

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING EMILY FAY REESE

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I rise to honor a dear friend. Her name was Emily Fay Reese, who passed away on November 3 at the young age of 44 after 8 years of battling colon cancer.

Emily was a source of strength and a beacon of light in the Reno community. She radiated love and kindness to every person she met, and her loss will be felt by every single person whose life she touched.

She loved and adored her three children, Madeline, KJ, and Thomas, who are living legacies and testaments to the amazing person that Emily was.

“Live life, love life, and impact others,” these are the words Emily lived by and wanted to share with the rest of the world. During her life, she embodied this simple message—giving life and love, doing all she could to make a difference in the lives of others. She did this first as a public school teacher, and after her cancer diagnosis she became a person on a mission to educate us all about the importance of accessible, affordable, and quality healthcare for everyone.

Before her passing, Emily wished for her friends and family to honor her by voting. She recognized how consequential elections were to building a better future for her children and her country. Emily was proud that she was able to vote early and cast her ballot to make sure her voice was heard in Nevada. Even in the final days of her life, she continued to fight for all of us.

Her advocacy was one way for her to impact others, and she fought to protect the healthcare of Nevadans by using her diagnosis to openly talk about what it was like to live with a terminal diagnosis and the difference that the Affordable Care Act had made in extending and improving the quality of her life. She reminded us that the ACA meant that she could spend her time with her children instead of worrying about bills and bankruptcy.

The last time I saw Emily was here, on Capitol Hill, just a few months ago. She was advocating on behalf of our fellow Nevadans who rely on Medicaid to get the care they need. She was here to oppose massive funding cuts to the program that she said was saving her life. She was here to speak out against a lawsuit that would take away protections from Americans with preexisting conditions and to fight for people like her who didn't have a voice. She was a “Battle Born” woman, and with grace,

dignity, and courage, she bore her fight against cancer and for healthcare for every American.

Emily was a fighter; she was a mother; and she was a friend. I will be forever grateful for the time she spent in giving voice to the voiceless and for her commitment to bettering the lives of those who, like her, need their healthcare protected.

Today and every day, I honor Emily's memory and continue to fight to protect healthcare for every Nevadan so that those who are struggling with illness can focus on their fights to get better, can spend time with their families, and live out their lives with dignity.

Emily's legacy lives on through every life she has touched, including mine. Emily's legacy will continue to live on through each of us and through her beautiful family. I know she will continue to bless us with her profound light, which will guide us and give us strength through the good times and the bad. Knowing Emily was a blessing, and I thank her for her friendship.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor, as I have many times in the last several years—and I know I am not alone in this—to talk about, unfortunately, yet another mass shooting. This one occurred in my home State—in Allegheny County, PA, in the southwestern corner of our State, in the city of Pittsburgh, in a community known as Squirrel Hill.

I come here to do a couple of things—to honor the victims of this mass shooting and the individuals who were injured, of course; to offer condolences to the grieving families again; to express gratitude for the law enforcement and medical professionals who responded to the scene; and, of course, to stand with the community in the face of hate and terror.

On this occasion, this deadly mass shooting occurred in one community, but it also occurred in a house of worship. It resulted in the deaths of 11 innocent Pennsylvanians. It left six people injured, including four law enforcement officers who were responding to the scene. It was a targeted, hateful attack on the Jewish community within the Squirrel Hill community in the city of Pittsburgh. It was an act of violence that we must work to ensure never happens again.

It was just a couple of weeks ago, long before election day, on Saturday, October 27, that three congregations—the Tree of Life, the Dor Hadash, and the New Light—were engaged in Shabbat morning services at the Tree of Life Synagogue in the Squirrel Hill neighborhood, which is a residential part of the city of Pittsburgh. As these worshippers were engaged in services, what played out was the most deadly act of violence against the Jewish community in American history. These congregants were targeted for one reason—because of their religious beliefs, because they happened to be Jewish. Their lives were changed forever by one hateful act of terror, as were the lives of those who were injured.

So our deepest condolences are with the 11 families of the victims of this attack. Here are the names of the 11: Joyce Fienberg, Richard Gottfried, Rose Mallinger, Jerry Rabinowitz, Cecil Rosenthal and his brother David Rosenthal, Bernice and Sylvan Simon, Daniel Stein, Melvin Wax, and Irving Younger. May their memories be blessings to their families and community. It is difficult to even begin to adequately express the hurt that this community has endured, the horror that these families have endured, and the hurt that is still part of this community.

Maybe one of the best ways to convey not just our condolences and our sympathy but also our solidarity with those who faced that horror and that danger and that hate is to talk about what those folks did in that dark, dark hour. It literally was about an hour, maybe a little more than that, on that Saturday morning.

We, of course, at this time—and so many have since that date—pay tribute to those in law enforcement who confronted the murderer with uncommon valor. We pay tribute, as well, to the emergency service professionals—nurses and doctors and others—who ministered to those who were wounded and tried their best to minister to those who were dying.

All of these individuals—and it is impossible to name all of them whether they are in law enforcement or are medical professionals or are emergency personnel—were, at that moment, as they always are, servants in the most profound meaning of the word. These were servants who came forward to help in that darkness. They came forward to save and to comfort. As the great hymn “The Servant Song” tells us, these were servants who were holding the light for these individuals in the nighttime of their fear. That is what that song, “The Servant Song,” reminds us of.

So, when a gunman with very powerful weapons was shooting directly at individuals—targeting them—in a house of worship, where there was no protection at all for those who were victims and for those who were targets but who survived and had to wait what must have seemed like an eternity for