from the Department of Education, to Health and Human Resources, to the Department of Justice, but as well we need to work with local and State government. All of us need to be concerned about providing more mental health services and more services to the American public.

We must fight against stigma. We must ensure in particular that our children who have been receiving special education do find that special education, albeit it is a very good program, it is not the only way out, that our children can have access to the needed mental health services that they may need to have.

We heard from Sue, an adoptive parent, who had 22 children. She asked us, do not leave out the parent. Provide the kind of holistic approach where parent, in this case Sue, can be the advocate for the child, for example, if she is 5 years old and she is taken to a juvenile center, they might do something to that.

We have found that 80 percent of the teenagers in juvenile detention have behavioral or emotional problems. We are finding a large number of our teenagers have attempted suicide or committed suicide. This is particularly prevalent in all of our various racial and ethnic groups, and particularly in groups that, we were told, are immigrant groups, like the Pacific Asian population who are facing deportation. If, as a juvenile, they have committed some grievance and wind up being taken to a juvenile center, they have the potential now under the 1996 immigration law to be deported.

We are finding in youth who are gay and lesbian that they are being attacked as being different, and therefore have a high degree of suicide. No group should be left out, no group should be stigmatized.

We also determined that there are not enough child psychiatrists in our Nation. One community, one large county, had one half-time child psychiatrist. When they were referring children to get services, they went to the county and were told, “We can only take care of children ages 5 to 9. We do not have any services for children under 5 years old.” It is well-known in the study of the brain that there is a great impact on babies, 0 to 5 years old, in fact that the fact that we have an ability to diagnose mental illness now and to do so by determining the brain’s illnesses, if you will, so that we should not leave anyone out.

We also have found out unfortunately that with HMOs we have had less care as it relates to mental illness. There needs to be a continuum of care. If a pediatrician sees a child that is troubled and refers that child to a psychologist for help with the parents’ consent, the HMO willy-nilly may decide to change and not allow the continuum of care, and therefore that child breaks the cycle of care with that psychiatrist, which tells me that it is now time to pass the Patients’ Bill of Rights. It is now time to ensure that the care that has been promised to a child and to realize that HMOs must serve us and we do not serve them.

A parent from Indiana said we must stop forcing parents to hit their heads against a brick wall, to provide services for them that they can reach out to, that they can get to. It is all right to say take your child over here across town and you cannot get a bus or train or cannot get the resources to get them to that.

Then we must realize that the resources that parents have, that people of all economic levels have, must be consistent, so that Medicaid goes only to the cardiocare. So if you are a parent and you are a cardholder and have Medicaid, you may not be able to provide the kind of care you need for your child, or vice versa.

"1930"

It is important that we talk to HCFA and others so that the continuing of funding sources will be provided.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that this was an eye-opening day. I will be offering a piece of legislation, Give a Kid a Chance omnibus mental health legislation for our children of America.

It is time to get to work. It is time to pass good health care and good mental health care.

TIME TO PASS COMMONSENSE GUN SAFETY LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURA) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON MENTAL HEALTH

Ms. DELAURA. Mr. Speaker, before we begin our commentary this evening, I want to congratulate my colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and my colleague from California who spoke earlier about the White House Conference on Mental Health.

I had the honor to participate in that event as well today, and just very, very quickly, I think it is clear that we need to focus on the issue of mental health. It is so critical in our society.

One, we cannot divorce these things from the rest of the body. We need to have the recognition that mental illness is an illness like other physical illnesses that people have. We need to destigmatize it.

We need to provide, most essentially, insurance coverage in the same way that we provide insurance coverage for physical illnesses. There needs to be parity for mental illnesses. We should consider that good mental health is good public health, and we need to promote that effort. So I compliment my colleague on her comments.

This evening I am pleased to join with other colleagues, because we recognize that this is an important week for this Congress. Two weeks ago the United States Senate did the right thing. It is now time for the House of Representatives to do the right thing. That is to pass gun safety legislation for children in our country.

Thirteen children every single day are killed by guns in America. By comparison, there was an interesting statistic, that we lose one police officer every other day. That means it is more dangerous to be a child in America than it is to be a law enforcement officer. That is wrong. We need to pass commonsense gun safety laws in order to protect the children in this country.

Democrats in this body are a minority. We need votes from Republicans, from the other side of the aisle, to pass any piece of legislation. I believe that 85 percent of the Democrats in this body will vote for commonsense gun safety legislation to protect our youngsters. We need 20 percent of our Republican colleagues in the House to say no to their leadership and to join us to try to do the right thing.

We can in fact pass strong bipartisan gun safety legislation for children in this body. That has been the historical past. In 1995 with the Brady Bill, with an assault weapons ban, these pieces of legislation happened because thoughtful, reflective people came together on both sides of the aisle to say that this makes sense for our country. We have the opportunity to do that again this week. I happen to believe that American families and American children are counting on us to do our jobs.

What we have seen in the last couple of weeks, there were a number of us who wanted to try to pass this legislation before we left Memorial Day break, but we were told that we needed to come back to have hearings, that there needed to be a more thoughtful approach to how we dealt with this.

