

parties to the conflict. This was a major contribution toward restoring peace to that region.

Furthermore, on October 22 of this year, Belarus released all of its very few political prisoners.

In response, the European Union and the United States have temporarily lifted economic sanctions. Hopefully, that temporary suspension of economic sanctions will become permanent as Belarus continues to improve its standing.

Exchanging ambassadors, as my resolution calls for, is a major step forward in the right direction. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution, which I will submit to the Congress right now.

COMMONSENSE GUN REFORM

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because passing commonsense gun legislation should really not be a partisan issue. What our country needs is commonsense gun reform, but many in this Chamber won't even take the first step: taking guns out of the hands of terrorists.

Time and time again, Republicans have voted to block debate. Let me say that again: a debate. They won't even let us discuss Congressman PETER KING's Denying Firearms and Explosives to Dangerous Terrorists Act, otherwise known as H.R. 1076. That is simply outrageous. We should debate, yes, and we should vote up or down on this important bill.

This bill, which I am proud to co-sponsor, would close a dangerous loophole that allows individuals on the government's no-fly list to legally purchase guns. Let me emphasize this. These are people who are deemed too dangerous to fly on planes, but they can and do purchase guns. If they are too dangerous to fly on an airplane, why aren't they too dangerous to have a weapon that fires 800 rounds per minute?

My Democratic colleagues and I remain committed to blocking dangerous individuals from buying guns, and we remain committed to stopping the senseless violence that has already taken too many lives in this country. It is past time to listen to the American people and not to the NRA.

REFORMING AMERICA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, just a few minutes ago I returned from the White House, where President Barack Obama signed historic reforms for elementary and secondary education into law.

I was proud to serve on the conference committee that was respon-

sible for settling the differences between the House and the Senate versions of the Every Student Succeeds Act, which has replaced No Child Left Behind.

This is legislation which has been years in the making and which will finally put the control of education back into the hands of our States, our schools, and, of course, our parents and teachers across the Nation.

It also calls for the U.S. Department of Education to study how title I funds are distributed. I have long been concerned that children are put at a disadvantage based on the populations of their school districts rather than on a concentration of poverty. I am hopeful that this study will make the argument for a more equitable method of distributing these funds to areas that are deeply affected by poverty.

This is a bill that I believe will make a real difference for students across the Nation. I was proud to see it gain overwhelming bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate.

AMERICA'S GUN VIOLENCE EPIDEMIC

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

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, we were elected to protect and serve the American people against all enemies, foreign and domestic. One of the best ways that we can uphold this sacred duty is to deal with the gun violence epidemic that we have in America, which claims the lives of more than 11,000 people each year.

One of the things that we should be doing is passing legislation to prevent individuals who are on the FBI's terrorist watch list, because they are suspected terrorists, from being able to purchase guns. To me, this seems to be a no-brainer.

If you are not able to fly because you are a suspected terrorist, you should not be able to purchase an AK-47, an AR-15, or another weapon of mass destruction which is not used to hunt deer, but is used to hunt human beings.

It is time for House Republicans to stop functioning as wholly owned subsidiaries of the NRA. It is time to cut the puppet strings from the gun lobby. It is time to do the business of the American people and pass sensible gun violence prevention legislation.

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT IS NOW LAW

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the enactment of the Every Student Succeeds Act.

This legislation passed the House and the Senate with overwhelming bipartisan support and was signed into law today by the President. Education is

not a partisan issue. At a time of political gridlock, I am proud to see both bodies and both parties come together to improve our education system.

The Every Student Succeeds Act repeals No Child Left Behind, gets rid of 49 wasteful and ineffective programs, and eliminates the Secretary of Education's coercion of States into adopting Common Core standards.

Most importantly, this legislation gets Washington out of our local classrooms and it restores control back to the school districts, teachers, and parents. These are the folks who know what our children need to succeed, not bureaucrats who are thousands of miles away.

As the son of two educators, I know that the future of Georgia's 12th District education system belongs in Georgia, not in Washington. As a member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, I am proud to see the Every Student Succeeds Act as the law of the land.

UPHOLDING THE SECOND AMENDMENT

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

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, given the challenges we face today with the economy and the labor force, I have watched since December 2 so much dishonesty on this floor concerning the actions on December 2 and the ability for terrorists to purchase weapons automatically.

FBI Director James Comey told the Senate Judiciary Committee that every time someone buys a weapon it is run through the FBI and they are notified if someone is on the no-fly list.

I am a little concerned with the other side of the aisle as they keep talking about having to protect our public when, in turn, they are taking away the Constitution of our Nation.

If the FBI is sent this information, it is reviewed. If the terrorists are actually buying weapons and walking the streets, they should be arrested, but they are not.

You can get on the no-fly list. I personally have been on the no-fly list. It took me 6 months to get off of it. They didn't tell me who put me on it, why I was put on it, and what it was the result from. Six months.

Yes, I am an NRA board member. But to have people say that terrorists are running around buying guns is an outright lie. I will say that on the floor. It is not true. It is part of the Constitution. We should uphold the Constitution.

When coming into office, I swore to uphold the Constitution. What they are talking about doing is against the Constitution. I will fight until my dying breath to make sure that we have the ability to retain the Second Amendment.