

Throughout his career, Bob championed legislation that strengthened mining, paper companies, and logging. He fought for the workers who make these industries possible and for the communities that rely on them.

It would be hard to find another Minnesota State legislator who has done more for the Northland than “The Old Trapper” himself.

As he reaches this milestone, we honor not only his longevity but his extraordinary service, his unwavering dedication, and the legacy he leaves for generations of Minnesotans.

□ 1740

#### NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

(Mr. HARRIS of North Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HARRIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, every day across this country, law enforcement officers respond to calls that most of us hope we never have to face: violence, danger, tragedy, and moments where lives are on the line. While others run away from danger, they run toward it.

To the brave men and women in law enforcement who answer that call: We thank you.

Every single day they put on that badge, unaware of the dangers that may lie ahead. Yet, they still stand ready to serve, time and time again.

While most Americans are asleep, they stand watch. When chaos erupts, they are the first to respond. When fear takes over a community, law enforcement officers are the line between danger and safety.

During this National Police Week, let us honor the courage, sacrifice, and unwavering commitment of the men and women in blue who keep our communities safe.

To every officer across North Carolina’s Eighth District and across the Nation, I stand to say: Thank you. Thank you for your courage and your service. Thank you for every holiday missed, every late-night shift worked, and every time you stepped into harm’s way to protect someone else.

My hope and prayer this Police Week is that everyone who sees a police officer will shake their hand and thank them for their service. The men and women behind the badge deserve to know that this country stands with them, supports them, and is grateful for their service.

#### FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TOPS SUPERMARKET SHOOTING IN BUFFALO, NEW YORK

(Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. KENNEDY of New York was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.)

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that

all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to submit extraneous material in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KNOTT). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart as we commemorate the fourth anniversary of the Tops Supermarket shooting in my community of Buffalo, New York.

On May 14, 2022, 4 years ago today, a racist white supremacist terrorist traveled more than 2½ hours to the only grocery store in a predominantly Black neighborhood on the east side of Buffalo to carry out a targeted act of pure hatred.

Motivated by racism and hate in his heart, the gunman entered Tops Friendly Markets with enhanced body armor and an AR-style rifle. He shot 13 people, 10 of them fatally.

On this solemn anniversary, we remember the precious souls we lost 4 years ago today:

Andre Mackniel, beloved father and brother;

Celestine Chaney, a cancer survivor and grandmother to six beautiful children;

Geraldine Talley, a proud mother, a sister to eight siblings, and an aunt;

Heyward Patterson, a deacon at the State Tabernacle Church of God in Christ in Buffalo;

Kat Massey, a civil rights activist, volunteer, and fierce advocate for gun violence prevention;

Margus Morrison, a father and an aide to the Buffalo Public Schools;

Pearl Young, a teacher in the Buffalo School District and pillar in her church community;

Roberta Drury, an active community member, sister, and caregiver;

Ruth Whitfield, a devoted caretaker, wife, mother, and grandmother; and

Lieutenant Aaron Salter, Jr., a public servant, retired Buffalo police officer, and a hero who sacrificed his life that day to serve those around him.

In just 123 seconds, those 10 innocent lives were stolen from us, marking one of the darkest days in Buffalo’s history and in America’s history.

The perpetrator, radicalized by white supremacist content online, fired a barrage of 50 shots, hellbent on one goal: killing as many Black community members as possible, all while live streaming it to the world.

It was a sick and twisted act of hatred and racist violence in America.

Today is a difficult day for our community, for the people of western New York, and for our country, as we mourn those we lost due to this senseless act of racist gun violence.

Yet, the carnage on that day could have been far worse if it weren’t for the heroic actions of Lieutenant Aaron Salter, Jr., a 30-year veteran of the Buffalo Police Department.

That afternoon, Lieutenant Salter was working as a security guard at Tops Friendly Market. When he heard the gunshots, Lieutenant Salter acted without hesitation and leapt into action to protect our community, firing at the shooter and hitting his target, but because this hate-filled terrorist was armed with enhanced body armor and tactical gear, Lieutenant Salter’s shots did not penetrate, and he, too, was murdered.

Lieutenant Salter died a hero, buying other patrons precious seconds to hide or escape as a result of his unwavering courage and his willingness to protect those in harm’s way.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask those listening here throughout the Capitol Complex and at home to join me to pause for a moment of silence to honor the 10 individuals who should be with us here today.

Mr. Speaker, because of this hateful act, Buffalo joined an ever-growing list of communities that have been scarred by mass shootings. From Newtown to Monterey Park, to Parkland, to Uvalde, and so many places in between, countless communities across our country, and to Buffalo, we are united today in mourning and in commemoration as we work to ensure that we one day will live in a world where these hateful acts will not happen.