What has happened in the interim, and I think it is important to note this, unfortunately, the National Rifle Association, they asked for this delay and they received a two-week delay from the Republican leadership in this House.

This was designed to give the NRA time to generate a campaign of fear in an attempt to influence this vote, to water down the provisions that were passed by the United States Senate around which there was agreement that these were good pieces that everybody could agree to.

The NRA has generated that campaign of fear. That is what they have been doing. I just want to read briefly from a letter that was sent out over
the weekend from the NRA. It is an astounding example of big money propaganda, but it has little relationship to the truth.

If I can just read one or two excerpts, and I quote, “What the Clinton-Gore-Lautenberg-Schumer legislation would do is to impose a cradle-to-grave massive Federal regulatory scheme on gun owners throughout America, and that is no exaggeration.’’

The second item, this legislation, “It gives the Federal Government open-ended authority to issue phone-book sized volumes of new Federal red tape on Americans who buy and sell firearms. It gives the Federal Government authority to keep names and addresses of citizens in FBI files, even after they are cleared as honest people entitled to buy firearms. It imposes virtually unlimited background checks on whether or not you are selling guns, buying guns, or organizing or attending a gun show.”

The final item, again I quote, “None of this has a thing to do with the Littleton, or the school attacks or any violent crime anywhere in America. It has everything to do with an attempt by gun haters and the enemies of your Second Amendment freedoms to dismantle the Second Amendment, one step at a time.”

That they could comment to say that the Nation has not focused its mind, hearts, and energy on what happened in Littleton, Colorado, or in Conyers, Georgia, this is mind-boggling. They say it has nothing to do with this event. It has nothing to do with Georgia?

I say, I do not understand where these people come from. This has everything to do with Littleton, Colorado, or in Conyers, Georgia. This has everything to do with parents who today are afraid to send their children to schools. They are afraid of utilizing what has been the route to opportunity and success in this country, the classroom, the schoolroom.

I heard a fifth-grader last night in Orange, Connecticut, say that schools used to be the safest place to be. She, this little mite of a person, was reading her little statement at a town meeting, and she said, “I have had to ask myself and my classmates whether or not this could happen in my school. And I have to answer that yes. And it makes me sad and it makes me afraid.”

All we are asking for in this body, again, on this side of the aisle, is let us pay attention to the hue and cry of the American public in asking us to try to do something to bring some sense out of fear and some sense out of chaos. Parents and teachers are pleading with us to respond. We are in the midst of a national crisis.

Frankly, in my view there is no need for this kind of propaganda where the safety of our kids is concerned. We do not need to be engaged in hyperbole. We need to be very careful about this issue. We need to be very thoughtful and reflective about this issue.

Mr. Speaker, my good colleague, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN MCCARTHY), mentioned that I came here to Congress to bring some sense to this issue of gun safety. This has a lot of personal significance for me. I have a son who was 11 years old when I came here to Congress. And in 1999 it was this issue of gun safety very, very personally because, as my son started to grow into a young man. People come up and they ask me, what is going on out there? Why are people shooting their kids? My son was asked this question at a town meeting the day after he graduated from high school. He had to answer that yes. And it makes me sad and it makes me afraid.”

I remember reading a story in the wake of the Littleton shooting where a Colorado parent said that his 5-year-old asked him, and I quote, “Dad, are they just shooting the big kids, or are they shooting the little kids, too?” Do we want to live in a country where 5-year-olds fear for their lives? Or is it the case that we are going to continue to see big bands of kids here in America, people writing, calling, and having town meetings like the one that I went to last night on a beautiful Sunday evening in Connecticut, in Orange, Connecticut; 200 people willing to sit for almost 3 hours to express their views on what should be done to deal with youth violence in this country.

Everywhere that I go these days people come up and they ask me, what is Congress doing to try to address this issue of gun violence? I went to a meeting where I was talking about social security and Medicare, and a woman stopped me as I was leaving. She grabbed my arm and she said to me, Rosa, she says, you are going back to Congress next week. Is there anything that is going to be done about the violence? She says, can you do something about gun legislation?

She says, I have two grandchildren. Both of them were forced to leave school 2 weeks ago because they had to be evacuated. They are in Indiana; a little girl who is 5 years old. I live in Connecticut, her grandparents are in Indiana, scared to death because these kids had to be evacuated from their classroom because of the fear that is out there.

I read an article on gun safety in the New York Times about a town meeting where there was a discussion on gun violence. One of the speakers said that my generation had lost the battle against gun violence. I said, I said, I will not live in a country where my generation is the generation that lost this battle.

We could make some very small changes in our laws that could make a big difference in people’s lives. Close the gun show loophole and apply the Brady background checks at gun shows, require child safety locks to be sold with every gun, raise the eligibility age for owning a firearm from 18 to 21, and ban the sale of high capacity ammunition clips. These are simple changes in our laws that could be made within weeks.

The issue of youth violence is not an easy one. It is a complex one. We need to have parents take greater responsibility for their children. We need the entertainment industry to take responsibility for its products. We need to ensure that our children have access to the mental health care that they need, that we talked about today at this conference.

