

Well, we are not a small part of the problem. We are 5 percent of the world's population and 25 percent of the world's pollution. And even if the specific actions this week do represent a very small percentage of the ultimate solution when we talk about trying to get the temperature of the planet under control, that is a terrible argument in and of itself. Is that a reason why none of us should bother to vote—because each one of our own actions in and of itself really doesn't affect the overall outcome? It is the collection of all of the actions we take in a democracy that makes the difference, and it is the collection of actions we will take as a community of nations and a community of individuals that will ultimately make the difference.

I imagine this debate will continue.

#### GUN CONTROL

Mr. MURPHY. Thirty-one thousand people a year die across this country from gun violence. That is 2,639 a month or 86 a day. I have tried to come down to the floor every week—a couple times a month at the very least—and talk about the voices of those victims because if the statistics aren't actually moving this place to action, then maybe we can talk about who these people were. Of course, we have a fresh set of stories from Santa Barbara, CA.

I don't need to tell the story of young Mr. Rodger. He was a deeply troubled young man who went on a shooting spree, killing six people and wounding many more.

Katherine Breann Cooper was 22 years old when she was gunned down by Elliot Rodger. She was a painter, and she was known as Katie by her friends. She had a really outgoing side. She was going to get a degree in art history, and she had a smile that "lit up the room," according to her friends.

What her childhood friends from Chino Hills remember is that she was absolutely unbeatable at foot races. She was the fastest kid in the whole neighborhood. You couldn't beat her at foot races, hide and go seek, and you certainly couldn't beat her when the ice cream truck went through the neighborhood.

Her seventh grade teacher said:

She was one of 2,500 students I've taught over the years, but Katie was a standout.

Veronika Weiss was 3 years younger—she was 19 years old—but her father Bob said she was wise beyond her years. He said he would actually go to his 19-year-old daughter for advice when he was having a problem with one of her brothers, Cooper and Jackson, or maybe when he was having an argument with his wife.

She played four sports in high school: cross country, baseball, swimming, and water polo. She earned straight A's. Her strength was math. She really excelled at sports, and she didn't let barriers get in her way. She didn't want to play softball; she wanted to play baseball. There was a baseball league for

kids in her hometown of Westlake, and there were 500 players in that league—499 boys and 1 girl, and that 1 girl was Veronika Weiss.

When she got to UC Santa Barbara, she didn't have a lot of friends until she joined the Tri-Delta Sorority. They became a built-in circle of friends for her.

Her former coach said:

We're really shocked. She touched a lot of people. And for someone who's 19 years old to have that many people showing up [at her service], that's a lot to say. There's been kids who say, "Oh, I was a new kid in school and she came up to me and just started talking to me. I didn't even know her." So she was that type of person.

Christopher Michaels-Martinez's father has had some strong things to say about the inaction of Congress, but he also had a lot of wonderful things to say about his son.

His son Christopher was a studious kid. He was an avid reader. He was an athlete from a young age, first beginning with soccer and going on to play football and basketball. He served as residential adviser at his dorm and was the kind of guy who would welcome strangers into his home and into his room.

His father talks a lot about his resilience. He remembers that at 8 years old Christopher decided he wanted to play football. He remembers at a practice watching his son being knocked down by a much larger teammate, and his father said he remembers thinking:

My god, he must be hurt. But he was on the ground no more than two seconds. He hopped back up, stomped one foot on the ground and walked determinedly back into the line.

That's the kind of kid Chris was.

Richard Martinez urged the 20,000 people at the memorial for the victims to follow his son's example from the football field. He said:

Like Christopher on that day, we've been knocked down. And like Christopher on that day, I want you to get back up and walk determinedly forward.

His father Richard has challenged Congress not to let one more person die because of our inaction.

In a lot of ways, the story of Elliot Rodger is a word of caution about the limits of what policy can do, but it is also an invitation for us to look at some of the things we can do.

Elliot was an incredibly troubled kid, but he was not a kid who lived outside of the mental health system, nor was Adam Lanza, the young man who killed 20 6- and 7-year-olds in Newtown. We can go back with 20/20 hindsight and pick apart the decisions—sometimes a very legitimate critique—that Rodgers' parents or Adam Lanza's parents made, but the reality is that Elliot Rodger was in and out of the mental health system and in and out of a number of different schools trying to find the appropriate placement. Adam Lanza had been identified with a severe mental illness, and his mother was trying to find treatment for him.

