

I thank my colleagues for their work on this important issue, and I hope many others will join us in supporting this bill to help our LGBT senior communities.

ATLANTIC COAST YOUNG MARINES

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

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the United States House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the Atlantic Coast Young Marines and their hard work during Red Ribbon Week.

The Florida regiment of Young Marines has performed more than 50,000 service hours since last October, with more than 35,000 hours of community service dedicated to our veterans.

As you can see, the Atlantic Coast Young Marines and their fellow Young Marines throughout Florida are very active in their local communities.

Reduction of drug demand is a major issue of the Young Marine program, and Red Ribbon Week is an excellent opportunity to recognize the Atlantic Coast Young Marines' emphasis on this mission.

Red Ribbon Week is the oldest drug prevention program in the Nation, reaching millions of Americans during the last week of October each year. By wearing red ribbons and participating in community antidrug events, Young Marines pledge to live a drug-free life and pay tribute to DEA Special Agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena.

Special Agent Camarena was a veteran of the DEA assigned to Guadalajara, Mexico, where he was on the trail of the country's biggest drug traffickers. Because he was so close to unlocking a billion-dollar drug pipeline, he was kidnapped and murdered by drug traffickers. His tragic death opened the eyes of many Americans to the dangerous illicit drug trade.

Red Ribbon Week celebrates Agent Camarena's life and his vision for a drug-free America.

Last week, the Atlantic Coast Young Marines honored his life through events that helped reduce the demand for drugs throughout northeast Florida.

These young men and women who participate in this education and service program are known to be excellent leaders inside and outside of the classroom. The Atlantic Coast Young Marines are a shining example of our First Coast youth.

They also serve our veterans in numerous ways, by cleaning yards, making hospital visits, and simply writing cards. Their dedication to community service and our veterans is a shining example of noble selflessness.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the Atlantic Coast Young Marines for their service to Florida's First Coast community.

GUN VIOLENCE IN LAS VEGAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because we do have a gun violence epidemic in this country, and the time to act is now.

Exactly 1 month ago today, we witnessed one of the most horrific mass shootings in our country's history, and Congress has done nothing. One month later, legislation on bump stocks has stalled. There is a deafening silence from the majority on any responsible actions on this public health crisis, even though, Mr. Speaker, a majority of Americans, including responsible gun owners, support responsible gun safety legislation.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I rise to share a statement written by my constituent Zach Elmore, who is here with us this morning. Zach's sister, Alicia Johnson, was shot in Las Vegas. Thankfully, she survived. This is what he wrote as he sat next to her hospital bed as she recovered:

"My sister was shot in Las Vegas. I have never been more afraid, more angry in my entire life. The problem with shootings around the country is that, unless you know someone directly affected, it is easy to say 'what a tragedy,' and move on with your daily life.

"It is not so easy when you are getting ready for bed and one of your sisters calls inconsolably crying to tell you that another one of your sisters has been shot. It is not so easy when you call your mother and she is terrified and crying and all you can do is try to calm her down while you figure out how to get to your sister as quickly as possible. It is not so easy to see your brother-in-law with blood still on his hands from doing whatever he could to keep your sister alive. It is not so easy to see your sister in a hospital bed, unable to move due to a gunshot wound in her back and staples in her stomach from surgery to check for organ damage. We are among the luckiest ones.

"I am sick and tired of thoughts and prayers. If thoughts and prayers had any affect whatsoever, there would be a lot of people still alive today. All these thoughts and prayers would have miraculously pulled bullets out of victims and healed wounds, would have stopped these massacres before they started.

"You know what is better than thoughts and prayers and lines around the block at blood banks and enormous relief funds for victims of tragedy? Creating a society where we don't have to do these things many times a year.

"We waited so long to do anything after Columbine that Virginia Tech happened. We still couldn't talk about it when the Aurora theater shooting happened. That didn't change anything, and then 20 children were murdered at Sandy Hook. Even that wasn't enough to promote change. When Dylann Roof happened, still couldn't

talk about it, and then San Bernardino happened. We still couldn't bring ourselves to discuss gun control, and then the Pulse nightclub shooting happened.