But we must also curb our children’s access to guns. We should pass this commonsense gun safety legislation this week. The American people believe we are dependent on us.

Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is someone who is truly a leader in this House of Representatives on this issue, someone for whom we have in this body, all of us, a tremendous amount of admiration; a woman who has demonstrated such unbelievable courage in the face of tragedy in her own life, who has taken on this issue of gun safety, and taken her own personal experience and turned it in a way to drive energy and vision and inspiration to trying to bring some sense to this issue of gun safety.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN MCCARTHY).

Mrs. McCarthy of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, my good colleague, the gentlewoman from Connecticut, mentioned that I came here to Congress to try and make a difference in people’s lives. Six years ago I used to work in my garden a lot. I worked as a nurse. My husband and I used to go skiing in the winter, and my son was starting a new job. Then, on December 7th, Pearl Harbor Day, an incident happened on Long Island which certainly affected my life and many lives on Long Island.

That day I lost my husband. That day my son almost died, and my world became upside down. It is almost 6 years now, and I take this issue of gun safety very, very personally because, as my son started to recover, he said, “Mom, what is going on out there? Why are people shooting each other?” It was at that point that I vowed that I would try and make a difference. It was at that point that I vowed that, if I could save one family going through what we on Long Island went through, then that would be my job.
As a nurse, I have always looked at things as holistic. I have always looked at things as common sense. I said, wait, obviously we have just got to tell the story, obviously we have just got to reach out to the American people and say, listen, we can make a difference out here. We can save people’s lives. Never once did I ever think of taking away the right of someone to own a gun that never came into my mind.

But there was more that we could do to make sure that criminals did not get their guns. There was more that we could do so that children did not accidentally find a gun and use it. There was more that we could do to save families from going through the pain that we all did. Then in 1996, my Representative decided to vote to repeal the assault weapons law. It would not have helped my husband, and it would not have helped my son, and it would not have helped the people in the beginning of the car. But I would have to say it would have helped three young people on the other end of the car because Colin Ferguson used a clip that had 15 bullets in it. He was able to get two clips off before courageous people were able to tackle him. With the assault weapons bill, we brought that down to 10 bullets a clip.

I will be very honest with my colleagues. I did not know enough about guns, I did not know enough about what was going on out there. But one of the things I did find out from asking my hunters, “Do you use these large capacity clips? Did you use them for deer hunting?” They said “Oh, absolutely not. You are not allowed to. You have to be a sportsman.” I said, “Well let me get this right. Large capacity clips, people can buy them up to 15, 30, sometimes 60, sometimes 90 clips in one round, but we will give the animals in the forest, we will give the birds a better chance than a human being.”

I could not understand that. Why did we have to fight so hard to get it down to 10 clips? Colin Ferguson did not miss one week of therapy. What would have happened if he had used. We had that law passed then, maybe three young people on the other end of the train would have survived. We do not know. Because the good news is, once the law was passed, we do not have a count on how many people were saved because we do not have a statistic anymore.

But I remember that debate back then, because I was part of it. I remember the NRA leadership at that time saying this is the slippery road. We are going to take away the right of everyone to own a gun. That has not happened. That was back in 1994. Now here we are in 1999. We have had eight shootings in our schools. We have lost too many children and too many were wounded.

I would be focusing on so many different issues. The gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) talked about mental health. As a nurse, I can tell my colleagues that is something that we have to work with especially in our schools. Our children seem to be under so much pressure today. We have a lot of things that we can work on together, working with the parents, working with the schools, working with our community police to try and stop these tragedies. But people are forgetting because they do not make the newspapers. When we lose 13 young people a day, that is a Littleton every single day. We cannot lose focus on that.

But one of the things that upsets me, again, is asking us to try and keep saying the word “leadership” for a reason, because I have a lot of NRA members in my district. I talked to them, and I said, “This is what we are trying to do. Do you see anything wrong with this? Is there anything wrong with a child having a safety lock?” They said, “CAROLYN, we already store our guns correctly. We take those precautions.” Do my colleagues know what, almost every hunter does.

Do we not concerned about those that actually know how to store their guns, but we have so many people today that just go out and buy a gun, do not learn how to use it, bring it home, and leave it in the home. That is an inviting disaster. That is an inviting disaster.

What are we trying to do is modest, and they will say, the NRA leadership, that it is not going to save anyone’s life. I have heard this debate for so many years. We have heard, “If we do this, they will have drug problems, they will have alcohol problems, they will have mental health problems, and yet they are not losing over 30,000 people a year or they are not losing over 5,000 children under the age of 18 every single year.

There is something wrong here. All I am asking is for this House to put forward what the Senate put forward. All I am asking is, if we can bring gun violence down in this country. Let us see if we can do this.

As I said, what the Senate has put forward are modest steps. Do I think that we should be able to do more? Yes. Will that debate hopefully come in the future? I hope so. But this week let us see where the House is. It is a week ago Thursday, I sat with the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) on the juvenile justice committee, and I said there. I am usually a very optimistic person, but by the time we left that committee hearing, I said, oh, my God. We are not going to get anything done. The NRA leadership is going to come into this committee and water down those modest bills that were passed. Child safety locks. Closing the loopholes in so many of our laws.

