

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 1501, JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM ACT OF 1999

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. LOFGREN moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 1501, be instructed to insist that the committee of conference should have its first substantive meeting to offer amendments and motions within the next 2 weeks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN) will be recognized for 30 minutes, and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, for 8 months the conference committee on the juvenile justice bill has done nothing, has not met. In fact, the last and the only meeting of the conference committee that has the opportunity to deal with the issue of gun safety was in August, and was not substantive.

Since then, we have seen shootings in day care centers and schools, we have seen 6-year-olds shoot 6-year-olds, we have seen firefighters shot as they try to do their jobs, and the congressional response has been simply nothing.

When the President calls congressional leaders to the Oval Office to get the conference started and no meeting is scheduled, something is wrong. A few days ago, the President called the chairman and the ranking members of the House and Senate Judiciary Committees to meetings at the White House to simply ask them to meet in an open and public conference meeting, and still no such meeting has been called.

We need to stop hiding behind closed-door negotiations. We cannot have a bill without a conference meeting, so we need to meet. Not having a meeting is the same as killing the bill. Time is running out, and the families of this Nation are waiting to see what we will do.

I am hopeful that we can come together on a bipartisan basis to support this motion to instruct, which simply says, get the job done. Sit down. Talk

to each other. Have a meeting. I hope that such a meeting will produce a bill, will produce a law that we will all be able to support.

Recently I had the chance to read the statement of Robin Anderson, who bought the guns for Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, the young men who killed those kids at Columbine High School.

What she says in her statement was that if there had been an instant check, if there had been a background check from the private gun dealers at the gun show where she bought the weapons that those boys used to kill all those kids, that she would not have purchased those guns. In fact, she says, "I wish a law requiring background checks had been in effect at the time. I don't know if Eric and Dylan would have been able to get guns from another source, but I would not have helped them. It was too easy. I wish it had been more difficult. I wouldn't have helped them buy the guns if I had faced a background check."

There has been a lot of unfortunate rhetoric in the last few days about the issue of gun safety and people questioning motives and the like. But I like the statement made by one of the Republican Members of this body at the White House earlier this morning. He said, what we want is we want to bury this as an issue. We do not want to bury any more kids. So please, let us support this motion to instruct.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to respond to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN) on this motion to instruct conferees.

First, I want to say that this is an important issue. No one treats this issue lightly, because we are dealing with the lives of individuals as well as dealing with constitutional liberties. So it is a very, very important subject that arouses the passions of people, as it should. It is something that we have to deal with and should deal with.

I believe that we do have a consensus that we want to make progress on this. But as the gentlewoman knows, when we make progress in this body, there are many ways to do that, particularly whenever we not only have to work with ourselves but we have to work with our colleagues at the other end of this Capitol in the United States Senate. So there are a lot of ways to make progress.

I will oppose the motion to instruct conferees because I generally oppose motions to instruct because these artificial time lines, these artificial constraints, are really not helpful in the negotiating process, in the coming together of the different points of view. I believe that can be done as the conference committee has already met, and the gentlewoman, and she well knows, they have met. She argues that

that is not a substantive meeting, but they discussed, they articulated their different views on this particular bill. To me that is a very substantive meeting.

The way the legislative process works, then we go back and we start working. We put out ideas. The chairman, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), who is on the conference committee, has an idea that he has presented that is being examined. There is a lot of work that is going on on this very, very important issue.

Whenever there is some indication that there is a meeting of the minds, that there is some room on both sides to come together, I am confident that this conference will meet and that they will pass substantive legislation.

I would also point out that not only is this an artificial time line, but it directs our conferees. As the gentlewoman knows, the chairman of the conference, who has the right to call the conference together, is the chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary on the Senate side, Chairman HATCH. So it is he that must make the decision to call the conferees together.

When I talk about areas of agreement, as I talk to my constituents and as I hear from different people, I believe that we have an agreement that we ought to protect children. I believe that we ought to provide parents with tools with which they can protect firearms, and they do not expose those children. Parents need all the tools that they can have.

I believe this is an area that we can reach agreement on. I believe we can reach agreement that we ought to keep guns out of the hands of criminals.

Whenever we want to expand the background checks to gun shows, there is basically a debate between a 24-hour waiting period and a 72-hour waiting period. I believe that people of good faith can resolve these differences, but there are clear differences. There are substantive constitutional rights at stake, so people, being passionate about this, want to be able to work these things out, fighting for their principles. I hope that we can come together on this.

But a lot of work is being done between the Members, dialogues are going on, ideas are being discussed. I believe this is the way to get this job done, rather than having these artificial time lines and constraints that are imposed.

So I thank the gentlewoman for her comments and her suggestions and engaging in this debate. We have had discussions, and I would be happy to sit down with her at any time. But for the conferees, I think the motion to instruct is inappropriate, is not conducive to working this thing out and reaching common ground.

For that reason, I would ask my colleagues to oppose the motion to instruct.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.