

morning, leaving 49 people dead and more than 50 wounded. Our hearts go out to the victims and their families. So many young people in the prime of their lives were senselessly murdered.

It is hard to make sense of it all, but there are three aspects of this tragedy that I want to address today:

First, the fact that the shooter pledged allegiance to ISIS is deeply disturbing. We need to follow every lead and find out if he did, indeed, have any connection to ISIS or any other terrorist group. We must pursue those who may have inspired him, trained him, or assisted him in his deadly act, and we must take action to prevent others from being radicalized and turned into deadly killing machines.

Second, we must acknowledge that this was a hate crime targeted at the LGBT community. The killer didn't pick his target randomly. He sought out gay, young men in a club environment where they felt safe, where they felt a sense of community and acceptance, and he sought to shatter their world and terrorize and intimidate the LGBT community.

I have worked with my friends in the LGBT community for a very long time, and one thing I am sure of is that they will not be intimidated; they will not be beaten down; they will not be forced into hiding; they will not be silenced. The community is strong, it is united, and it is unashamed. The LGBT community will come together to honor the dead and then will keep educating, keep advocating, keep mobilizing for a more fair, a more just society where no one has to live in fear because of who they are or whom they love.

Third, it is clear that far fewer people would have been killed or wounded if the attacker had not had access to a deadly assault weapon. Once again, the necessity of controlling access to military-style assault weapons, whose only purpose is to kill large numbers of people as quickly and efficiently as possible, is made tragically clear.

Our refusal to ban assault weapons makes this House complicit in this and every other mass murder that we now see on a regular basis. This Chamber is drenched in blood. We must cleanse it. We must pass the long-pending legislation to reinstitute the assault weapon ban. We ban machine guns, and we had an assault weapon ban not that long ago, so it is not a radical proposal. It is not counter to the Second Amendment. It is just common sense. And yet, President George W. Bush let the ban expire, and Republicans in Congress have acted repeatedly to prevent even our consideration of renewing the ban.

Every Member of Congress who has refused to support renewing the ban should be forced to answer to their constituents, to their country, and to the countless victims and their families who have suffered so much heartbreak due to gun violence.

How can you allow such carnage to go unchecked? How can you do nothing in the face of so much pain? Why won't

you stand up to the NRA and at least take the basic step to prevent mass murder? Why won't you ban people on the terrorist watch list from purchasing assault weapons? If someone is too dangerous to permit to fly, certainly he or she is too dangerous to permit to buy assault weapons.

And yet this Congress has done nothing except hold repeated moments of silence. That is not enough. This silence, combined with this inaction, makes hypocrites of us all. The American people are baffled by our silence. They demand more. They demand action, action to combat hate, to protect the LGBT community, and to control access to deadly weapons to prevent murderers and lunatics from getting assault weapons.

If the leadership of this Congress won't take action, then it ought to be replaced by a leadership that will.

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A DEDICATED EDUCATOR TO RETIRE

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

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Minnesota State Colleges and Universities chancellor Steven Rosenstone's upcoming retirement, and I thank him for his years of serving our State's higher education system.

Steven has dedicated his entire life to education, which began when he received his own degree from Washington University and a master's degree from the University of California, Berkeley. From there, he went on to teach political science at Yale University, and later at the University of Michigan.

In 1996, Steven came to Minnesota to serve as the dean of the College of Liberal Arts, where his hard work and vision ultimately led him to being named the chancellor of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities in February of 2011. During his time as the head of Minnesota's State schools, Steven implemented numerous policies that ensured a better and more affordable education for Minnesotans.

Thank you, Steven, for dedicating your life to helping others pursue their goals through education. We wish you a happy and restful retirement.

THE PRIDE OF MINNEAPOLIS TURNS 150

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 150th birthday of a fantastic Minnesota company, General Mills.

In 1866, Cadwallader Washburn started a mill that would eventually become General Mills. Located on the mighty Mississippi, the mill was the largest mill west of the Mississippi, causing the locals to name it "the pride of Minneapolis."

Throughout the years, the company flourished, even through the hardest of times. During the Great Depression, while many other companies went

under, General Mills thrived, creating popular products like Kix and Bisquick.

General Mills not only succeeded during these times, but extended a helping hand when it was needed. During World War II, 9 out of 10 employees worked on projects so vital to the war effort that armed guards patrolled the company.

