

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.

□ 1045

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