globe.

From December 12 through January 12, visitors at Spokane Valley Mall can, with just a few taps, direct every dollar of their donations to trusted local charities like Second Harvest and global charities like CARE. This is eastern Washington at its best, people coming together to serve, to give, and to care for one another.

Since their launch in 2017, the Giving Machine initiative worldwide has helped raise tens of millions of dollars in donations, and now Spokane is part of that story of quiet, everyday kindness.

During this holiday season, eastern Washington is not just celebrating. It is stepping up to bless lives across our community and around the world. I am proud to represent a region that leads with generosity, and I encourage all who are able to visit the Light the World Giving Machine and to join in this spirit of giving.

CELEBRATING SPOKANE CHRISTMAS BUREAU

Mr. BAUMGARTNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the Spokane Christmas Bureau and their 79th year of serving eastern Washington families and making each holiday season brighter.

Coordinated by Catholic Charities Eastern Washington, Volunteers of America, and The Spokesman-Review, the Christmas Bureau runs on the generosity of local donors and volunteers who give their time, talents, and treasures.

Through these community efforts, the bureau provides grocery vouchers to put food on the table and gather toys and books so children can experience the simple joy of a Christmas gift.

The Christmas Bureau serves folks in need throughout the greater Spokane area, including Adams, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Stevens, Spokane, and Whitman Counties, making sure no child is forgotten and that no table is empty at Christmas.

Mr. Speaker, the Christmas Bureau reminds us what makes eastern Washington and the holidays so wonderful. It is neighbors stepping up for neighbors year after year.

SUPPORTING THE SALVATION ARMY

Mr. BAUMGARTNER. Mr. Speaker, over the last few weeks, many of us have walked past the familiar red kettles and heard the ringing bells of The Salvation Army outside our neighborhood grocery stores. Those kettles are just the tip of the iceberg of what The Salvation Army does for communities like mine in eastern Washington, not just at Christmas but all year long.

The donations collected outside of our local grocery stores are essential to funding key programs that serve our most vulnerable neighbors. In Spokane, The Salvation Army operates emergency foster care programs like Sally’s House, providing safe and loving shelter for children removed from abusive or unsafe homes and giving them stability at one of the most traumatic moments in their young lives.

This holiday season, The Salvation Army in Spokane is leading toy drives across the greater Spokane area, collecting gifts so that hundreds of local children, who might otherwise go without, will wake up to a present under the tree.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that many of us in this Chamber have seen someone outside our neighborhood grocery store ringing a bell right next to a red kettle. When we all go home for the holidays, let us take a moment to thank The Salvation Army volunteers in our communities for raising money for programs like Sally’s House and who are working every day to make our communities stronger.

**ENACTING REAL CHANGE FOR
GUN VIOLENCE**

(Mr. KENNEDY of New York was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, at this moment two families of Brown University students and 15 families in Sydney, Australia, are experiencing an anguish and heartbreak that is immeasurable, yet far too familiar.

Once again, we have seen hatred rear its ugly head in the form of gun violence, this time with 2 students murdered and 9 more injured at Brown, and 15 murdered and dozens injured in Sydney.

This comes on the heels of the 13th anniversary of the Sandy Hook shooting that took 26 victims, including 20 children.

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Last year, those 20 beautiful children who were violently taken from their families should have been graduating from high school. This year, they should have been coming home for the December break, seeing their childhood friends, and telling their parents about

all that they learned and experienced in college. Those are experiences that their families have been robbed of.

We, as a society, have been robbed of all that they may have accomplished throughout their lives: families that will never be formed, careers that will never be, memories that will never happen. The families of the victims of those two horrific shootings will experience that same agony year after year and decade after decade.

My own community of Buffalo knows it all too well. On May 14, 2022, a racist, white supremacist, terrorist gunman drove nearly 3 hours to our community, the City of Good Neighbors, and opened fire at the only full-service grocery store in a prominently Black neighborhood.

Mr. Speaker, 10 lives were callously and heartlessly stolen from us with three more, including the son of a dear friend of mine, critically injured. Our city will never be the same again.

It doesn’t have to be this way. We can choose another path.

In New York State, we did just that. We ensured that military-grade body armor stays only in the hands of law enforcement and our Armed Forces. We implemented enhanced red flag laws and universal background checks. We raised the age to own firearms from 18 to 21, and we banned assault rifles.

We know these laws work in New York, and we know they work everywhere else, but they are severely weakened by the flow of guns across State borders due to the lack of Federal regulation.

In the United States, for far too long, some have treated gun violence as a part of life. My Democratic colleagues and I reject that. We refuse to accept a reality in which our schools, our houses of worship, our movie theaters, our grocery stores, our government offices, our workplaces, our parades, our malls, and our nightclubs are treated as if they haven’t been the scenes of horrific, deadly attacks.

The time for action is now. I implore this body to join me in supporting the assault weapons ban; universal background checks; stronger red flag laws; ending gun trafficking across State lines; and, among others, my bill, the Lieutenant Aaron Salter, Jr., Responsible Body Armor Possession Act.

I beg my colleagues not to accept the status quo and to fight for a safer Nation. We can and should do so much better for our children and future generations.

I pray for the lives of those who were lost this past weekend. I pray that our country sees the light and enacts real, substantive change that will end the scourge of gun violence across our Nation.

**RECOGNIZING FLORIDA TECH
PANTHERS**

(Mr. HARIDOPOLOS of Florida was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)