

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, on Friday evening this past Friday, the 5A Division 1 playoffs occurred in high school football in Louisiana, and my high school alma mater of Catholic High in Baton Rouge played against our distinguished majority whip's Catholic high school, the Archbishop Rummel High School.

This was a great game, Madam Speaker, where it went on to the fourth quarter where things were tied up with only a few seconds left with both sides praying, I am sure. We had a little bit of intervention here. And while there is a chance, Madam Speaker, that this poster was fabricated, I assure you that the win that Catholic High had over Archbishop Rummel was very, very real, and the values that each of these schools instill upon their students is also very real.

I want to congratulate Coach Dale Weiner, Catholic High School Bears out of Baton Rouge, and Coach Weiner's over 300 wins in high school football.

□ 1215

RENEW THE ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, just hours before last week's shooting, I stood in this very same spot and called on Congress to renew the assault weapons ban, which expired in 2004.

Shortly after the shooting in San Bernadino, we learned that one of the weapons used was an AR-15, capable of unloading 800 rounds per minute or 13 rounds per second. Just a week earlier, a gunman in Colorado Springs used an AK-47-style weapon.

We need to get these weapons of war out of the hands of terrorists and criminals. It is easy to say criminals and terrorists will always find a way to get a gun, but certainly we don't need to make it easier for these individuals to get guns capable of killing dozens of innocent people within seconds.

There are simple steps we can take today to address this issue without denying a person's Second Amendment rights. We can start by making sure someone convicted of a violent crime can't buy a gun by exploiting a loophole and prevent someone on the terrorist watch list from buying a gun. If you are too dangerous to get on a plane, you are too dangerous to walk into a gun store and buy an assault weapon or any other gun.

We need to start somewhere to address this epidemic if we have any hope of reducing gun violence in this country. Getting assault weapons out of the hands of criminals and potential terrorists is a good place to start.

COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION WEEK

(Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of national Computer Science Education Week. Established in 2009 to coincide with the birthday of one of the first women in the field of computer science, Grace Murray Hopper, Computer Science Education Week provides a unique opportunity to connect students with opportunities in the computing fields. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that in the year 2020, there will be roughly 10 million jobs in STEM fields. Of those, half are expected to be in computing and information technology.

Despite these opportunities, there is a substantial shortage of individuals with skills needed to fill computing jobs. The more we can expose and engage our students in computer science programs, the better prepared they will be for the jobs in the 21st century.

This week, Representative SUZAN DELBENE of Washington, my co-chair on the Congressional Women's High Tech Caucus, and I introduced House Resolution 554 to encourage schools, parents, and our colleagues to support computer science education, participate in an Hour of Code event this week, and join this national movement in computer science education.

GUN VIOLENCE AND THE TERRORIST WATCH LIST

(Ms. HAHN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, mass shootings have become daily occurrences in this country. There were 355 mass shootings in the first 336 days of this year.

Americans are understandably shaken. As Members of Congress, it is our responsibility to enact policies to protect and defend them.

It is unbelievable that an individual on the terrorist watch list can walk into any gun shop and buy the firearm of their choice. That is completely legal right now, and law enforcement has no ability to stop it.

We all know that our weak gun laws in this country have failed for decades to protect innocent lives. We have a long way to go in reversing the deadly damage done by the lobbying efforts of the NRA, but this is a good place to start.

Closing this glaring loophole is common sense. It is not a cure-all for all gun violence in this Nation, but it is a step in the right direction.

I am calling on Speaker PAUL RYAN to bring H.R. 1076, the Denying Firearms and Explosives to Dangerous Terrorists Act of 2015, up for a vote immediately.

The American people are calling us to do something, and we can start now.

VENEZUELA ELECTIONS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the people of Venezuela on their democratic victory this weekend.

Voters at the polls sent a clear message to the corrupt Maduro regime: We reject your policies and support a return to true democracy, as well as an end to an economic system that has bankrupted an otherwise wealthy nation.

Despite lopsided electoral conditions, state-imposed censorship, and intimidation tactics, the democratic opposition overcame many obstacles to gain control of the National Assembly. But there is still much work that remains to be done. All political prisoners must be freed, including pro-democracy leader Leopoldo Lopez.

There are still a few contestant seats without a winner announced that are very important to the final outcome of the election.

I urge a speedy and transparent declaration of the winners and a full adjudication process for any disputed contests that can occur in certain races.

Congratulations to the people of Venezuela for a great victory.

CLOSE THE TERRORIST GUN LOOPHOLE

(Mr. GALLEGO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, we shouldn't allow terrorists who want to kill innocent Americans to have easy access to guns. It is just that simple, and that is just common sense.

Yet, any individual on the no-fly list considered too dangerous to get on a plane can walk into any gun store in America and walk out with a weapon of their choice.

We are facing an epidemic of gun violence in this country, yet House Republican leadership is unwilling to even close the most dangerous loophole like this one that exists today.

Speaker RYAN has said that "keeping America safe should not be a partisan issue." I strongly agree. We should set politics aside and do what is right for the American people by passing commonsense gun laws and stopping senseless acts of violence in our communities.

The cost of inaction in Congress is borne by thousands of mourning families here in America.

It is time for Congress to step up and take meaningful action by closing the terrorist gun loophole and keeping dangerous people from buying guns.

