

hundreds of men, women, boys, and girls are dying every day in our Nation due to gun violence.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, almost 40,000 Americans have died as a result of gun-related injuries in the year 2017, which is the most recent year for which complete data is available.

□ 1015

Almost 40,000 Americans have died as a result of gun-related injuries in the year 2017. In the city I love, the city I live in, the city of Chicago, over 279 citizens of our Nation have been murdered within the last year due to gunfire.

Mr. Speaker, these statistics should be a clarion call to action by this Congress, by this Nation, by this administration. That is why, Mr. Speaker, the committee that I am proud to serve on, the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health will finally meet in my district on October 3 to convene a hearing to examine gun violence as a national public health issue. This is a hearing that I have been consistently calling for ever since 2017.

This hearing will convene community members, national experts, victims, academia, and law enforcement. All these individuals will gather in my district in the city of Chicago for one purpose and one purpose only: to discuss how we can better protect our Nation, our people, our boys and girls, our schoolchildren, our church-going citizens, our mosque-going citizens, our citizens who worship in synagogues all across this Nation, our movie theater-going citizens, our citizens who are in malls across this Nation enjoying themselves and shopping.

We need to have protection for all of our citizens driving along the highways. All of our citizens need to be protected, and this hearing will have the purpose of discussing how we can better protect our citizens and our communities from this epidemic, this widespread epidemic of gunfire, gun violence. As with any epidemic that this Nation faces, we will have experts come and speak to us.

Mr. Speaker, we must stop the violence. Save the children. Save the families.

MEMORIAL TO THE BUFFALO SOLDIERS AT FORT VANCOUVER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an important chapter in my region's history that must be remembered, and it is significant to our whole Nation: the service of African American regiments known as buffalo soldiers.

Their service stations included Fort Vancouver; and afterward, some of them made our region their permanent

home, men like Willie "Bill" Morehouse, who served their Nation with courage and honor.

The buffalo soldiers' place in southwest Washington history began in April of 1899. That date marks the assignment of buffalo soldiers from Company B of the 24th Infantry to the barracks at Fort Vancouver. This was also the first time in history that a unit from one of the Army's four African American regiments was included in Fort Vancouver's regular garrison of troops.

The buffalo soldiers' contributions to our Nation continued throughout subsequent conflicts.

Two years ago, we lost a pillar within the greater Vancouver community, a member and president of the Moses Williams Pacific Northwest Chapter of the buffalo soldiers, "Bill" Morehouse.

Bill was a member of the United States Army and the National Guard early in his life, with his military service spanning World War II and the Fort Vancouver barracks as a POW guard.

His contributions to our community went beyond his military service. Bill led toy and food drives for underprivileged kids, and he provided honor guard at military ceremonies and parades.

In just a few days, on September 21, a ceremony will take place to dedicate a permanent memorial at Fort Vancouver to Bill and to the buffalo soldiers so he will be honorably remembered. This memorial will help mark their unwavering commitment to our country, a commitment they made in the face of racism, unfair treatment, and adversity, policies of the past.

I am proud that their legacy will live on in Vancouver, that their fight will live on, and I pledge to do whatever I can to ensure that the buffalo soldiers' stories of service and sacrifice are not forgotten.

OUR ESTUARIES: NATIONAL RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY TREASURES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. POSEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, today I join millions of my fellow Americans in recognizing National Estuaries Week, which extends from September 14 to September 21.

We know that estuaries are those places where freshwaters or rivers meet the seas. Estuaries are also places where biodiversity is often at its zenith. They are the ecologies of our coastal communities. Wherever a watershed empties into the sea, we find an estuary.

My home in Florida is part of an estuary called the Indian River Lagoon, where the fresh and salt waters mix behind barrier islands to form what experts recognize as the most biodiverse estuary in the United States of America. My community and district depend on the lagoon to support a broad array

of activities to meet our economic, environmental, and recreational needs.

My neighbors and I understand how much we depend on the lagoon. We strive to protect the sea turtles and the habitat of the manatees. When they are thriving, we know that fishermen, boaters, businesses, and, most importantly, our families will thrive.

For years, I have worked for the health of the Indian River Lagoon and tried to help other communities keep their estuaries healthy. The challenges of the Indian River Lagoon are the same challenges faced by all the other estuaries.

Last Congress, I joined with Congresswoman SUZANNE BONAMICI to found the Congressional Estuary Caucus to support the National Estuary Program, foster research in estuary restoration and protection, and bring other resources to bear on sustaining our estuaries.

National Estuaries Week is a special time for a national celebration of our estuary efforts and for local estuary programs within the national program to bring the importance of estuaries to their communities and involve other citizens in their work.

An important part of these goals is to communicate the value and importance of our estuaries and our coasts to key decisionmakers at the local, State, and Federal levels. That is what we are doing right now.

