

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

Hearing none, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall it pass?

The bill (H.R. 1370), as amended, was passed.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2017

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, November 7; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for debate only until 11 a.m., at which point the Senate proceed to executive session and consideration of the Gibson nomination under the previous order; finally, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator DURBIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Illinois.

WISHING SENATOR PAUL WELL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me first say at the outset that many of us have extended well wishes to our colleague, Senator PAUL, who was injured over the weekend. We wish him a speedy recovery and hope that he returns soon. He is an important part of the Senate and an important colleague to those of us on both sides of the aisle.

TEXAS CHURCH MASS SHOOTING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, yesterday there was another gun massacre and horrible circumstances. I know the Presiding Officer came to the floor earlier today to say a word about his feelings and the feelings of his family. They are shared by all of us. It is heartbreaking to think that some person so demented, so unusual would come into a worship setting and kill innocent people.

Yesterday, in Sutherland Springs, Texas, at least 26 people were killed and 20 others were wounded when a gunman opened fire in the sanctuary of the First Baptist Church. The reported shooter, Devin Kelley, used an assault rifle to commit this mass murder. The victims range in age from 18 months to 77 years. About a dozen of those who were killed were children, including the daughter of the church's pastor. This is heartbreaking. Our nation grieves for the victims and their loved ones.

The shooter reportedly drove up to the church wearing a bulletproof vest and tactical gear, and he began firing in the parking lot before entering the church. At some point, a local resident who lived near the church began firing back. The shooter then drove off, with two residents in pursuit, eventually crashing his car. He was found dead from a gunshot wound, which may have been self-inflicted.

President Trump and others have said that this exchange of fire with citizens responding saved lives and shows that the policy response to the shooting should be to arm more good guys with guns. Let us not forget that 46 people were shot before these citizens came on the scene.

This reported shooter, 26 years old, had served in the U.S. Air Force from 2010 until 2014, working on logistics readiness. In 2012 he was court-martialed for two counts of assault on his then-wife and child. He was sentenced to confinement for 12 months. He received a bad conduct discharge in 2014. He remarried in 2014, and had worked as an unarmed security guard at a water park. He reportedly bought four guns, one each year from 2014 to 2017, and three of those weapons—the assault rifle that he used in this crime and two handguns—were found at the scene.

Local law enforcement said that the shooter was likely motivated by a domestic situation. His wife's grandmother was one of the victims.

There are so many things that come to mind. First and foremost is the grief and sorrow we all feel for the families who were affected. It is so sad that when people go to church on Sunday, they are not safe from gun violence and gun massacres, which are occurring way too frequently across the United States. Just over two years ago, nine people were killed by a gunman in the Charleston Emanuel AME Church. And just last month we saw the worst mass shooting in modern American history in Las Vegas, with 58 people murdered and over 500 wounded. In Chicago, at least 29 people were shot, five fatally, over this past weekend.

There are things that we need to do, and that only we can do in Congress, to make the laws better and safer.

I respect the Second Amendment. I respect the fact that there are men and women in my family, friends, and people I represent across Illinois who own guns and use them safely and respon-

sibly. We have sportsmen and hunters in my family. We have people who buy guns for sporting purposes and for self-defense. They store the guns carefully and safely. They take very seriously that they are dealing with a deadly weapon. They don't want anyone innocent to be hurt. I respect that very much. I think we all should. But I also call on them now. They need to lead us into a more sensible policy when it comes to gun safety.

Owners of firearms, overwhelmingly, when asked, believe we should have comprehensive background checks to keep guns out of the hands of those who misuse them. Overwhelmingly, a majority of gun owners feel that way, as most Americans feel. Why can't we do that? We certainly know it is within our power.

In my State of Illinois, in the city of Chicago, we are approaching 600 homicides this year—600—most of them from gunfire. It is heartbreaking. That doesn't include those who were injured by being shot as well. Where are these guns coming from? There are no gun stores in the city of Chicago. That is true. But when it comes to purchasing guns, it makes no difference. The suburbs have plenty of gun dealers. Of course, there are gun shows in neighboring States, like Indiana. We also know gun stores in the suburbs of Chicago supply 25 percent of the identified crime guns. We know many of those are sold in what is known as a straw purchase. They are sold to someone who buys a gun for someone who is not legally qualified. It is a girlfriend or someone who buys a gun because she has no criminal record so her boyfriend can use it—misuse it—and kill innocent people. Can't we toughen that law and make sure there are real penalties for straw purchases? That is not going to slow down any legitimate gun owner or anyone who wants to use a gun in a responsible fashion. That is one thing we can do.

Then there is the gun show loophole. We know, with Columbine and other places, that it was a gun show loophole that opened the way for the purchase of guns that killed innocent people. Let's do something about that. We should. If we are serious, we should.

We also know that the 1996 Lautenberg amendment prohibits convicted domestic abusers from buying or using guns. That applies, as well, to military personnel. Questions need to be asked and answered about this shooter in Texas and what happened after he was court-martialed for domestic abuse in the Air Force in 2012. How did he purchase a gun after that, in violation of the Lautenberg amendment?

We need to also ask why in the world anyone needs to own an assault weapon. I understand people buy rifles and shotguns and even handguns for sporting and self-defense. But why does anyone need to own a military-style weapon—one that can be converted, as we found in Las Vegas, to a weapon that discharges 100 rounds in 7 seconds?

That is totally unnecessary for any legitimate legal purpose. It is available, perhaps, for military use, perhaps, for law enforcement but not for the ordinary American citizen who would purchase and own a gun for legitimate purposes.