Yet, if my colleagues listen to the NRA leadership, and unfortunately so many of their members will read this and get scared, they will get scared because they will say they are trying to take away my right to own a gun, there is nothing in the bills that we are trying to be passed, hopefully this week, that will take away the right of a legal citizen, a legal person to buy a gun.

Will there be some inconveniences? Yes, there will be. But do my colleagues know what? Again, talking to gun owners, women gun owners, men gun owners, they are willing to take that inconvenience if it can save a child’s life, if it can save someone’s life.

We see statistics that gun violence has come down in this country as far as homicides. What no one talks about is what it is costing this health care system. Because of medical technology, thank God, are saving people. That is not a statistic.

My son is a statistic. He survived. He was not supposed to live. But there is no count on him and what it has cost this country to get him where he is today and the struggles that he has to go through on a daily basis to keep what he has worked so hard to get.

People do not realize, when someone is injured as severely as Kevin was, he has to have physical therapy three times a week. He has to work out every single day. He is one person. Multiply that by all the accidents and certainly intentional shootings that happen in this country on a daily basis.

I estimate that a healthy cost from $2 billion to $3 billion a year that it is costing our health care system. $2 billion to $3 billion a year. Gosh what we could do with that money. Gosh, we could push that into education. We could put that into our health care system. We could help our senior citizens. We could help our veterans. Yet, they do not want us to do anything.

There are many Members here, good Members that are petrified of the NRA leadership, and they should be. They should be.

What I am asking the American people, what I am asking every mother, every father, we need to hear from your voice starting now and going through until we get good legislation passed that could hopefully save a child’s life, hopefully save a family from going through the grief that so many families go through, because I have to tell everyone I think, there are so many of us as victims that have been fighting so long for this, many victims before me, and the only reason we got involved is because we did not want another family to go through this.
That is my job. That is why I am here. It is a job that I would love to be able to finish and go home to my garden, my booth, and maybe have some time to go skiing. But until that job is done, I am going to stay here, and I am going to fight tooth and nail, because that is what the people of my area voted me in for.

We have a long way to go. I am asking those Members that I know will have a tough time to stand up. But if the American people do not stand with them, they are going to have too many Members here that are going to be afraid to vote on legislation that could save lives.

Let us have a chance for a change, let us try and do the right thing for a change, let us see if we can do common sense legislation and maybe, this is the people on a daily basis that we will see a drop, even more so in homicide. Maybe we will see a drop in suicides in our young people. Maybe we will see accidental deaths come down even more.

But it will be amazing if we see a drop in the amount of money that is spent on health care on a daily basis for those that are surviving. We have an opportunity here. We have a moral obligation here. The women of this Congress have to stand up and stand together. But again, the American people on a grassroots front have to have their voices heard, because I will tell them, the NRA leadership will win again; and we as Americans will actually be the losers.

I thank my colleagues for taking this stand. I thank them for standing with us to try and make a difference.

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my thanks to the gentlewoman. We thank her for her courage, we thank her for her optimism. She is truly an inspiration for all of us. And what she has said, I, too, and I know my other colleagues here tonight believe, as she does, that the American people will stand tall with us. They have to know we are willing to take that first step, and I believe that they will be with us.

I want the gentlewoman to know that she gives us all really great courage to try to do the right thing and we thank her so very much.

The gentlewoman also said one thing about inconvenience, and it will be an inconvenience in the same way that seat belts are an inconvenience in this country, the same way that metal detectors at airports are an inconvenience. But they happen to save lives, and so we swallow hard or we get annoyed, but we buckle up and we take whatever jewelry or change out of our pockets as we go through those metal detectors because it does make a difference.

I thank the gentlewoman for making a difference.

I would now like to recognize the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE). And as part of this debate and discussion because we are some of us who are here tonight have been the subject of commentary that would say that the only thing that we believe as part of the issue of youth violence is gun legislation, and that is so totally not the case. There is a number of people who were at the mental health conference today and precisely there because there is an unbelievable need in our schools to integrate mental health services for our youngsters.

That is part of this puzzle. That is so much a part of this puzzle of youth violence, of engaging teachers and administrators and law enforcement people to understand and to recognize signs of difficulty that students may be having and to help them to get the services that they need. And I know my colleague from Texas is a big proponent of that effort in the same way that she is a proponent of trying to do something about gun safety legislation in this country. We are not one-dimensional people on the floor of this House tonight.

And so I yield to my colleague from Texas. Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut for her leadership and for the really smart and determined approach to the challenge that we have before us, allowing us to hear from the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. McCARTHY), a person who does not walk as a victim, although she has been a victim. She is a surviving victim who lost her husband and saw her son fight for his life. But I think what we have seen this evening is persistence.