When Columbine happened 27 years ago, there was a national promise that we would do everything possible to prevent another tragedy like it, but, yet, entire generations of children have now grown up with the normalization of mass shootings.

That reality cannot become normal. We must not allow this to become a permanent reality.

On the fourth anniversary of this tragedy in Buffalo, we must use this opportunity to advocate for the advancement of commonsense gun violence prevention legislation in the name of every single person we have lost because of a lack of it.

We must condemn acts of hateful, racist violence in all forms, and we must come together as Americans to ensure that our supermarkets, our places of worship, our schools, and everywhere else in our community are free from the scourge of gun violence.

This body has a moral obligation to take action. Our charge, on both sides of the aisle, must be to enact the commonsense reforms that the vast majority of Americans overwhelmingly support in order to keep our community safe and prosperous.

□ 1750

We must enact a permanent assault weapons ban and make sure that military-grade body armor is only in the hands of our Armed Forces and law enforcement. We must crack down on ghost guns, straw purchasing, and deadly accessories that turn handguns into semiautomatic weapons. We must close the Charleston loophole. We must expand red flag laws.

We must strengthen our mental health support networks. We must reaffirm our commitment to ending the gun violence epidemic that plagues this country once and for all.

Today, you will hear from Members of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force. My colleagues from all over the country will join me in honoring the victims of the Top Supermarket shooting, condemning racially motivated violence in all forms, and calling for an end to the gun violence epidemic that plagues this country.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to yield to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. TLAIB).

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, as we stand here, I know the community is trying to heal as we mark the over 4-year anniversary since 10 of our Black neighbors were targeted and murdered while grocery shopping at a supermarket in Buffalo.

I think it is important to understand there was intentionality here and how the killer chose the location. We all know their lives were stolen due to racism, extremism, and the unchecked epidemic of gun violence plaguing our country.

I always must ask this to my colleagues: How many more families need to mourn before Congress acts? How many more children need to lose their lives before we act?

Every day, people are killed by guns in mass shootings, domestic violence incidents, suicides, and preventable accidents. Entire communities are traumatized again and again by this violence.

Far too often, the victims are children. I stand in honor of a 9-year-old boy in Oakland County, Michigan, who accidentally shot himself in the face with an unsecured firearm. I stand in honor of a 6-year-old girl in Detroit, Michigan, who was accidentally shot and killed by an unsecured handgun in March. Even in that same weekend, another 6-year-old girl was hospitalized after she accidentally shot herself with an unsecured firearm. In Wayne County alone, 39 children have been killed or injured since 2020 after finding unsecured firearms.

It is not just mass shootings. It is also a fact that we must take measures to protect and store these guns. Protecting our loved ones, especially our babies, should not be a partisan issue.

I call on this Congress to act on gun safety legislation, including the Safe Storage Saves Lives Act. It would require firearm sellers to provide every purchaser with a gun lock. I always used to raise it and show people that it cost \$10 to secure the gun.

The Safe Storage Saves Lives Act would be commonsense gun safety legislation. It is sitting right here in Congress, waiting for a vote. While we wait for a vote, families are grieving loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, I ask and demand that our Congress have the courage to act to end this madness.

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. LATIMER).

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman KENNEDY for his compassion and his humanity.

This tragedy occurred in Buffalo, and it was a racist crime against Black people in Buffalo. This crime is a crime against humanity, people of all ethnic backgrounds, and it is a crime that could happen in any place across this country.

My home is 375 miles away from the site of this crime. Yet, we, too, are affected by the same policies that have allowed this tragedy to happen.

The young man who committed this crime, motivated by racism and radicalized on the internet, drove 200 miles, half the distance between my home and Congressman KENNEDY's home. He drove 200 miles to particularly target this supermarket in an African-American neighborhood. What depth of depravity causes a human being to do that?

All of us, whether our skin is white or black, whether we trace our heritage to Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, or Europe, have to see this as a crime against all humans. It is dehumanizing to take a weapon of mass destruction into a supermarket to kill people who are shopping, who are just there doing the average thing that we all do every day.

As my colleague from Michigan pointed out, there is legislation in this Chamber that needs to become law. It needs to have support not just from people of color but from those of us who represent every area and every demographic in this country. The next victims could be anywhere in this country.

It is important to understand that the people of Buffalo have allies all across New York State. We grieve with them. We stand by our brothers and sisters from Buffalo, as we do those in all the sad places that Congressman KENNEDY referenced.