Our friends at Restore America's Estuaries tell us that last year's celebration was a tremendous success, as organizations and volunteers from across the country gathered at their local bays or riverfronts and classrooms to celebrate and learn about the importance of our estuaries and how they benefit our daily lives. More than 30,000 volunteers across 21 States, Canada, and Guam participated in over 105 different estuary events.

Many of this year's events are posted online, and they give us a stunning picture of how each estuary, while being a national asset, is also a unique treasure to its communities. For example, in Palm Bay in my district, the Marine Resources Council, the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program, The Nature Conservancy of Florida, Act 2 Technologies, and the Tampa Bay Estuary Program held a rain barrel workshop and auction, heard from a distinguished panel of water quality experts, and dined on a fine barbecue meal. A speakers panel open forum focused on audience participation, facilitating questions and concerns, as well as the opportunity to present ideas and potential problems and solutions for our waterways.

We also celebrate National Estuaries Week as a time to recommit our effort in the caucus to achieve full funding for the National Estuary Program and to bring those resources to the communities that live on the estuaries' edge.

We can and we must work to assure that our estuaries and our environment are sustained.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 25 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) at noon.

PRAYER

Dr. Bryant R. Ali, New Psalmist Worship Center, Newark, New Jersey, offered the following prayer:

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in Earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; as we also forgive everyone that has sinned against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

Lord, as these elected officials handle the agenda before them today, may the words of their mouth and the meditation of their heart be acceptable in Your sight.

Lord, Your word declares that those who acknowledge You, paths will also be directed by You. I pray that we truly become one nation under God, united with liberty and justice for all.

Lord, touch each Representative today. Bless their family and the community they have the privilege of serving. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit I pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr.

PAPPAS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PAPPAS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Miss Kaitlyn Roberts, one of his secretaries.

WELCOMING DR. BRYANT R. ALI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce and praise today as guest chaplain Pastor Bryant Ali.

Pastor Ali has been my friend for almost 50 years. He has been the "pastor in the hood," as we call him, for 26 years at the New Psalmist Worship Center in Newark, New Jersey, a center he founded to bring the power of the Lord to those who have lost their way.

He is a renowned author, community activist, counselor, teacher, and preacher in my district. His story is one that should inspire us all. Pastor Ali received his spiritual calling as a homeless man struggling with chemical addiction. He conquered those demons through the power of the Lord. He started preaching and pursued his calling.

Today, he has a doctoral degree in holistic theology. He serves as the president of the Baptist Ministers Conference of Newark and Vicinity, and he is a spiritual counselor for the Newark Anti-Violence Coalition and serves on the board of the Newark Community Health Centers.

He is an outstanding clergyman, an incredible leader in my community, and a true inspiration. I am very proud to have him say a prayer for us today.

My fellow Members, I would like to present the senior pastor of New Psalmist Worship Center, the Honorable Dr. Bryant Ali, who did an incredible job for us today.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

ADDRESSING AMERICA'S INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, the American Society of Civil

Engineers estimates that, by 2025, the cost of addressing America's infrastructure needs will reach \$4.6 trillion. With Federal transportation funded at \$305 billion this year, we aren't even coming close.

With each day that passes, the need grows. Safety is threatened; opportunity is lost; and the cost of getting the job done only increases.

According to the Federal highway data, in the Buffalo Niagara region alone, 1 out of every 13 bridges is structurally deficient. Our roads are crumbling; our water infrastructure is breaking; and our transit systems are inadequate and outdated. The situation couldn't be more urgent, and the opportunity couldn't be more obvious.

Numerous economic reports indicate investment in infrastructure delivers real jobs and real growth in the American economy. It is time to deliver on the substantial investment in infrastructure. There is a great deal of work to be done, and there are Americans prepared to do that work.

HONORING SUCCESS OF SORINEX

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, every August, I participate in a bus tour of South Carolina's Second District with my wife, Roxanne, and dedicated staff from the Washington and district offices, visiting schools, job-creating businesses, and chambers of commerce.

An amazing stop this year was at Sorinex in Lexington. Sorinex is a family-owned business that makes unique exercise equipment for professional teams, national Olympic teams, colleges, high schools, and the military. It is a classic example of a garage-originated business that now produces equipment worldwide.

The founder of Sorinex, Richard "Pops" Sorin, took us around the impressive facility. The beginning of the visit was a tour with a historic collection of over 100 years of weightlifting equipment. Not only does Sorinex create its custom equipment, but it also produces all of its own branded apparel. I am grateful Lexington is the home of their success.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Our sympathy to the family of Emily Clyburn and our prayers for Congressman JIM CLYBURN and daughters Mignon, Jennifer, and Angela.

HONORING GLADYS BARKER GRAUER

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor my dear friend, Ms. Gladys Barker Grauer, the "Mother of Newark Arts" for more than 70 years, after