GOLDEN SPOON

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two outstanding

local businesses in my district recently recognized in Florida Trend magazine.

Local spots all over Florida help boost our economy and strengthen our communities.

Two weeks ago, we celebrated Small Business Saturday and encouraged people to support small, local businesses. It is important we continue to shop small and keep our local communities growing.

Two local establishments in my district recently received Florida Trend's Golden Spoon Awards and rank among the State's best restaurants. I would like to congratulate Dulcet Restaurant and Lounge in New Port Richey and Pearl in the Grove in Dade City.

These awards are very well deserved. I am grateful to have such outstanding businesses in my home district, and I will continue my efforts to help small businesses thrive.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD RESOLUTION

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as co-chair of the House Pro-Choice Caucus in strong support of the caucus' resolution condemning violence toward women.

This month, our Nation has seen unspeakable violence, including in a Planned Parenthood health center in Colorado and the awful things that happened in San Bernardino, California. I condemn this violence in the strongest possible way.

We get so used to it, don't we? Eighty-nine Americans are shot to death every day, over 300 mass killings already this year in this country, and we get up on the floor of the House and we go through our piety and we ask for a moment of silence. That is all we can give. We are not going to give any more relief to the people of the United States from gun culture, but take a moment of silence. Those of us who sit in this Chamber who can do something about it steadfastly refuse to do so.

For heaven's sake, many countries in this world don't have 89 killings in a month, much less every day.

No American should feel intimidated or threatened because of choosing to access health care. Violence is unconscionable and we have to stop it.

RECOGNIZING EDITH LANIER

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Edith Lanier.

Christmas came early this weekend for four disabled veterans. It came in the form of new wheelchairs. These were not just any wheelchairs. These were four custom sport wheelchairs. These more-than-deserving veterans

were given these wheelchairs by Ms. Edith Lanier.

Ms. Lanier was born in 1925. She tells stories about picking cotton, about milking cows, and pumping water from the well. She attended North Georgia College before moving to Savannah to build a business that she passed along to her daughter after 32 years of service.

Over the last two decades, she has also dedicated her time to philanthropy. She is an asset to the community and closes her prayers with: May we be ever mindful of the needs of others.

It comes as no surprise that the four custom sport wheelchairs were donated by Ms. Lanier.

Oh, by the way, did I mention that this young lady this week will be celebrating her 90th birthday? I commend Ms. Lanier for continued acts of selflessness, her devotion to the needy, and her continued hope for the greatness of this country.

Happy birthday, Ms. Lanier.

PASS LEGISLATION THAT PROHIBITS PEOPLE ON THE TERRORIST WATCH LIST FROM GETTING A WEAPON

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, since 9/11, 750,000 refugees have been resettled and welcomed into the United States of America. Not one of them has ever appeared on a terrorist watch list or been accused of terrorism. Yet, Republicans say that for homeland security, we should keep these refugees from Syria out of our country.

About 40,000 people in the United States of America are on the terrorist watch list right now and they are not allowed to get on an airplane. But they are allowed to go into any gun store and buy any weapon that they would like, a weapon that looks like this, for example. This is a picture of a Smith & Wesson .223-caliber assault rifle. This is the kind of weapon that the suspects fired in San Bernardino. Sixty-five to 75 rifle rounds were sent, and people are dead.

That was the 355th mass shooting in our country just this year. We need to pass legislation that prohibits people on the terrorist watch list from getting a weapon, and we should do it now. Prayers and thoughts are not enough.

CONGRESS WILL ALWAYS PUT THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE FIRST

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the very real and dangerous threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

For too long, our Nation has stayed on the sidelines, claiming ISIS was a

junior varsity threat or that it had been contained. The unfortunate reality is that America and her allies are under attack by radical Islamic terrorists. Changing the subject or downplaying this threat gives aid and comfort to our enemy, which is bound and determined to strike innocent people around the world in their comfort zones.

As we have seen in Paris or in San Bernardino, these terrorists are emboldened by the President's failed foreign policy. Weakness invites aggression, and only through strength will we have peace.

This is a time for unity of purpose and strong leadership. We need our Commander in Chief to chart a course towards complete destruction of ISIS. Congress should quickly debate and authorize the resources necessary and military force to complete the mission.

Mr. Speaker, we stand ready and willing to work with the President, but Congress will always put the safety and security of the American people first.

VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

(Mr. MOULTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MOULTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 158, a bill that would improve the Visa Waiver Program and ensure better information sharing among intelligence and law enforcement agencies.

This is separate from the Republican proposal introduced last week that would have effectively halted refugee resettlement. Refugees already undergo the most stringent screening process of any individual entering the United States, with an extensive series of background checks.

Refugees are victims, not perpetrators of terrorism. Categorically refusing to take them only feeds the narrative of ISIS.

In contrast, H.R. 158 strengthens the screening of travelers who qualify for the Visa Waiver Program by increasing intelligence and law enforcement cooperation and by making it harder for extremists to falsify their identities and enter our borders.

Rather than betraying our timeless American values by scapegoating refugees, which only plays into ISIS' hands, we should focus on addressing real vulnerabilities to our homeland security.

I urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 158.

□ 1230

SUPPORTING THE DENYING FIREARMS AND EXPLOSIVES TO DANGEROUS TERRORISTS ACT

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, just last week, another community joined the