Mr. Speaker, we must make a commitment that, out of this tragedy and on this anniversary, there will be a resolve to make sure this doesn't happen again. We have to act quickly. The efforts to warp people's minds and to convince them that violence is the future of America are moving very quickly, even as those of us who believe in peace and brotherhood have to respond.

I thank Congressman KENNEDY for his leadership and friendship.

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman LATIMER for his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. MCBATH).

Mrs. MCBATH. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman KENNEDY for gathering us here this evening on this very somber anniversary. He truly is honoring his community in Buffalo very well. I actually have family members in his district. He is their Member of Congress.

Four years ago, 10 innocent people lost their lives in an act of hate at a place that we all know very well. We frequent our grocery stores all the time. A man decided that a group of people just simply didn't deserve to live because of the color of their skin.

The shooter in Buffalo used an assault weapon so that he could kill as many people as possible in as little time as possible. We should all think that this is absolutely horrifying.

Thankfully, though, he was brought to justice because our justice system took action and sentenced him to life in prison, where he is now. The families of these grandmothers, fathers, sons, and sisters were actually able to take solace in knowing that something was done to ensure this man would never harm their communities again.

My heart remains with all the families as they remember their loved ones. I still pray for every single family of every tragedy because I know exactly how they feel. That is what continues to drive me to action.

These families deserve better. Every family that we lose across this Nation deserves better. No one should be subjected to violence while they go about their daily lives, running errands, going to church, going to the movie theater, going to school, or going to festivities.

Weapons of war simply do not belong on our streets. They don't belong in our churches and definitely not in our grocery stores.

The assault weapons ban, which I have held since 2023, has proven to prevent death by firearms. I have also introduced the GOSAFE Act, a lifesaving bill that focuses on the internal operations of semiautomatic guns, not the cosmetic components that gun sellers tend to modify to find loopholes.

□ 1800

It is so far past time that we pass both of these bills and so many other pieces of good, comprehensive gun safety legislation to save lives and to ensure that no more families experience the excruciating pain of losing their loved ones in a senseless act of gun violence.

This country deserves better. Our kids deserve better. The victims of this senseless shooting, they deserve better, every one of them. These pictures, these human beings deserved better, and they should be with us right now enjoying their lives today. These men and these women, they deserve to see their grandchildren and children growing up, to make their own marks in the world.

The Gun Violence Prevention Task Force and Democrats have made progress towards a safer country with helping to pass historic legislation, but we have got to continue to stand for gun safety in this country.

We are not going to forget those that were lost in Buffalo, and I assure you I will not forget my son who was killed from unnecessary gun violence. I will

not forget all the children at Sandy Hook, and I will not forget all the children at Parkland, and I will most certainly not forget the everyday gun violence and people that are dying in our communities every day. Nobody even knows their names. They don't get the big headlines in the newspaper. No one talks about them nationally, but their families suffer in silence. We are not going to forget those that were lost in Buffalo, and we are going to continue to fight to end gun violence because hate absolutely has no place in this country.

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman MCBATH for her extraordinary courage and leadership in taking that pain of hers and her family's and turning it into triumph and turning it into positive action for our communities and our Nation. We are indebted to her.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. IVEY).

Mr. IVEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from New York for putting this together today. I thank the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force and the Congressional Black Caucus for joining in as well in support of this effort.

The tragedy in Buffalo, unfortunately, is not a rare event. As you just heard from my colleague, 10 people were gunned down using an assault weapon that had been sold to an 18-year-old, an AR-15 that had been modified. He gunned them down in cold blood, and he drove 200 miles to get to them because he wanted to kill African Americans. I guess that was the closest he could get to find them, and that is what he did that day.

He had been inspired, sadly, by another similar type of shooting, a mass shooting in Charleston, South Carolina, just a few years before at the Mother Emanuel Church. In fact, my colleague from New York and I had a chance to go visit there just a few months ago, where nine people were gunned down. The person had come into the church, sat through Bible study with the African Americans that he later gunned down, and killed nine of them.

I know the question that we have now. We had a long list of these that happened on such a regular basis that sometimes people are numbed by it, forget to keep track of it. It is a sad day that we have reached from that standpoint.

A version of that too that I heard the other day in the hallways here is the shooting that took place at the hotel where President Trump was about to speak. One of the things that the person remarked to me was that the older people were scared by the gunfire, but the younger folks were not. I kind of wondered about that. Then I thought about it, and I said: Well, this is the generation that has grown up, and instead of doing fire drills, they have done active shooting drills. They have been trained tragically in what to do when you hear gunfire like that.