We need to do something to improve our mental health system. We have

closed down 4,000 mental health inpatient beds in the last 6 years alone, while the needs of those with mental illness are skyrocketing. We know the waiting time for especially young adolescents to see a psychiatrist or psychologist just for an introductory visit is far too long. So we need to make massive investments in our mental health system. But the law can help as well when it comes to guns. The fact is Adam Lanza should never have been able to possess the high-powered weapon that he did, and had he walked into Newtown with a different weapon instead of a semiautomatic rifle, there would still be children alive today, in the minds of many of those parents.

It is not clear the law could have changed anything in California, but what we know is that in States that give law enforcement the ability to take guns away from people who pose a danger to the community or deny them to those individuals in the first place, fewer murders happen.

Police showed up at the door of Elliot Rodger's house and, had they walked in, they would have found a draft copy of his manifesto and a whole bunch of guns and a whole bunch of ammunition. He likely would have been taken into involuntary custody. His guns would have likely been taken away. The police didn't make that decision, but in California they have the ability to do that whereas, in many other States they do not.

In Missouri, for instance, they used to have a law on the books that allowed for local law enforcement to deny gun permits to individuals whom those local law enforcement personnel knew to be a potential danger to society. Well, Missouri repealed that law, and a recent study by Johns-Hopkins University shows that controlling for all other possible factors that could explain the dramatic increase in gun violence since the repeal of Missouri's background check legislation, the repeal itself accounts for 60 to 80 additional gun murders in Missouri every single year.

We know that laws that keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people, allow law enforcement to take guns away from dangerous people, laws that prevent military assault weapons from being in the community in the first place, save lives. It is not a coincidence. During the period of time after which the government instituted an assault weapons ban, we saw a reduction in the number of mass murders in this country. After it was repealed, we started to see an increase in those mass murders. Assault weapons bans don't have a lot to do with average, everyday gun violence, but they can have something to do with mass shootings.

Edmund Burke said: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." I believe every single Senator here has heard that.

I will end with this thought: I think we can pass laws that will reduce these

numbers. It won't eliminate these numbers, but we can pass laws, whether it is improving our mental health system or changing our gun laws, that reduce the number of people who die and to perhaps lessen the weekly stories we hear of mass violence across the whole country.

What is the real risk of doing nothing, not even trying? I submit it is like pulling teeth to get any Republican Senators or Congressmen to even cosponsor a bill addressing any of these issues, and the real risk of doing nothing is that we start to look complicit in these mass murders. I know that is a strong thing to say, but it is not enough for the community itself to rally after these mass murders to shame the action when the most important legislative body in the world has nothing to say about this dramatic increase in mass gun violence. When we allow these numbers to fester without a single piece of legislation to address this trendline passing the Senate and the House, we have become accomplices because we send a message that we don't think the murders in Aurora, in Tucson, in Newtown, in Santa Barbara, are serious enough for us to do anything. That is a real shame.

Hopefully, at some point over the time the Presiding Officer and I have the honor of serving in the Senate, if the numbers don't move this place to action, the voices of the victims will.

I yield the floor, and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### ENERGY POLICY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, several years ago when the majority party, the Democratic Party, controlled 60 seats in the Senate and had literally the numbers to do whatever it wanted to do, the majority leader tried to push through a new massive energy tax bill known as cap-and-trade. Not only did it fail to pass, the majority leader never even brought it up for a vote, primarily because members of his own party recognized there would be huge costs associated with this new energy tax, and that the benefits, indeed, on balance did not outweigh the costs or, perhaps most charitably stated, were neutral. There were hardly any real benefits to speak of on the plus side, but there were plenty of negatives, including lost jobs, lost wages, higher utility bills, and a less competitive U.S. economy.

Now the Obama administration, we learn, is in the process of enacting a backdoor energy tax, not through the

votes of Members of Congress—the only people who could be held accountable for how we vote—but rather through the regulatory process through the Environmental Protection Agency.