"Lord knows we can't do anything about guns, and then Las Vegas happened. And we are still being told that now is not the time, let healing begin, don't politicize tragedy, but by all means send thoughts and prayers to all affected by 'insert massacre here.'

"There is no place in society for any weapon which has the singular purpose to kill people. The man who killed and injured more than any massacre in America's history broke the mold for who commits mass shootings. He would have easily passed a background check and psych evaluation. He was affluent and had no known ties to terrorist organizations, but he is certainly a terrorist. The system we have in place allowed him to accumulate dozens of assault weapons and thousands of rounds of ammunition because, for all intents and purposes, he was not a risk to society.

"Let's keep in mind, the Second Amendment of the Constitution was written over 200 years ago when a good gunman might get three shots off a minute with a musket. It is hard for me to believe the Founding Fathers envisioned a world where one man could or would fire 400 rounds a minute into a crowd of people.

"This should not be difficult. How many people have to die before people will apply a little logic to gun laws? Do more children need to die? Does a hospital need to be attacked? What is your limit? Does it have to happen to you or a loved one before you start to think differently about gun laws?

"The people of this country have so much power. We have protested, pressured our Congressmen and -women, and we have seen that work. Why can't we do the same to reduce and hopefully eliminate the insane amount of gun violence in America?

"Excuse me for not being willing to wait to let healing begin, for not accepting that now is not the time to talk about a major problem in this country. There is never a wrong time to stand up for what you think is right.

"My sister was shot in Las Vegas in the latest of a devastatingly long line of mass shootings in this country. We are luckier than 58 people and their families, and likely luckier than many of the over 500 other people who were injured. If I don't talk about it, if we don't truly take steps to effect positive change, everyone reading this will forget it happened because they will be sending thoughts and prayers to the victims of the next mass shooting in America."

Mr. Speaker, that is the end of the excerpt of his letter. Zach's family's experience illustrates why it is crucial for us to take a hard look at gun violence policies.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that we will, across the aisle, in a bipartisan fashion, do what is right for the American

people and protect families like Zach's across the country.

THE GOVERNMENT OF ETHIOPIA HAS A HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS

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

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the Government of Ethiopia's continued pattern of repression and violence against its own people, and I urge the House of Representatives to vote on H. Res. 128, the Supporting Respect for Human Rights and Encouraging Inclusive Governance in Ethiopia resolution.

This resolution calls on the Government of Ethiopia to take clear, decisive steps towards becoming more inclusive, more democratic, and more respectful of the basic human rights of its own people.

This resolution has overwhelming bipartisan support, with more than 70 cosponsors, and it passed out of the House Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously on July 27.

The ongoing human rights crisis in Ethiopia is extremely troubling to me, to the resolution's other cosponsors, the many Americans of Ethiopian heritage, and too numerous to list human rights groups. I firmly believe that the passage of this resolution will encourage the Ethiopian Government to end its practice of violence and repression and provide a strong basis for an inclusive government.

Specifically, this resolution condemns the excessive use of force by Ethiopian security forces and the killing of peaceful protestors; the arrests and detention of journalists, students, activists, and political leaders; and the Ethiopian Government's abuse of the anti-terrorism proclamation to stifle political and civil dissent.

The resolution does not simply highlight the Ethiopian Government's increasingly authoritarian acts, but it also encourages the United States to support efforts to improve democracy and governance in Ethiopia.

I believe that the United States can take actions that will positively influence the Ethiopian Government and use our existing institutions to further democracy and effective governance in Ethiopia.

Critically, the resolution calls on the Ethiopian Government to admit U.N. human rights observers so they can conduct an independent and thorough examination of the current state of human rights in Ethiopia.

On March 9 of this year, the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing to discuss specific steps the United States can take to bring about positive changes for the Ethiopian Government and their people.

Among those who testified was Deacon Yoseph Tafari of the St. Mary's

Ethiopian Orthodox Church located in Aurora, Colorado. Deacon Yoseph was raised in Ethiopia and has experienced the daily struggles too many Ethiopians have faced living in abject poverty under an oppressive government.