Schools now sell bulletproof backpacks to protect kids—"protect kids"—from this kind of gun violence and bulletproof chalkboards. Think about that. How did we get to this place?

Then the next question, of course, is: How do we get out of it? We have talked a little bit about some of the solutions to gun violence. I have got to say that my Republican colleagues, sadly, are not in support of nearly any of them that I am aware of. The ghost gun piece, in particular, was a shock for me. Ghost guns, as you may know, are untraceable guns. The only reason somebody would want a gun that is untraceable is if you want to commit a crime and you want to make sure that law enforcement cannot find you.

Why these guns would be legal is beyond me, but there was a period where they were. We couldn't pass legislation to ban them, so the Biden administration reached out to the ATF, which passed a regulation that did ban them. The Trump Supreme Court, to my surprise, upheld that regulation.

I thought, well, maybe it is a new day. Yesterday, in the Committee on Appropriations, I am sorry to say, my Republican colleagues passed language that would repeal the ban on ghost guns. The sad thing about it is I think they were trying to do it sort of in the cover of dark because they didn't offer an actual piece of legislation that would have hearings and the like to do the same, because they would have to stand up and defend it there, so they just tried to slip this in.

This is a tragic moment, I think, given all of the deaths, all of the killings, all of the murders that we have seen year after year and now decade after decade here in the United States.

I also would add this. We found some things that do work. You heard about the assault weapons ban. I know that is a bridge too far for many of my Republican colleagues—I guess all of them actually, because none of them will even cosponsor legislation like that. I put together a bill that is called Raise the Age, and it would raise the age from 18 to 21 to buy an assault-style weapon. It is already required that you be 21 to buy handguns, and that was a bill that was put in place by the Ronald Reagan administration.

I thought maybe we can get some support for this. There was not one Republican cosponsor for that bill. The shooter in Buffalo was 18 years old, and he bought the gun by himself without anybody to monitor it. The shooter in Charleston, he was 21, but he should have been caught by the background check. He slipped through, though, because it was underfunded and they didn't have enough people to make sure they caught and did all of the checks. Even though he should have been flagged and he was, they didn't have the bodies to do the follow through. He got the gun, and we know what he did after that.

Then, lastly, on this point, some of the things that we found that also work is not just enforcement. It is also intervention and prevention. We found grants that help with violence in the street, to reduce it. They help by reaching young people before they get too deep into trouble or help to get them out before they get too far along with it. But the Trump administration has cut 400 of those grants worth \$815 million. The funds that would be used to help prevent street violence or, even worse, gun violence in our schools has been cut back.

I say this on this day of remembrance: I call upon all of my colleagues—I know we don't agree on everything. In fact, we don't agree on a lot, but let's see if we can find a solution to this. My Republican colleagues want to protect the Second Amendment. That is great, but we have got to be able to find a way to protect the Second Amendment and protect second-graders at the same time. Let's get this done. Let's get this done.

□ 1810

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman IVEY very much for his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY).

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman KENNEDY so much for gathering us.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, I rise today to remember the 10 lives stolen, the 3 people injured, and the survivors of the hateful mass shooting in Buffalo 4 years ago.

I remember their lives, but I also urge Congress to actually do something meaningful to honor them and all survivors of gun violence. Congress passed the first Federal gun safety law in nearly 30 years, but the American people cannot wait another 30 years.

There are pieces of legislation waiting to be passed and programs that are waiting for funding that have already been approved. Over 110 Americans are dying every single day. Instead, the Trump administration has only exacerbated this public health crisis and fanned the flames of racist rhetoric and violence.

We have witnessed hateful rhetoric turn into hate crimes for far too long. We must condemn racism, full stop. Moments of silence are not enough. Thoughts and prayers are not enough. The victims and survivors of the shooting in Buffalo and across the country deserve better from Congress. They deserve action.

We need universal background checks, red flag laws, safe storage, assault weapons ban, community violence intervention funding, and better support for survivors. The gun lobby responsible for putting profits over people's safety must be held accountable.

I have asked for about 13 years now in Congress just who or how many have

to be maimed or die before we take action. It is not first graders. It is not people worshipping in their church. It is not a young lady playing in the park. It is not a young man coming out of choir practice. It is not a young man riding on the CTA bus. It is not even Members of Congress that have moved us, but I will not stop fighting until everyone, no matter where they live, the color of their skin, who they love, or even how they vote, we all need to live free from gun violence.

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman KELLY for her remarks.

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

Mrs. MCIVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to stand alongside my colleague Congressman TIM KENNEDY to commemorate the fourth anniversary of the Tops supermarket shooting in Buffalo, New York.