I spoke yesterday to a group of graduates, and I challenged them at the Morning Star Full Gospel Baptist Church as to whether or not they were a part of the membership or the movement. Many times Members of Congress are not perceived to be in a movement. In fact, some would argue that that is not a good forum to legislate, being in a movement, because it suggests that we only hear one side, that we are so single-visioned or tunnel-visioned that we cannot see all shapes and sizes.

But I think we have cause now to be in a movement around an issue that needs the energy of a collective group of individuals, Republicans and Democrats to say, now is the time to pass this legislation. Not because we have tunnel vision, because we do not want to look back over our shoulders and see any more violence that we might have prevented, such as that at Columbine High School, Littleton, Colorado; Georgia; Jonesboro, Pennsylvania; and other places unnamed.

My colleague is right. I think it is important for the American people to realize that we are not one-dimensional. And I mentioned the legislation, Give a Kid a Chance, the omnibus health services bill. And I am looking at it now, and it is 18 pages. We are not one-dimensional. There is a need for comprehensive mental health services for children. There is a need for the entertainment industry to be responsible.

I believe, as I see my colleague here from New York, that there is a need for us to be in a movement. And why is that? Because I grew up in the generation that saw John F. Kennedy shot dead with a gun, the same generation that saw Robert Kennedy shot dead with a gun, and then saw Martin Luther King shot dead with a gun. Yet I did not rise up and castigate the second amendment, as my friends in the National Rifle Association suggest that we have done.

I did, as a council member, pass gun safety and responsibility legislation, holding adults responsible for not putting away their guns. And we saw a 50 percent drop in accidents by children. Not one hunter in the State of Texas was prohibited from using his or her gun.

And yesterday, again in another speech before the State Department of Corrections in the State of Texas, I challenged my fellow Texans. I said, I know we are known to love our guns here. I might have been on foreign ground, I said, but it is important for me to say to my fellow Texans that we in Congress are not taking away anyone’s guns. We are not dismantling the Second Amendment. The Senate bill, the provisions that were passed and that will hopefully be passed in this House if we are part of a movement, has nothing to do with anyone’s love and admiration for the gun collection, antique gun collection. What it has to do with is saving lives.

I am really tired of hearing “guns don’t kill, people do.” But people take guns and kill, and they do it dangerously, they do it criminally, but they also do it accidentally. They do it by way of the fact that there are 260 million guns in this country, even more than people in the United States, and children get guns. And I believe it is now imperative that we become part of a movement.

I would almost say to the gentlewoman from Connecticut that we appear on this floor every single day and that we reach out to those who would come by train or bus, or however we do this, to be part of a movement, because I believe if we lose this time, all the work that I may do, that we may do collectively on mental health, with the entertainment industry, working with police and teachers and providing more school counselors, which many of my colleagues have been involved in, along with the gentlewoman from Connecticut; people like the gentleman
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CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

from California (Mr. Miller), so in-
strumental; the gentleman from Wis-
consin (Mr. Oxley); the gentleman from
Michigan (Mr. Bonior); the gentleman
from Texas (Mr. Proest), my colleague,
we could call the role.

So many of our colleagues on the
other side of the aisle have worked on
so many issues that I take great off-
ense at hearing the term "tunnel vi-
sion" when there are so many things
we are working on. But if we do not get
to the gun issue, we are going to lose it
and the multiple ammunition clip that
was passed in the Senate. Yes, we did
something back in 1993, but we left out
all the used and secondhand ammuni-
tion clips that are still in the cycle of
commerce.

I just want to share with my col-
leagues, as I respond to a few points
and legislation. I hope they were seri-
something about this thing called blind-
ness to the fact that we have so many
guns. Speaking to an undercover agent
of the Alcohol, Tobacco and Fire-
arms Agency, and I spent a good few
hours with the gentleman, he said he
can buy guns on almost every street
corner. Of course, they only have about
2,000 agents. Not enough to do the job
we need them to do.

But he went to one lady and said,
"I'm going east to shoot a police of-
icer." And this is not something I would
like to say, but she told him a gun and
she said, "By the way, if you're going
to do that, why don't you take a sil-
encer. Make your job better. And if
you get caught, don't remember my
name."

This is someone purchasing a gun out
of the back of a station wagon, some-
one's so-called personal collection. And
that is the reason why we need regul-
ation of our gun shows and we need to
ensure that those who can purchase instan-
t checks, because probably if that person was not
an undercover agent, as he was, an
instant gun check might be able to find
out that is a criminal trying to do crim-
inal acts. But we have refused to do that.

And, yes, my colleague indicated
that a week or so ago the Sub-
committee on Crime of the Committee
on the Judiciary, of which I am a mem-
ber, had a hearing in order to propel
this legislation, that is serious. I hope
the chairman was serious about that
hearing, because what that
means is we should be prepared to
mark up this legislation.

And we had representation, in trying
to fair, from the National Rifle As-
sociation. And, frankly, I am glad we
did. I do not want anyone to suggest that in
this movement that we have here on
the floor of the House that we are not
listening to everyone's claims in oppo-
sition. And, boy, did they have an op-
position.

The National Rifle Association
thought almost everything we proposed
was wrong. Unfortunately, they did not
see the value in ensuring that guns
should be kept out of the hands of chil-
dren, that we should require people to
have a license, if you will, up that we
should close the loophole on the gun
show sales.

