

our Nation's law enforcement communities have been resolute and clear: Congress needs to support common sense measures, such as background checks for gun sales, to help stem the gun violence that plagues our Nation.

This is far from a revolutionary idea. Polls consistently show that approximately 90 percent of Americans support universal background checks. So do major law enforcement groups such as the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Major Cities Chiefs Association, the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, the National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, the Police Executive Research Forum and the Police Foundation. These groups, each of them dedicated to the safety of our people, tell us that the time is now to act to prevent more senseless gun violence.

The extension of background checks to all gun sales would go a long way toward making our neighborhoods safer. Today, anyone, including convicted felons and the mentally ill, can walk into a gun show and walk out with a deadly weapon. As Police Chief Ronald Haddad of Dearborn, MI put it in a letter he wrote to me this past April, "Police see firsthand the toll that gun violence takes in our schools, on our streets, and among our fellow officers—and we know from experience that our broken gun laws are a significant part of the problem."

This status quo has dangerous consequences. A 2004 Department of Justice survey found that 80 percent of prisoners who committed crimes with handguns got them through private transfers, where no background check is required. In many of these cases, a simple background check could have stopped a tragedy and saved lives by keeping a weapon out of the hands of someone who sought to use it for harm. As Baltimore County Police Chief James Johnson put it at a hearing of the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing earlier this year, "The best way to stop a bad guy from getting a gun in the first place is a good background check."

We should listen to the voices of those entrusted with the safety of our communities. We should listen to the officers who every day confront well-armed criminals who legally purchase weapons to turn on innocents. We should live up to the spirit of Peace Officers Memorial Day by passing the Safe Communities, Safe Schools Act of 2013, a common sense piece of legislation to protect our society from more senseless gun violence. We owe the brave law enforcement professionals who keep our communities safe nothing less.

#### WORLD WAR II VETERANS VISIT

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President. On June 16th, a group of World War II veterans

from Montana will be visiting our Nation's Capital.

With a great deal of honor and respect, I extend a hearty Montana welcome to each and every one of them.

Together, they will visit the World War II Memorial and share stories about their service. This journey will no doubt bring about a lot of memories. I hope it will give them a deep sense of pride as well.

What they achieved together almost 70 years ago was remarkable. That memorial is a testament to the fact that a grateful nation will never forget what they did or what they sacrificed. To us, they were our greatest generation. They left the comforts of their family and their communities to confront evil from Iwo Jima to Bastogne. Together, they won the war in the Pacific by defeating an empire and liberated a continent by destroying Hitler and the Nazis.

To them, they were simply doing their jobs. They enlisted in unprecedented numbers to defend our freedoms and our values. They represented the very best of us and made us proud.

From a young age, I remember playing the bugle at the memorial services of veterans of the first two World Wars. It instilled in me a profound sense of respect that I will never forget.

Honoring the service of every generation of American veterans is a Montana value. I deeply appreciate the work of the Big Sky Honor Flight, the nonprofit organization that made this trip possible.

To the World War II veterans making the trip, I salute you. We will always be grateful, and we will never forget your service or your sacrifice.

#### TRIBUTE TO SUSAN SULLAM

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President; I rise today for a moment of bittersweet reflection and the celebration of a dedicated public servant who has contributed greatly to the State of Maryland and our entire Nation. June 21st marks the final day that Susan Sullam will be working in my office as my communications director. We've traversed a 27-year journey together that started when I was first running for the House of Representatives. Over the years, with a combination of her quick writing and single-minded determination, she has helped me find my voice and articulate my positions during the very best and the very worst of times for me and our country. She has been a friend, trusted counselor, and a part of my extended family.

As a former editor at Knight-Ridder with an interest in politics, Susan became one of my first and few campaign workers. She was instrumental in helping me win my first election to the U.S. House of Representatives. And when I took office, she became my first press secretary. Somehow, Susan managed to give 110 percent of herself to her family and to her job.

Throughout our time working together, I have had the privilege of

watching Susan's daughters, Jennifer and Karen, grow into remarkable, professionally accomplished young women. She instilled in her girls the understanding that you really could raise a family and have a career without shortchanging either one. I am forever grateful to them and Susan's husband Brian for sharing her time with me and the people of Maryland. I know Susan's family is looking forward to their first dinner without her BlackBerry.

I have always thought that Susan was born to be a journalist. Her mother, Mary Jane Fisher, was an admired and respected journalist and publicist who worked for 25 years as the Washington correspondent for the National Underwriter, a publisher of insurance and financial services trade publications. She was a well-known figure on Capitol Hill, and she frequented hearings of the Ways and Means Committee, where I served.

During one particularly memorable Medicare hearing, I watched from the dais as three generations of this wonderful family all worked the room. Mary Jane was reporting for her publication; Susan was covering the hearing as my press secretary; and Susan's daughter Jennifer was serving as an intern in the Ways and Means press office that summer, reporting to her boss, now-Representative DAN MAFFEI of New York.

Susan has been witness to the good and bad of politics over the course of nearly three decades. We started together at a time of great optimism that Congress could make decisions and enact meaningful legislation. Susan worked tirelessly during the many iterations of health care reform; she was constantly and meticulous pulling together materials that would help explain how real families would benefit from the passage of the legislation. This was as true in the 1990s with Hillary Clinton, as it was just a few years ago when we finally passed the Affordable Care Act. Her congressional career also encompassed my time as a member of the House Ethics Committee. During this period, Susan was witness to the various undertakings of the committee as it carried out its authorization to investigate violations of the House of Code of Official Conduct by Members and staff, investigations that included the "House Bank" and the Speaker of the House.

But Susan's career was so much more. As I pushed to reshape our retirement system, Susan was there every step of the way with an article, interview, or a cable show designed specifically to get out the word to people who could benefit from the proposed legislative changes.

Some moments we have shared together tested our Nation, as well as our professional relationship. We came together as a family during 9/11, watching our Nation as it was grievously wounded. I voted against giving President George W. Bush the power to send