Ten people, ten loved ones, ten members of a community left home to run errands on what should have been a normal day. They showed up to Tops to buy groceries for their families. Like most of us, this was one of the last places they would ever think that they would be in danger.

That day, a white supremacist walked into a Tops supermarket and turned an average store on a day into a site of terror. This was racial terrorism. The shooter was radicalized by white supremacists on the internet to the point he livestreamed the attack.

It gets to the point where our Nation continues to see history repeat itself because we refuse to learn from the past.

Across the aisle, people refuse to accept that an 18 year old should not have access to a military grade firearm. They refuse to accept that when white supremacy is allowed and normalized on the internet, the consequences are devastating.

Buffalo is a painful reminder of the racism and gun violence crisis affecting all of our Nation. We are at the point where families live with the sound of gunshots as background noise and children are taught lockdown drills in school before they fully understand and learn algebra.

The worst part of it all is that our Nation has started to treat this like it is normal, like there is nothing we can do about it.

We cannot keep treating it like an inevitable part of American life, but if we only commemorate and remember names and cities without actions, we are disrespecting the families who wake up with the trauma of losing their loved ones every day. Thoughts without policy are not enough. The families in Buffalo should not have to watch us commemorate this tragedy year after year without meaningful change.

Tonight, we honor the victims of Buffalo. We stand with Congressman KENNEDY who is their voice here. We mourn

with their families. We condemn white supremacy and racially motivated violence that is showing its face far too often.

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman MCIVER and all of my colleagues that have joined me here this evening.

The western New York community, the national community was impacted in a gut-wrenching way on May 14, 2022.

I vividly remember the minutes, hours, and days after the shooting. As it occurred, I was with my family out of town when I received a call from Zeneta Everhart, then my director of diversity, equity, and inclusion in my New York State Senate office, who is now president pro tempore of the Buffalo Common Council, representing the Masten District.

She herself had just received the most awful phone call any parent can imagine. Her only child, Zaire, an employee at Tops, called her screaming and crying. "Mom, Mom, I have been shot."

Zaire had been doing what any parent would want their child to be doing: He was helping an elderly customer load her groceries into her car. That is when the first shots were fired in the parking lot.

Zaire was shot and went to the ground, unable to get himself up, and in that moment, finding the courage and strength in being able to remove himself from the situation and run for help.

Time stood still. Nothing prepares a parent for that call and nothing prepares a friend on how to best be there to provide comfort and support. Zaire was the only Black person shot that day who survived. By the grace of God he survived.

He had been hit in the neck and the shoulder with a hollow point bullet shot by an AR-15 rifle. He is now alive and thriving, giving all glory to God, but the physical and emotional scars will live with him and his family forever.

Frantic phone calls to friends, family, colleagues in government, and law enforcement followed for me as we struggled to understand what had happened.

I immediately got into my car, left my family, and drove 5 hours back to Buffalo. I had to see my friend. I had to be with our community, and I had to make sure that she and they knew that they had the support of our entire community every step of the way.

When I arrived back to Buffalo to be with Zeneta and our neighbors as we processed the gravity of what had just occurred, our whole city was going through the same process, feeling an excruciating combination of emotions: despair, heartbreak, rage, anger, confusion, but also resolve.

In the face of one of the most unimaginable tragedies and hardships that the City of Good Neighbors, Buffalo, New York, had ever experienced, we received support not just from each

other but statewide, nationally, and even internationally.

We saw an almost immediate call to action to enact gun violence prevention legislation at the State level in the New York State legislature just days later. It was legislation that I was incredibly proud to help craft and pass.

□ 1820

We demanded action federally, including when I joined Zeneta here on the Hill as she testified before the House, along with the son of Ruth Whitfield, another victim, former Buffalo Fire Commissioner Garnell Whitfield, and the families of the victims of the Uvalde massacre, which spurred the first Federal gun violence action in decades.

We saw a devastated community finding the resolve to come together as one with compassion, solidarity, and resilience. We met hatred and evil with love and friendship because love always conquers hate.

There were food donations for a neighborhood that was reeling and had lost its only supermarket. World Central Kitchen was on the ground within days, ensuring that a grieving community could break bread together over a hot meal and begin to process the trauma they had endured.

We had visits from President Biden and Vice President Harris, reminding us that an entire nation stood by our side. We saw memorials sprout up almost immediately, a raw display of the pain that we felt. We saw the creation of a 5/14 Memorial Foundation and Living Memorial and Healing Center, dedicated to honoring the lives of those lost and supporting the victims' families.

