

Congress. Recently, my friend and colleague from Tucson, Congressman RON BARBER, himself a victim of gun violence which occurred during the tragic murders in Tucson—which included the serious wounding of our former colleague, Gabby Giffords—has also introduced legislation.

I am looking forward to being able to work with both Congressman MURPHY and Congressman BARBER, so that this Congress produces legislation to strengthen the opportunities to help people who are mentally ill.

We ought not to pretend that there is nothing we can do about these situations. Look at what happened with automobile safety. It has dramatically improved within a generation, once we stopped accepting the carnage on our roadways.

Auto deaths have been cut in half, serious injuries reduced, not with any single magic solution, but by patient, hard work involving step-by-step efforts to improve design and construction of automobiles, the education of drivers, and the enforcement of our laws.

Education, engineering, and enforcement can likewise make a big difference in reducing the epidemic of gun violence in America, and we certainly can do a better job of helping individuals and families in mental health crisis.

Let's not make a parody in The Onion be the reality of this Congress. Let's act. Tens of thousands of victims, past and future, including young Emilio Hoffman, demand our best efforts.

HONORING LINDA TOWSE FOR 35 YEARS OF SERVICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, Members of Congress rely a great deal on our staff for policy advice, research, interacting with constituents, and all of the other tasks that allow us to serve our districts.

Today, I would like to take a moment to recognize one member of my staff who has been the backbone of my office for over 35 years. Linda Towse started in my office on June 7, 1979, less than 2 months after I was elected.

Last week marked her 35th anniversary in our office. Before that, Linda worked with Senator Edward Brooke from Massachusetts. All told, Linda has been a congressional staffer for 42 years.

Always patient, always thoughtful, always thorough, Linda is what every Member wants in a staffer. She has helped countless Sixth District residents resolve issues with Federal agencies.

Hundreds of young people will remember Linda for her work coordinating their internship in my office or working with them while overseeing my service academy commission.

Birthdays are always remembered and celebrated thanks to her, and fellow staff rely on her years of wisdom and experience for learning the ropes and succeeding in their jobs.

She is our office historian and somehow locates any specific piece of paper when needed from the stack of papers on her desk.

We see staffers come and go, but it is rare to have one as dedicated as Linda and one who has served the Congress for over 40 years. Thank you, Linda, for your service to the Sixth District of Wisconsin over these many years.

CONGRATULATING AUDRA McDONALD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize Audra McDonald, an award-winning actress and singer from my hometown of Fresno, California.

Audra, who I have the pleasure of knowing personally, made history on Sunday, if you were watching the Tony Awards, when she received her sixth Tony Award. This win makes her the most statue-laden Tony Award winner in our Nation's history. Audra's most recent Tony Award was for her incredible portrayal of Billie Holiday in "Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill."

Audra, who grew up in Fresno, began her career with my friend Dan Pessano and the Good Company Players while attending Roosevelt High School. She then went on to graduate from the Juilliard School of New York in 1993. Audra has seen great success on Broadway, television, and in the opera.

In addition to having won three Tony Awards at the age of 28, Audra has also received numerous Grammy Awards, Drama Desk Awards, and Outer Critics Circle Awards. There is almost nothing that she hasn't performed in her field. She also has been able to display her talents at the White House and on the greatest stages in the world.

Audra is not only an exceptional actress, but also a wonderful, giving person. She actively gives back to her community and seeks to improve the lives of those around her, including her family.

Earlier this year, she held a benefit concert for Hands in the Community and is a supporter of marriage equality. She also sits on the advisory committee for Broadway Impact. Most importantly, she has always given credit to where credit is due, beginning with her parents who are respected educators in Fresno, who motivated and taught students as they taught Audra.

Audra McDonald is a source of pride and inspiration in the San Joaquin Valley and her hometown of Fresno, as well as around the world. I think it is important that we take special note of the talented people throughout our country who provide joy and the expe-

rience of the arts as this very, very fine individual has done, a star in her own right, Audra McDonald—hometown, Fresno, California.

FEDERAL RESERVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I have the Federal Reserve on my mind this morning.

You can't really get through the Federal Reserve in 5 minutes, Mr. Speaker, but I wanted to start down the road today because I saw a headline Bloomberg reported to say that what had been intended to be the beginning of an unwinding of a Federal Reserve balance sheet wasn't going to occur in the timely fashion that had been intended. This was news to me, based on what we have seen in the Budget Committee.

I have with me this morning the Federal Reserve Act authorization. Folks often wonder where the Federal Reserve comes from. The truth is it comes from the Federal Reserve Act.

I point to section 2A, "Monetary policy objectives." Its says that:

The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve and the Open Market Committee shall maintain long-run growth of the monetary and credit aggregates commensurate with the economy's long-run potential to increase production, so as to promote effectively the goals of maximum employment, stable prices, and moderate long-term interest rates.

Now, I know there are some high school economic students out there who are thinking: Hey, wait a minute. Can you really promote stable prices, maximum employment, and moderate long-term interest rates with the same set of policies?

I share that high school economics concern about whether or not those three goals can be pursued collectively, but this is the mandate the Federal Reserve has, and this is why the Federal Reserve is involved in what they are involved in.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what I have here is the Federal Reserve balance sheet. It goes back to 2007, back when the Federal Reserve balance sheet was relatively stable. By stable, I mean it was at about \$800 billion—\$800 billion, the balance sheet of the Federal Reserve.

I want you to watch on the chart as we go out through these stable times, right up until the balance sheet triples in 2008. Now, when we are trying to promote economic stability, the tripling of any government balance sheet should be of concern. The Federal Reserve balance sheet triples in 2008.

Mr. Speaker, I hold in my hand a hearing transcript from my very first month on the Budget Committee. That occurred 3 years ago. It was 2011, and Chairman PAUL RYAN was questioning Ben Bernanke, then the Federal Reserve chairman.