I want to share with my colleagues
briefly some of the things they believe,
and they are sending out to their mem-
bers, although I know a Captain Spivey,
of Harris County, a National Rifle As-
sociation member, and he stands with
me, a constable, a police officer, and
says, "You are right. Pass those laws. I
am with you, and I am an NRA mem-
ber."

I wonder how many members of the
NRA would step aside from their lead-
ership and stand with us.

Listen to some of these points that
they are saying that our bill will do.
The Executive Director Wayne LaPierre,
says that our legisla-
tion "Can prevent your law-abiding son
from inheriting his grandpa's shotgun
collection." Our bill deals with selling
on doors and asking people to dis-
pose of all their guns. There is no one knock-
ing on doors and asking people to dis-
pose of all their guns. This is not true.

So I would just simply say to my
friends in the National Rifle Associa-
tion, when they write someone like Mi-
ichael, and I am reading a letter they
have sent out across the country, that
they should tell Michael the truth.

When they sent a letter to tell Michael
that he needs to act immediately, and
I am reading a letter from the National
Rifle Association of America to Dear
Michael. "In the next 2 weeks your
Congressman, Congresswoman is going
to cast the most critical gun vote in
over 5 years."

They name a few Senators. They
throw the names of Bill Clinton and AL
Gore in this letter to suggest that this
is wrong. They lump in every gun ban
bitterly, saying they are all lumped
there, they say, "Don't let anyone tell you the vote
that is going to take place in the House
is about instant checks at gun shows.
That is the party line, but don't buy it.

"What this legislation is about is, it
will impose a cradle-to-grave massive
Federal regulatory scheme on gun own-
ers throughout America. And that is no
exaggeration."

They tell their readers to read a fax
sheet, and they say, "We cannot beat
this. Back up, if you help now, it will
be enough to win. The great thing
about our country is when you
call, when you write, and when you get
your views heard, you have an enor-
mous power, Michael. If you help us
today, you can beat the national
New York Times. The Washington Post, and all the enemies
of the Second Amendment who would
dismantle the foundation of freedom in
this country, brick by brick."

I love the Bill of Rights. We did a lot
with it in this last session in the Com-
mitee on the Judiciary. We held the
Constitution in our hands a lot in deal-
ning with impeachment. But I would
simply say to my colleagues that I
would hope that we in America are bet-
ter than this letter. I really hope we
understand what the second amend-
ment is all about. I hope we understand
the First Amendment, the Bill of
Rights, and I hope we understand the
Declaration of Independence, that we
all are created equal.

I hope the National Rifle Association
and its leadership will become part of
a movement that says we count our chil-
dren first. And that movement is to
promote and care and love our chil-
dren that we are not putting our guns
away to block our use of them and to
strip us of the Second Amendment; we
are putting our guns away to protect
our children and give them a future
and help them to have children and
grandchildren.

I think we need to be in this move-
ment. My commitment is to join my
colleagues as many times as we have
to, to come to this floor and say that
the will pass this legislation. And it
will also be my commitment to address
any member of the National Rifle Asso-
ciation with a cool head, warm heart,
reasoned mind and ask them to join me
to ensure that letters like this, scaring
our decent Americans all over this country
that love peace and freedom, should say what is really right: that
they will join us and do the right thing.

□ 2015

I thank the gentlewoman for allowing
me to share with her. I also hope
that we will pass all the mental health
legislation and all of the regulations, if
you will, fair regulations, on violence
to our children in the media, fair, keep-
ing in mind the First Amendment.

I hope we will also work with law en-
forcement, everyone. But at the same
time, we cannot ignore this crucial
time, how to pass this legislation that
will protect us now and in the future.

I thank the gentlewoman for her
leadership and her time.

Ms. Delauro. Mr. Speaker, I thank
the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms.
Jackson-Lee) for her eloquent words
and for her leadership and for pointing
out so clearly that the document from
which she quoted in fact is a fund-raising
letter. It is a letter prone to hyper-
bole in order, in fact, to scare people.
It is a campaign of fear. It is a campaign
of rhetoric.

I, too, hope and believe that there
are people out there even who receive that
Mr. Speaker, we cannot back down in this fight. There are children at home, in our schools, on the streets and away from our children. Let us not wait.

But let us not wait.

And I know that my colleague and I and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. Carolyn McCarthy) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. Jackson-Lee) and other members of our caucus are going to be speaking to mothers and fathers and families all around the country. And I hope they are listening tonight. Call your member of Congress. Tell them to pass the legislation now. We have the power to do it. We can do it. We must do it. We must save lives. Let us do this now.

I want to thank my friends and colleagues. The gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. Delauro) for her leadership on so many issues. I know how she cares about Head Start and pre-K and how she is fighting to achieve their desires and their dreams.

Yet they can be what they want to be, so they can reach for the sky and fulfill their dreams. And we have the power to do it. We can do it. We must do it. We must save lives. Let us do this now.