As we buried our 10 neighbors, we honored each of them for the lives that they lived. We committed to ourselves that their memories would not be forgotten and that their legacies would live on.

I personally promised each family at every funeral that their loved ones would not die in vain, that their memories would spur us as a community and, ultimately, as a nation into action to prevent further tragedies like this from occurring.

Under Councilwoman Everhart's leadership, Buffalo has established an Office of Gun Violence Prevention, showing that even in the face of Federal inaction, communities can still take charge of their own future.

We continue to witness a never-ending pursuit of justice for the innocent victims who were gunned down.

Today, while the trauma for many still lingers, we are reminded of that resolve, the unwavering sense of community and dedication to one another, united in mourning but motivated by the shared desire to enact change. Part of that change, as mentioned by my colleagues, is enacting gun violence prevention legislation.

Mr. Speaker, in memory of Lieutenant Salter and his fellow victims who

died on this day 4 years ago, I am proud to lead the Aaron Salter, Jr., Responsible Body Armor Possession Act. This bill, which I am proud to co-lead with Congresswoman GRACE MENG, bans the sale and ownership of enhanced body armor—hard-shell, military-grade, rifle-resistant body armor that was used to carry out the Tops mass shooting. This is body armor that should only be in the hands of our military and law enforcement.

On 5/14, the terrorist acted in just 123 seconds to murder 10 innocent individuals and severely injure 3 others, all thanks to the enhanced body armor that protected him from Lieutenant Salter's shots and an assault rifle that allowed him to fire rapidly. No civilian should have access to military-grade body armor, equipment that is designed for war, not our streets.

The Lieutenant Aaron Salter, Jr., Responsible Body Armor Possession Act ensures that no civilian can possess military-grade body armor ever again—armor that has been used in mass shootings across the United States: Sutherland Springs, Texas; Aurora, Colorado; Boulder, Colorado; San Bernardino, California; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The list goes on and on and on.

Through this legislation, we can ensure that enhanced body armor never falls into the wrong hands again. With the support of 27 of my House Democratic cosponsors, currently, and growing, I call on the U.S. House of Representatives to pass this critical, commonsense legislation.

The legislation and our action must not end there. Gun violence legislation can help stop mass shootings. We have deep wounds in this country that we must work on together to heal. While gun violence legislation can help stop mass shootings, I believe, with every fiber of my being, that we cannot discuss May 14, 2022, without acknowledging the underlying cause—the scourge of white supremacy, a legacy of our Nation's original sin of slavery.

Before the advent of this Nation, families were torn apart and trafficked across the Atlantic in unimaginably torturous conditions to be sold to the highest bidder, treated like livestock. Making it all worse, it was legal. From the three-fifths compromise to the Fugitive Slave Act to the Dred Scott decision, an entire legal framework was set up to enforce white supremacy, and I am just scratching the surface.

Even after the Civil War, when slavery was abolished at the cost of hundreds of thousands of lives, and despite the passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, that legal framework continued under the guise of Jim Crow laws—grandfather clauses, poll taxes, literacy tests—all legal but deeply immoral.

It continued in the shadows through hate groups like the Ku Klux Klan. It took our country another century to pass the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act. Yet, still, that original sin remains.

It remains in the tacit racism we see through redlining and food deserts. It remains with the Supreme Court's evisceration of the Voting Rights Act, allowing States to break up communities of color and silence their voices. It remains with the vile concepts like the great replacement theory, often peddled by anti-American voices on the far right, including people in Congress whom we serve with today.

With the advent of social media, we have thrown gasoline on the fire, allowing this toxic worldview to spread even faster, with dire consequences.

That hatred led a man to plan this massacre in Buffalo 4 years ago. He purchased his weapon and body armor. He modified his rifle and purchased some of the deadliest ammunition available, crossing State lines. He researched his target, drove nearly 3 hours, and opened fire. He bears responsibility for his actions, and he will never see the light of day as a free man again.

We must raise our children to view their fellow human beings with dignity, with kindness, with empathy, and with acceptance. If we don't, then the list of hate-motivated shootings will continue to grow. More cities will be added to the list after Buffalo, El Paso, Pittsburgh, Charleston, and Orlando.

Nobody believes that we can legislate hatred away, but the policies advanced here in Washington have cascading effects across our country. When we allow communities of color to be silenced, we are strengthening hate. When we stick our heads in the sand and push forward a rose-colored version of our history and whitewash our history, we only enable bigotry to take root.

