

that have been faced with difficult circumstances. I trust that my colleagues in Congress will now come to our aid.

#### THE NEWTOWN TRAGEDY AND THE NEED FOR TIGHTER GUN CONTROL

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

Ms. TSONGAS. Madam Speaker, every corner of America has been deeply affected by the tragic loss of so many lives in Newtown, Connecticut. We mourn for the enormity of grief and for the inconsolable loss visited upon Newtown's families, and we know that our response to Newtown must not and cannot go the way of the many other senseless acts of violence we almost routinely witness. The tragedy in Newtown must be a call to action.

Members from both sides of the aisle have acknowledged that it is time for a conversation about the accessibility of high-capacity weapons in our country and of the culture of violence we live in. This conversation is long overdue, and it is simply not an option to allow this discussion to become stagnant or to be bullied into silence by seemingly untouchable organizations.

America's laws must reasonably control gun manufacturing, sale, and usage. We must act to make real changes that will provide real protection for America's families. In the days to come, let us work together to do just that.

#### LET US MOURN WITH ACTION

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, you will hear many voices being raised in the backdrop of an unspeakable tragedy from which, even as Members think of it, they cry.

Just a few minutes ago, there was a press conference in which there was probably not a dry eye in that room as Members gave tribute to those lives lost and to those being buried today, and as they spoke of their own anguish, their lost children, and of the loss of their fellow staff members in a gun incident.

So I rise today to say that we must act and can act and can pass legislation even this week. I join with Senator FEINSTEIN's effort and Congressman PERLMUTTER's and Congresswoman MCCARTHY's and that of many others with legislation. I join with the legislation of H.R. 277, that talks about protecting our children, which was introduced by myself. I join with the statement by the Progressive Caucus that speaks about this ammunition, these guns, and mental health. I also join with Dick's Sporting Goods store.

I will just personally say to those who are listening: maybe you'll want to turn in your guns. Oh, no. I am not going to take your guns, but look at

what Dick's Sporting Goods did in the moment they wanted to be part of the solution and a part of America. Let us mourn with action.

God bless those who have lost their lives.

□ 1220

#### COMMEMORATING LIFE OF JENNI RIVERA

(Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor and commemorate the life of Mexican American singer Jenni Rivera. Jenni used her powerful voice, soulful singing style, and honest lyrics to create a message that spoke to the resiliency of women.

That powerful voice was silenced forever when she and six others were killed in a plane crash on November 9. Born and raised in Long Beach, California, to immigrant parents from Mexico, Jenni Rivera started her career selling her CDs at flea markets. When she died at the age of 43, Jenni was a top-selling artist, an actress, television producer, and entrepreneur.

Tragically, she was on the cusp of multicultural stardom when she died. She had just finished filming her first film and was in talks with ABC to star in her own sitcom.

Her talent and authenticity shined brightly in a music genre dominated by men. Jenni's lyrics offered a new and refreshing woman's perspective.

Madam Speaker, please join me in honoring the memory of Jenni Rivera and the message of empowerment she gave to millions of women that she spoke for.

#### IMPLEMENTING THE HIRE ACT

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

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, as more and more of our brave warriors return from Afghanistan, more and more of them are looking for work. It's our duty as a Nation to make sure that we're doing everything possible to get these troops reemployed. That's why I'd like to applaud both the Senate and the House for including in the National Defense Authorization Act the Helping Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Return to Employment, the HIRE Act.

What it does is establish a very commonsense process that encourages State credentialing authorities to consider certain military occupational training when granting licenses. It makes absolutely no sense to force a battlefield medic to spend time and Federal dollars taking redundant training to be an EMT. It makes no sense for a State agency that wouldn't count hundreds of hours driving heavy equipment in Afghanistan to get a CDL li-

cense. The Department of Defense spends \$140 billion a year training our military personnel, the best in the world. It would be ludicrous to not use that investment to get them jobs here at home.

Eight States have already passed legislation to develop the process. I encourage Members of Congress, talk to their State and their Governor to get this done.

#### FISCAL TURNING POINT

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, as a Nation, we are gaining momentum as our economy gets back on track. For my constituents in San Diego, home prices are on the rise and most employers are adding jobs and hours instead of cutting back. We cannot afford to undo the progress we are making, especially for the middle class.

The only way to accelerate our economic progress is to balance economic development with protection for the most vulnerable Americans from job losses, tax increases, and program cuts. Americans young and old need to know that Congress believes in the future and that we'll work together to keep our country on the rise.

I think often of Gandhi's statement: The future depends on what we do in the present.

Let's not waste this critical opportunity to advance economic growth and invest in our future.

#### PREVENTING MORE SANDY HOOKS

(Mr. PRICE of North Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, we have experiences in our personal and collective lives that challenge us profoundly, forcing us to search our souls and to change our behavior. Our Nation experienced such a moment on Friday as 20 children were gunned down at Sandy Hook Elementary School, along with six teachers and administrators who were attempting to protect them.

As we mourn and reach out to the families of Newtown, we owe the victims and each other serious consideration of how to prevent more Newtowns and Auroras and Oak Creeks and Tucsons. We must shore up mental health outreach and support, especially for troubled young people. And politically difficult as it may be, we must deal with the instruments of destruction, keeping deadly weapons out of the hands of violent and deranged people and removing weapons of mass killing from our streets.

The horror of Sandy Hook must overcome any temptation to accept the unacceptable or to avoid responsibility for addressing the crying need for change.