Deacon Yoseph fled from Ethiopia in 1976 and came to the United States as a refugee. He and many of the members of the Ethiopian community in my congressional district of Colorado, including the Oromo and Amharas, have worked diligently to organize and assist those still suffering from repression in their home country.

Oromo community president of Colorado, Jamal Said, has also shared his concerns with me, and both of these gentlemen have no motives other than a concern about the safety and state of democracy in Ethiopia. I appreciate their leadership in the community as they continue to fight for democracy in their homeland.

Unfortunately, stories like this are not uncommon in my district, and I am disappointed that the House has not yet scheduled a floor vote on H. Res. 128. I note that on two prior occasions a vote was tentatively scheduled. In both of these instances, it is my understanding that the vote was postponed due to pressure from the Ethiopian Government, which continues to make promises to curb human rights abuses against their own people, but fail to deliver.

Additionally, it has been brought to my attention that the Ethiopian Government has threatened to cut off security cooperation with United States should we proceed with H. Res. 128.

I am particularly dismayed that rather than solving their problems and moving towards becoming a more democratic country, the Ethiopian Government has chosen instead to hire a D.C. lobbying firm at a cost of \$150,000 a month to "work with the Ethiopian Government to develop and execute a public affairs plan to enhance the dialogue and relationships with policymakers, media, opinion leaders, and business leaders," in addition to "meetings with Members of Congress, their staffs, and executive branch officials."

The issue the Ethiopian Government needs to address is the repression of democracy and its citizens in Ethiopia. The solution to whatever negative perception it has in the Halls of the U.S. Congress is not a public affairs one, but, rather, what concrete steps are being taken against democracy in Ethiopia.

That is why I remain committed to working with House leadership to have a vote scheduled on H. Res. 128.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage leadership to schedule a vote, and I call on my colleagues to vote in favor of and pass H. Res. 128. I will continue working with local Ethiopian community leaders in Colorado and across the country to raise awareness of the human rights abuses occurring in Ethiopia and to bring relief from oppression to the Ethiopian people.

UNDERSTANDING THE RYAN-McCONNELL TAX GIVEAWAYS

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

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege and an honor to represent the community of the San Fernando Valley here in the United States Congress. I think it is my duty and responsibility to make sure that when something is going on in Washington, people should know what is going to happen to them and how it affects them.

I think it is really important for everybody to understand that right now in the workings—and it is probably going to come to this floor in just a few days—is the Speaker Ryan-McConnell tax giveaways to big corporations, which will actually increase taxes for working families, working mothers and fathers.

I think it is important for people to understand that this is something that is being sold as a middle-income tax cut. Actually, what it is going to do is it is going to cut the take-home income to middle class families.

What it is going to mean is if you are a police officer or a teacher or a waitress, you are going to see less money every week. It might be \$5 less a week, it might be \$50 less a week, it might be \$100.

Let me tell you, the opposite of what is going to happen should this become law is that the biggest corporations in America are going to see \$1 million less in taxes a week, maybe \$50 million less in taxes paid a week, maybe \$100 million less per week paid in taxes.

Some people are thinking: Well, they earned it. They should keep it.

Well, okay. I understand what you are saying. But, see, this is the fundamental problem of this \$1.5 trillion reduction in the ability for our Federal Government to fund things like Medicaid and Medicare. Because when we see less money, you are going to see Members on this floor and in committees throughout this House and in the United States Senate saying: Well, we don't have the money.

When they see a mother whose child has cerebral palsy and she is saying, "I go to work every single day, and thank you, government, for allowing my child to be in a program so that he or she can be safe while I go to work," they are going to say, "You know what? I agree with you, ma'am. We should fund that, but since we don't have the money anymore, we are going to stop funding that."

This is a woman who just wants to work for a living. This is a person who just wants to make sure that she can have the dignity of work and have her child in a safe place, but we are going to cut those programs if we have this tax giveaway go through Congress and signed by this President.

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You see, it is a multistep process. And what some of my colleagues—and