When we refuse to learn from the lessons of the past, we are dooming ourselves to a future filled with violence, and that is something we can control. It is something we can legislate. I invite my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and from all political points of view to join us in this fight, or else this carnage will only continue.

□ 1830

Mr. Speaker, in honor of these beautiful souls, these wonderful and beautiful souls that were lost, I would like to read into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a little bit about each of them.

Lieutenant Aaron Salter, Jr., a hero and public servant who saved lives that day as he confronted the shooter without hesitation.

He was a loving husband, father, friend, and colleague to many over his years in public service. In his spare time, he was a musician. He took a keen interest in cars. He enjoyed taking trips with his family.

He will be remembered not just for the selflessly heroic actions he took that day to save lives but for the person he was and his contributions to our community.

His memory lives on in each of us as a shining example of citizenship, bravery, and love.

Andre Mackneil was at the supermarket on that fateful day to buy a surprise birthday cake for his 3-year-old son, Andre Mackneil, Jr. He never came home with his son's birthday cake.

Andre loved basketball, playing the guitar, writing poems, and listening to music. But most of all, he loved his family. He loved his children. He loved his siblings. He loved his grandchildren.

Today, 4 years later, Andre's loved ones are forced to reckon with grief every day as they navigate his absence.

Celestine Chaney was a devoted mother to her son, Wayne, a loving grandmother of six, and the youngest of four sisters. She was survived by her partner and fiancé, Raymond Johnson.

A fighter in every sense of the word, she had beaten breast cancer and survived multiple brain aneurysms, odds that would have broken most.

But on a day like any other, while picking up ingredients for the strawberry shortcake she was making for her family, she was taken from this world far too soon.

Geraldine Talley, known as Gerri to her friends and family, was 62 years old. She was a devoted member of our community who worked at a nonprofit assisting people with mental illness and related substance abuse issues.

She loved to cook for her family and friends. She was at Tops on 5/14 shopping for a few ingredients for a weekly waterfront picnic with her fiancé.

Gerri left behind her children, Genicia Smith and Mark Tally, Jr.; a stepdaughter, Marquish Jacobs; four siblings; and her beloved fiancé, Gregory Allen.

Katherine Massey, known to many as Kat, was 72 years old. Kat worked for 40 years for Blue Cross Blue Shield and was always committed to the betterment of our community.

She was a longtime campaigner against gun violence, founding We Are Women Warriors with her friends Betty Jean Grant and Dr. Eva Doyle. She was a regular contributor to the Buffalo Challenger and The Buffalo Criterion.

Kat was also an active resident in Buffalo's Fruit Belt neighborhood, helping to form a block club and successfully fighting for the creation of a new public park on her home street of Cherry Street.

She is survived by her siblings and her nieces and nephews.

Heyward Patterson was 67 years old. He was in his truck waiting for a friend he drove to Tops to pick up groceries, something he often did for those in need.

A deeply devoted servant of God, Heyward was a deacon at the State Tabernacle Church of God in Christ in Buffalo.

According to his fellow churchgoers, Deacon Patterson was often the first one to arrive and the last to leave. He helped open and close the church, clean, shovel, and he volunteered in every capacity, including in the church's soup kitchen.

He is survived by his three children, his beloved wife, as well as his parents, siblings, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Margus Morrison, a beloved and devoted father, built his life in Buffalo raising his children with his companion of 25 years, Regina Patterson, and serving as an aid for the Buffalo public schools.

Margus was just 52 years old when his life was stolen from us. He was known as a reliable and steady presence in our community who was always there when his loved ones needed him.

Margus' family and friends remember a kind and generous person whose sense of humor and unwavering support defined every moment they shared with him.

Pearl Young, was a mother, a grandmother, a great-grandmother, and the devoted wife of Oliver Young, Jr.

A graduate of the University of Buffalo, Pearl served as a substitute teacher at Buffalo Public Schools for 20 years.

In her free time she was active with the Good Samaritan Church of God and Christ in Cheektowaga where she taught Sunday school and volunteered at the parish's food pantry.

She was the loving mother of James, Pamela, Damon and sister of Annie Ruth Winston and Jean Craig. She was a grandmother to 10 and a great-grandmother to 7.

Roberta Drury was 32 years old. She moved to Buffalo to help care for her brother who was recovering from his battle with leukemia. She was murdered while picking up groceries for him.

Robbie, as she was called growing up, was the kind soul defined by her unwavering love for family and a smile that was known to light up a room.

She was survived by her parents, her grandfather, her beloved siblings, as well as numerous aunts, uncles, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Ruth Whitfield was the mother of our community. Ruth Whitfield was 86 years old. She was a longtime parishioner at Durham Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church where she sang in the choir.