I want to thank my friend and colleague the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. Lowey). And I want to continue to emphasize the point that those of us who stand here tonight are not one-dimensional. We do not react to this issue of youth violence in a cavalier or knee-jerk way that says that the only resolve is gun legislation.

The gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. Lowey) has spent her career fighting for lowering the blood alcohol level to lower the incidence of drunk driving, is not the only answer on promoting after-school programs in our schools, which is part of this issue, so that young people have a place to go and a place to be during those hours where the greatest amount of crime occurs. She has spent time talking about lessening the size of our classrooms for safety and accountability in education and of providing safer schools for our youngsters so that they can, in fact, achieve their desires and their dreams.

So as part of what she does on a daily basis to understand the complexity of the problem and knowing that we have to move on all of these areas, including the gun safety issue, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. Lowey).

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DeLauro) for ordering this special order this evening. It is truly an honor for me to spend some time with her and my good friend the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. Carolyn McCarthy) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. Sheila Jackson-Lee) to talk about this very important legislation.

And I am very glad that she mentioned that we work together on just a whole range of issues, education, health care, and we know that we have to address the violence in our society in just so many different ways, and my colleagues talked about it this evening, that we all have this time today.

But as I talk to people in my district, as I talk to the mothers, the fathers, the children who are afraid to go to school, I realize there is a madness in this country and we have to work on doing something about the guns.

My colleagues and I have talked about how different it was when we were in elementary school. I do remember, a long time ago, when Ms. Margot in first grade would get upset when someone was chewing gum and I had to leave the classroom. These kids are going to school and worried about whether someone has a gun. This is madness. And so, as a grandmother and a mother, I feel it a personal obligation to represent all these families across America.

Every once in a while in our congressional career we feel that there is an urgency to do something and do it now. I think of the pain of the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. Carolyn McCarthy) when she lost her husband, the pain of the gentlewoman from New York as she watches her son Kevin fight back, the pain of all those parents in Littleton, in Conyers, the pain of all those family members.

Every day 13 youngsters are killed because of guns. We have a responsibility and an obligation to do something and to do it now. And each week and nearly every day since the tragic shootings in Littleton, Democrats have called for urgent passage of meaningful gun legislation. We held press conferences. We raised our voices loud and clear. The NRA just cannot be allowed to write our gun laws anymore.

I want to assure my colleagues that I, along with my colleagues, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. Delauro), the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. Carolyn McCarthy), the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. Sheila Jackson-Lee) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. Steny Hoyer), we are going to address this every moment we can.

The gentlewoman and I and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. Hoyer) came prepared to offer gun control legislation to the Treasury, Postal Appropriations bill. It was hard to believe. We had on our desk the wires from Conyers that had just happened that morning. And yet the GOP leadership stalled. They did not act. They did not heed our calls. They did not take up meaningful legislation that our Senate colleagues have passed. They even canceled the Treasury, Postal markup rather than consider our common sense gun control amendments.

Hard to believe, is it not, that the GOP leadership could be more afraid of the NRA than they are of violence in our schools?

Now the leadership's delay has given the NRA the chance to strategize and mobilize. My colleagues referred to the letter that the NRA sent to their constituents. We held press conferences. We raised our voices loud and clear. The NRA just cannot be allowed to write our gun laws anymore.

But let us not wait.

And we know we have to look at the whole picture, as my colleague mentioned. We really have to talk about why has become such a violent culture, why the kids have to watch these violent episodes on TV and the movies and the Internet. We understand, as my colleague said, that this is not a one-dimensional issue.

But there is a madness in this country. They should not be able to buy guns when they are a kid. I mean, how is it that they cannot go to a licensed gun dealer and buy a gun until they are 21 yet they can buy a gun from a secondhand dealer at a gun show? It does not make any sense.

But we are not even talking now about the comprehensive bill of the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. Carolyn McCarthy). We want to work on that. What we are saying is the Senate had passed common sense legislation. No one should be celebrating that, because unless it passes our House and unless the President signs it, it is not law.

So let us make sure that we pass the common sense legislation that passed the Senate. And as we are doing that, let us talk about the larger issue and pass more comprehensive legislation. But let us not wait.

And I know that my colleague and I and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. Carolyn McCarthy) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. Jackson-Lee) and other members of our caucus are going to be speaking to mothers and fathers and families all around the country. And I hope they are listening tonight. Call your member of Congress. Tell them to pass the legislation now. We have the power to do it. We can do it. We must do it. We must save lives. Let us do this now.

I want to thank my friend and colleague the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. Rosa DeLauro) for her leadership on just so many issues. I know how she cares about Head Start and pre-K and how she is fighting to
make sure our young people are nurtured all the way through, and this is part of that great effort. Let us deal with the issue.

I thank my colleague again for leading us in this great effort.

Ms. DE LAURO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWIT) for her comments. And I just want to highlight something that she said, which is the wonder of the body that we serve in and what can be done. She said that every now and again in our congressional career comes a moment when we have an opportunity to make a difference, to do something.

I happen to view, as my colleague does, that this is an historic opportunity. We are not so glued and fixed in a calendar and in a schedule that we cannot move when a need arises in the country for us to move.