Next, we need to make sure that we understand why gun violence is growing in America. The number of people who have been killed or injured just grows by the year. It is getting worse. According to a CDC report issued just last week, gun deaths increased for the second year in a row last year. There were more than 38,000 gun deaths in 2016, up from 36,000 in 2015 and from 33,500 the year before that. We are experiencing a public health crisis of gun violence in America, according to the American Medical Association.

Of course, there is no single law or policy that would prevent every shooting death, just as there is no single law or policy that would prevent every drug overdose death. But we have to start working together, on a bipartisan basis, to bring these shooting numbers down.

We need to also talk about the issue of mental health, raised by the President in response to this tragedy in Texas. The President said:

This isn't a guns situation. . . . I think that mental health is your problem here.

Despite the fact that most violence in the United States has nothing to do with mental illness, many are arguing that mental health is really the issue. What have we done in the Senate when it comes to mental health and guns this year? Senate Republicans used the CRA to repeal a regulation that directed the Social Security Administration to share mental illness information with the background check compilation of information. There was advocacy for massive cuts to Medicaid, which would throw millions of people with mental health needs off coverage. There was an attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act, which would have allowed insurers to refuse coverage of essential health benefits, including mental health treatment. And there was a refusal to provide additional Federal funding to help provide mental health care. We don't have a very good record this year in the Senate when it comes to taking mental illness seriously, and we should.

I will also introduce a bill that I am working on to encourage more crime-gun tracing in light of last week's crime-gun trace report from the Chicago Police Department.

We focus on terrorism and what it does to our country, and we should. That is our responsibility. Anyone who would do harm to innocent Americans—as in 9/11, killing 3,000 in that particular instance—needs to be taken extremely seriously by all of us in Congress and in the White House. Foreign sources of terrorism need to be carefully watched when it comes to our border security, when it comes to background checks, and the like. But let's

be honest. More Americans are dying from Americans killing Americans with guns than by terrorist activity. It is just as much a death as any foreign terrorist threat would be, and we need to consider it just as seriously as we do when it comes to the issues of terrorism and safety for the people of America.

Why doesn't the Congress take this up? Why don't we even have a debate? I am on the Senate Judiciary Committee. We have not had a single bill this year that addresses gun safety—not one—despite the gun violence that takes place every day and despite tragedies like this tragedy over the weekend in Sutherland Springs, TX.

Every time a terrible shooting occurs, Republican leaders in Congress say now is not the time to act. And then Congress never acts.

Congress still has not acted to close the 72-hour background check loophole that allowed the Charleston church shooter to buy his gun in 2015.

Congress has done nothing to address the bump stocks that enabled the Las Vegas shooter to turn a concert into a war zone.

Congress still hasn't even addressed the gun show loophole that allowed the Columbine shooters to commit that massacre back in 1999.

Will Congress act in response to this latest tragedy? Will the Republicans who control Congress finally stand up to the gun lobby and put legislation on the floor to bring down the number of gun deaths? Or will the Republican-controlled Congress ignore this public health crisis once again?

The Republicans in Congress are rushing to pass massive changes to our tax code in a matter of weeks, and yet they refuse to do anything to prevent the next mass shooting. If the Republicans treated this gun violence epidemic with a fraction of the urgency they are showing when it comes to cutting taxes for the wealthiest one percent and the largest corporations, we could save many lives.

I pray for the victims of gun violence in this nation, but I also pray that my colleagues will act to reduce this gun violence epidemic.

DACA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on September 5, 2 months ago, Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced the Trump administration's repeal of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, better known as DACA.

DACA provides temporary legal status to immigrant students if they register with the government, pay a fee, and pass criminal and national security background checks. It was renewable on a 2-year basis.

The young people protected by DACA are also known as Dreamers. They came to the United States as children. They grew up knowing only this country, believing this was their home and their future. Many of them in their

teenaged years were told quietly by a parent that their legal status was not the status of an American citizen. These kids, who grew up singing the Star Spangled Banner and pledging allegiance to the American flag, have no country.

It was 7 years ago that I sent a letter to President Obama, joined by Senator Dick Lugar, a Republican from Indiana. On a bipartisan basis, we asked President Obama to establish a program like the DACA Program. The President responded, and DACA has been a success. Almost 800,000 Dreamers have come forward. They have surrendered to their government the information that many of their families kept secret for years. They trusted us. They gave this information to the government and said: We want to become part of America's future, and we are willing to sign up, submit ourselves to the background check, pay our taxes, pay our filing fee, and do whatever is necessary. They trusted us. These young people who came forward and received DACA have then gone on to contribute more fully to their country. They are teachers, nurses, engineers, first responders, and servicemembers in our military.

Now, because of President Trump's announcement, the deportation clock is ticking on these young people. Beginning on March 5, 2018, not that long from now, every workday for the following 2 years approximately 1,400 Dreamers will lose their work permits and be subject to deportation. These young people who trusted our government will now, with the decision to end DACA, find themselves in an extremely vulnerable position.

When they lose their DACA protection, if they are teachers, they are forced to leave their students. If they are nurses, they are forced to leave their patients. If they are first responders, they leave their post. If they are soldiers willing to die for our country, they are forced to leave our military service.

This isn't just a looming humanitarian crisis. It is also an economic crisis. The nonpartisan Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy reports that DACA-eligible individuals contribute an estimated \$2 billion a year in State and local taxes. The Cato Institute, a conservative operation, estimates that ending DACA and deporting DACA recipients will cost \$60 billion and result in a \$280 billion reduction in economic growth over the next 10 years.

Poll after poll shows overwhelming bipartisan support for these Dreamers. Even FOX News—no liberal media outlet—recently found that 79 percent of Americans support a path to citizenship for Dreamers, including 63 percent of those who voted for President Trump. Sixty-three percent, or almost two out of three Trump supporters, supports a legal status for Dreamers.

The answer is clear. Congress needs to pass the Dream Act, and we need to