She was a devoted wife, caring for her husband and soulmate of 68 years, Garnell Whitfield.

Earlier that day on May 14, Ruth had visited her husband at the nursing home just as she had done every day and had made a stop at the grocery store on her way home.

She left behind her husband and their children along with nine grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and five great-great-grandchildren.

May all of their souls rest in peace. Our city, our State, our community, and our country mourn with them, but we are driven in their memory to do better for all of us and for future generations that we will never meet.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for joining me here today to honor the souls that we lost on May 14, 2022, 4 years ago today.

I want to thank the Congressional Black Caucus and the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force for joining in as well in commemorating this fourth anniversary of the Tops Friendly Markets massacre.

Today, we honor the victims and their families, and we urge this body to pass meaningful gun violence prevention legislation to ensure we live in a country free from tragedies like 5/14.

May God bless their souls. May God bless all of us. May God bless the United States of America.

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

#### REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN OFFICERS

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. RUTHERFORD of Florida was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.)

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I am here tonight to celebrate Police Week, the National Police Week celebration for the police officers who have given their lives in service to their communities.

This is a very bipartisan hour that we are going to have, and I am glad and proud to have with us here on the same side JOSH GOTTHEIMER from New Jersey who is, without a doubt, I think, one of the most supportive of our law enforcement officers in the Chamber. I have always enjoyed working with JOSH.

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Mr. Speaker, I will begin with this quote:

"As a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to serve mankind; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence and disorder; and to respect the constitutional rights of all men to liberty, equality, and justice."

That is the first line of the Law Enforcement Officer's Code of Ethics, a code every officer whose name is etched into the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial lived and died by.

Today, I rise to honor the 363 fallen officers whose names were added to the wall this year, including 10 officers from Florida.

Sadly, these officers are joining over 24,000 of their brothers and sisters whose names are already etched into that wall.

Each fallen officer said goodbye to their loved ones as they put on their gun and badge to protect and serve their community, not knowing if they would ever return home. They stood as a shield between the vulnerable citizens that they vowed to protect and those intent on doing them harm.

Of the 363 officers added this year, 111 were killed in the line of duty in 2025, which is 111 too many.

Ambushes and unprovoked attacks on our Nation's law enforcement offi-

cers are happening at an alarming rate, making the job of a law enforcement officer even more dangerous.

Almost daily in 2025, an officer was shot in the line of duty, totaling 347 shot, and 45 of those officers died. Specifically, there were 67 separate ambush-style attacks on law enforcement officers which left 90 officers shot and 22 of them fatally.

There was also over 90,000 officer assaults last year, indicating a rate of 13.8 assaults per 100 officers, the highest officer assault rate in 10 years.

This violence upon our officers is unacceptable, and ambushes on our officers must stop. That is why I want to make it clear to the criminal element who are intent on attacking our officers, if you target law enforcement, Congress will target you.

This Congress, JOSH GOTTHEIMER and I introduced the Protect and Serve Act, a bipartisan bill to increase penalties on those who target, ambush, and harm our officers. I urge all of my colleagues to support passage of this very important legislation.

It is our responsibility to protect those who protect us. Of the 111 officers killed in the line of duty this past year, I would like to take just a minute to honor a few of them.

On July 23, Ohio's Lorain Police Department Officers Phillip C. Wagner and Peter Gale were taking their lunch break in their police vehicle when a 28-year-old man with a high-powered rifle opened fire on them and later a responding officer, Brent Payne. The officers were able to return fire, killing the heavily armed assailant who had ambushed the two patrol cars parked at the end of a dead-end street.

Officers Gale and Payne were critically injured but made recoveries. Sadly, Officer and United States Marine Corps veteran Phillip C. Wagner's end of watch was July 24, 2025.

My thoughts and prayers are with his family, including his wife and three children, his friends, and the men and women of the Lorain Police Department.

I also rise today to honor the life and service of four Northern York County Regional Police Department detectives in southern Pennsylvania whose lives were taken in a senseless ambush on September 17, 2025.

Detective Sergeant Cody Becker, along with Detectives Mark Baker and Isaiah Emenheiser, were attempting to serve a warrant for a stalking suspect when they were met by gunfire that took the lives of three detectives and wounded two others.

Together, Detective Sergeant Becker, Detective Baker, and Detective Emenheiser served the Northern York County Regional Police Department for a combined 57 years.

I will close with this, Mr. Speaker: Ralph Emerson once said that the purpose of life is not to be happy; it is to be useful; it is to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you lived and lived well.