Much like the cap-and-trade bill that collapsed in 2010, the EPA regulation that was announced earlier today would impose major new costs on America's economy while doing virtually nothing to improve the environment. I will explain my reason for saying that in a moment.

I will talk about the economic costs in a second, but first I want to emphasize that over the coming decades America's contribution to the growth of worldwide carbon dioxide emissions will be virtually nonexistent.

Consider these numbers from the Energy Information Agency: Between 2005 and 2012, America's energy-related carbon dioxide emissions actually declined by more than 10 percent. Between 2005 and 2012, our carbon dioxide emissions did not go up but they declined by more than 10 percent. By contrast, over the same period of time China's energy-related carbon dioxide emissions grew by nearly 64 percent.

So ours went down 10 percent and China's went up by 64 percent. As a result, China is now producing far more carbon dioxide emissions than the United States.

Looking ahead, the Energy Information Agency has projected that developing countries—countries that don't have a developed economy like the United States but do want our standard of living and a better life for their people—will be responsible for 94 percent of the growth in global carbon dioxide emissions between 2010 and 2040, with China alone accounting for 49 percent of that increase. As for the United States, during that same period of time carbon dioxide emissions will barely increase at all.

I mentioned these figures because some of my friends across the aisle have repeatedly declared that President Obama's backdoor energy tax will help us "fight climate change." Given the numbers I just listed, it should be clear to us that any rule such as what the EPA is proposing would do little to affect global emissions unless developing countries such as China and India do exactly the same—assuming that is something we would want to make as a priority, and assuming the benefits outweigh the costs.

The fact is that China has no interest in sacrificing economic growth for speculative long-term climate benefits, nor do India or other developing nations. We have to remember that these countries alone still have hundreds of millions of people living in abject poverty. They want a better and growing economy, so why in the world would they impose these restrictions on themselves? It is not going to happen, and that is what they told us.

In short, President Obama's EPA rule would place America's economy—an economy that shrunk by 1 percent last

quarter—at a competitive disadvantage without having any substantial effect on global climate change or on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions overall. In other words, it would be all pain and no gain. As I mentioned, the pain would be very real. It would come in the form of lost jobs due to a slowing economy, lost wages, and higher electricity prices.

In my State, the month of August gets to be pretty hot, and our grid operates at maximum capacity. Due to a variety of EPA regulations, the price of those higher electricity prices is borne by the people who are least able to absorb those costs—particularly people on a fixed income, including the elderly. Also, the job loss would be concentrated on blue-collar workers in the fossil fuel industries—most notably the coal industry. These workers have already been hurt by EPA regulations, but these new proposed regulations would make that pain even worse. The higher electricity costs and higher utility rates would affect all of us, but the heaviest burden would fall on people who are at a low or fixed income; in other words, the people who are least able to pay more for their utility bills.

If a regulation can't pass the basic cost-benefit test, then in my view it has little business being enacted—and it should certainly not be enacted by nameless, faceless bureaucrats who are unaccountable to the American people or for the consequences of what they are passing. That is especially true when our economy is suffering through the weakest economic recovery and the longest period of high unemployment since the Great Depression. Why—if this makes sense at any time—would we want to do it now?

Median household income has also declined by nearly \$2,300 since the recession formally ended. We have had a period of anemic economic growth in this country, a high unemployment rate, the slowest economic recovery since the Great Depression, and the highest percentage of people who dropped out of the workforce because they are discouraged about the prospect of finding jobs at any time since Jimmy Carter was President.

In the meantime, if you are buying your health insurance in the ObamaCare exchanges and your health insurance premiums have gone up—we know the cost of fuel and gasoline has gone up, and the cost of food has gone up. The middle class will be disproportionately burdened by this EPA regulation in a way that does not, on net, change the global environment, and would kill jobs and hurt families in return for negligible, or even nonexistent, benefits.

Once again, we see that the President has decided to place ideology—his wish of how the world ought to look—ahead of the numbers. He is famous for saying, let's do the arithmetic.

Let's do the arithmetic. The arithmetic does not make the case that these regulations should be passed; indeed, it defeats the argument that they should.