Today, General Mills successfully markets many popular brands like Betty Crocker and Haagen-Dazs, creating jobs and making a major contribution to the great State of Minnesota and this country.

I would like to thank General Mills for feeding the Nation, and I wish them a happy 150th birthday. Here's to 150 more years of success.

HONORING ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY'S PRESIDENT EARL POTTER

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of St. Cloud State University president, Earl Potter, who was tragically killed in a car accident last night.

Earl was one of Minnesota's best and brightest educators, and he dedicated his entire life to this Nation's students, most recently serving Minnesota's Sixth District at St. Cloud State University. He brought innovation and positive change to St. Cloud State University over the past decade, preparing his students for life after college.

Not only was Earl Potter committed to the students within the St. Cloud community, but he dedicated his time and energy to serving the greater St. Cloud community and Minnesota as a whole. He served on the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, United Way of Central Minnesota Board of Directors, Greater St. Cloud Development Corporation, and the Minnesota National Guard Senior Advisory Task Force, among many others.

Earl's service extended well beyond the borders of our great State of Minnesota as well as with his service on nearly a dozen national academic boards. He was passionate about the universities he represented, the students he served, and the communities in which he lived.

We have suffered a huge loss in the St. Cloud community, and my deepest condolences go out to Earl's wife Christine, their children and grandchildren, and their loved ones across the country. The work that Earl has done for our community will be his living legacy.

REMEMBERING THE ORLANDO SHOOTING VICTIMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, Stanley Almodovar, III. Amanda Alvear. Antonio Davon Brown. Darryl Roman Burt, II. Angel L. Candelario-Padro. Luis Daniel Conde. Cory James Connell. Tevin Eugene Crosby. Deonka

Deidra Drayton. Leroy Valentin Fernandez. Simon Adrian Carrillo Fernandez. Mercedes Marisol Flores. Peter O. Gonzalez-Cruz. Juan Ramon Guerrero. Paul Terrell Henry. Frank Hernandez. Miguel Angel Honorato. Javier Jorge-Reyes. Jason Benjamin Josaphat. Eddie Jamoldroy Justice. Anthony Luis Laureanodisla. Christopher Andrew Leinonen. Alejandro Barrios Martinez. Juan Chevez-Martinez. Brenda Lee Marquez McCool. Gilberto Ramon Silva Menendez. Oscar A. Aracena-Montero. Kimberly Morris. Akyra Monet Murray. Luis Omar Ocasio-Capo. Geraldo A. Ortiz-Jimenez. Eric Ivan Ortiz-Rivera. Joel Rayon Paniagua. Jean Carlos Mendez Perez. Enrique L. Rios, Jr. Jean C. Nives Rodriguez. Xavier Emmanuel Serrano Rosado. Christopher Joseph Sanfeliz. Yilmarty Rodriguez Solivan. Edward Sotomayor, Jr. Shane Evan Tomlinson. Martin Benitez Torres. Jonathan Antonio Camuy Vega.

We will never forget. And while we mourn your loss, your memory will inspire us to fight for change.

TIME FOR ACTION

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because thoughts and prayers are not enough. It is time for action.

The hateful terrorist attack targeting America's LGBT community in Orlando is another reminder to come together and work across party lines to root out terrorism, prevent gun violence, and put an end to bigotry of all kinds. An attack on one American is an attack on all of us.

We cannot allow partisanship to define this debate. We must take decisive and united actions to ensure that nothing like the attacks on Orlando, Paris, Newtown, or San Bernardino ever happen again.

Congress should immediately move forward and pass the Denying Firearms and Explosives to Dangerous Terrorists Act. This commonsense bill would prohibit suspected terrorists from possessing guns or explosives. Keeping dangerous weapons out of the hands of people who wish to do our country harm is a solution that we should all be able to get behind.

The hateful attack in Orlando also reminds us once more of the growing threat of ISIS-inspired radical Islamic terrorist on U.S. soil is real and cannot be ignored or downplayed.

Congress must reassert leadership in the fight against ISIS by passing legislation to hold the President accountable for developing a comprehensive plan to destroy ISIS.

Through congressional oversight hearings, we must also ensure that Federal agencies and local law enforcement are effectively communicating with each other to identify international and homegrown terror threats through both traditional security approaches and social media.