Thirty children dying every single day from gun violence is a national crisis. The kinds of unspeakable violence we have seen in school settings across the country, the pleas from parents and grandparents, from children, to make our schools safe places to be in says to those of us who hold a public office we need to act and to move to try to help us with this problem.

We cannot be so fixed in our own agenda, in our own schedule, in everything that only we concern ourselves with to say we cannot change what it is that we do here so that we can meet this challenge, meet this need, take this opportunity to say, yes, we can act and act in the best interest of the American public. And that is all we are talking about. We have this opportunity this week. We would be derelict in the responsibility that we have been entrusted with if we walk away from that responsibility.

And again, my colleague said it, the Senate passed last legislation, legislation that has consensus from the gun industry, from the sports councils, from others. Our duty and obligation is to pass that kind of legislation in this body.

I thank the gentlewoman and I thank my colleagues for joining us tonight.

NATIONAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON). I rise tonight to talk to our colleagues about what I think is one of the greatest issues that face this Nation, certainly in the 13 years that I have had the honor of serving in this body.

I come before our colleagues, Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Republican Party but as someone who believes that national security issues rise above party politics. I am very proud of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that both times I ran for mayor of my hometown I was the nominee of both the Republican and the Democrat Parties. In fact, today I enjoy significant support from Democrats I work in my home district in Pennsylvania.

In Congress, Mr. Speaker, I have taken great pride in working with Members of the other side on national security issues, and I have been the first to acknowledge that many of the struggles that we have won in this body against the White House involving national security were won only because we had the support of strong, long-standing bipartisan support as well as the Republican side. I give those comments today, Mr. Speaker, because I want to focus on what is happening with the debate surrounding the Cox Commission of which I was a member and the conclusion that has been put forward to the American people about a matter that needs to be thoroughly investigated.

Mr. Speaker, it is my contention that when the administration released a preliminary view of the Cox Committee report in early January, in fact we gave it to the administration sometime around January 2nd or 3rd, they got a chance to see a document that nine of us, Democrats and Republicans, had worked on together for 7 months in a very nonpartisan way. We did not care where problems had occurred, in which administrations they were in. If we saw evidence of our security being harmed or potentially harmed, we laid the facts basically where they were. We did not attempt to spin them or distort them or attempt to have them be other than what they fact were. We did what we knew to have the integrity of our report kept intact once it was completed. No member of the Cox Committee released any information to the media. We swore to ourselves that we would not in fact jeopardize our findings. We gave it to the White House the first week of January and we asked for a very quick response to assist us in making that report available in a declassified version so the American people and our colleagues could read it and talk about it. As we all know, that took 5 months. But what gave me the first indication that this report was going to be spun politically was about a month later, in February. In fact it was February the 9th, the National Security Adviser to the White House, issued a statement that I have a copy of to selective members of the Washington media, responding to the 38 recommendations that we made in our Cox Committee report that were still classified. Without asking any member of the Cox Commission, Sandy Berger released the White House’s spin in response to those recommendations.

Two days after he released that spin, Mr. Speaker, I had the occasion of asking the Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet in a closed National Security Committee hearing in front of 40 Members from both parties if he agreed as the head of the CIA with our findings that our security had been harmed. Mr. Speaker, this was after Sandy Berger released public information about our still classified report. George Tenet said, “Congressman, we at the CIA haven’t finished reading the document yet.” Which meant, Mr. Speaker, that the White House, before the CIA had even completed reading our report, was spinning it publicly to try to deflect attention away from the White House and any responsibility of this administration. That is not what the nine members of the Cox Commission and that is not the approach we used. We did not spin anything. Yet that was my first inclination that this White House was not going to deal in an honorable way with the findings and the conclusions that we drew from our extensive research into the results of the transfer of technology both legally and illegally to China.

Mr. Speaker, that spin continues today. Since the report was released some 2 weeks ago, the administration has sent Bill Richardson, a friend of mine whom I served with in this body, out a road show traveling around the country convincing the American people that the only issue in the Cox report is Chinese espionage, the stealing of our W-88 nuclear warhead design, the stealing of our nuclear design technology. And the reason why the White House has wanted to spin the Cox Committee report in this way is because they can point to this stuff to having occurred before the Clinton administration took office. So what Richardson has been saying publicly, on national TV shows, on the talk shows on Sunday mornings is, “Look, when this administration in 1995 found out that China had stolen some of our designs, prior to us coming into office, we took aggressive steps to stop it. These problems didn’t happen under the Clinton administration. They happened under previous administrations.”

I am here tonight, Mr. Speaker, to challenge that notion and to offer to debate Secretary Richardson anytime anyplace in a public format on the issues that I am about to unveil. First of all, Mr. Speaker, even though the Cox Committee report did not just focus on the nuclear laboratories and their security, let us talk about the labs for a few moments, because if you listen to Secretary Bill Richardson traveling around the country, he would have us believe that the only problems with the labs were problems that started under previous administrations which he has now cleaned up. That is hogwash, Mr. Speaker. Let us look at the facts.