Internationally, Congress must act to cut off sources of funding to other radical Islamic terror groups by restoring crippling sanctions on Iran. The recent agreement, which, frankly, shipped billions of dollars to the world's largest state sponsor of terror while helping finance organizations like Hamas and Hezbollah, is simply unacceptable.

At home, we cannot allow the tired, partisan bickering to distract us from the difficult but necessary work of preventing gun violence. We need to bridge the partisan divide and put the best interests of our country before politics.

A good first step is the legislation that I helped introduce with former Congresswoman Gabby Giffords to require universal background checks on firearm purchases. The vast majority of the American people support this commonsense idea, and it is past time Congress moves forward with this proposal that will keep more people safe.

We also need to improve communications so that local law enforcement is notified when someone attempts to purchase a gun and fails a required background check. My colleague, Congressman MIKE QUIGLEY, introduced a commonsense bill to make this fix, which I strongly support.

Other important efforts to prevent gun violence include my bill with Congresswoman DEBBIE DINGELL to prevent domestic abusers from being able to purchase weapons. This proposal would help, again, prohibit firearm trafficking used to evade background checks, and also, a long-overdue increase in mental health resources.

In short, there are numerous commonsense proposals, Mr. Speaker, that will keep guns out of the hands of those that should not have them while protecting our Second Amendment rights. It is time that we take action.

Mr. Speaker, there is no quick and easy solution to all the problems underscored by the Orlando terrorist attack, but if we are able to set aside partisan differences and unite in the best interests of our Nation, we can make serious strides in the ongoing efforts to keep Americans safe and prevent future atrocities.

WE ARE ALL ORLANDO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I went down to the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village in New York City, where the modern gay rights movement really began.

I went there to leave some flowers in honor of those members of the LGBT community who lost their lives in the massacre—the worst mass shooting in American history—at Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida.

While I stood there in solidarity with a somber crowd of allies and members

of the LGBT community, it occurred to me that, just as the events at Stonewall were a turning point in the gay rights movement, this horrific attack in Orlando may serve as a turning point of its own because it is time for all of us to stand up together and say: Enough. We will not be silent. This madness must end.

And make no mistake, it is utter madness that a man with a history of domestic violence, a man who had been investigated by the FBI for his possible ties to terror, could buy an assault weapon as easily as he could buy an aspirin.

In the Pulse massacre, this man armed with an AR-15 military-type assault rifle, a weapon that he bought legally, killed 49 people and injured 50 more.

□ 1100

Earlier, at an elementary school in Connecticut, another madman with an AR-15-style assault weapon killed 26 children and their teachers. And in a theater in Aurora, Colorado, one man with one AR-15 assault weapon killed 12 and wounded 70.

In each of these mass casualty events, it took one gun and one man to brutally take so many innocent lives. In each case, the gun was an assault weapon.

Assault weapons are designed to do one thing very well, and that is to kill people very rapidly. They aren't used for hunting. They aren't used for self-defense. They are used as weapons of war.

So why is it so easy for people to purchase them and hurt others?

That is why, in 1994, three United States Presidents—President Ford, President Carter, and President Reagan—all signed a letter to the House of Representatives calling for a Federal ban on military-style assault weapons. I will place their meaningful letter into the RECORD.

MAY 3, 1994.

TO MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: We are writing to urge your support for a ban on the domestic manufacture of military-style assault weapons. This is a matter of vital importance to the public safety. Although assault weapons account for less than 1% of the guns in circulation, they account for nearly 10% of the guns traced to crime.

Every major law enforcement organization in America and dozens of leading labor, medical, religious, civil rights and civic groups support such a ban. Most importantly, poll after poll shows that the American public overwhelmingly support a ban on assault weapons. A 1993 CNN/USA Today/Gallup Poll found that 77% of Americans support a ban on the manufacture, sale, and possession of semiautomatic assault guns, such as the AK-47.

The 1989 import ban resulted in an impressive 40% drop in imported assault weapons traced to crime between 1989 and 1991, but the killing continues. Last year, a killer armed with two TEC9s killed eight people at a San Francisco law firm and wounded several others. During the past five years, more than 40 law enforcement officers have been killed or wounded in the line of duty by an assault weapon.