

country, we should honor their service with easy access to lifesaving COVID-19 vaccines. In my view, there are no people more deserving.

EQUALITY ACT DESTROYS WOMEN'S RIGHTS

(Mrs. GREENE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on International Women's Day, I would like to discuss the Equality Act. The Equality Act has completely destroyed women's rights. It has taken away women's rights in sports. It has completely canceled women, and I think it is a terrible thing that has happened to the women in America who have come so far.

Our grandmothers and mothers worked so hard to achieve our rights, and now with the passage of the Equality Act, they have put men in our little girls' bathrooms, sports locker rooms, playing fields, and seem to care less about women's rights whatsoever.

They have also completely destroyed religious freedoms and violated our freedoms and rights in every single way.

The Equality Act is atrocious and evil. It completely erases gender. God created us male and female in His image. He created us.

Women deserve their rights. We deserve our sports. We deserve our privacy and should not have the invasion of biological men in any of these areas.

□ 1415

RECOGNIZING JEANNETTE RANKIN ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

(Mr. ROSENDALE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROSENDALE. Mr. Speaker, on this international day of women, I remind everyone that the first Member of this body who was a woman was Jeannette Rankin.

She was elected from the State of Montana in 1916 and again in 1940. She served us well; she served us admirably.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to remind everyone that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle do not have a monopoly on having women represent them.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KAHELE) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 8, 2021.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II

of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 8, 2021, at 9:10 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 164.

That the Senate passed S. 578.

That the Senate passed S. 579.

That the Senate passed S. 590.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON,
Clerk.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1445

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BEYER) at 2 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 46 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1600

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. MCBATH) at 4 p.m.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 842, PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE ACT OF 2021; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 8, BIPARTISAN BACKGROUND CHECKS ACT OF 2021; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1446, ENHANCED BACKGROUND CHECKS ACT OF 2021; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 188 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 188

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 842) to amend the National Labor Relations Act, the Labor Management Relations Act, 1947, and the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order

against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and Labor or their respective designees; (2) the further amendments described in section 2 of this resolution; (3) the amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution; and (4) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. After debate pursuant to the first section of this resolution, each further amendment printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules not earlier considered as part of amendments en bloc pursuant to section 3 of this resolution shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, may be withdrawn by the proponent at any time before the question is put thereon, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

SEC. 3. It shall be in order at any time after debate pursuant to the first section of this resolution for the chair of the Committee on Education and Labor or his designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of further amendments printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc offered pursuant to this section shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and Labor or their respective designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

SEC. 4. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 8) to require a background check for every firearm sale. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees; (2) the further amendments described in section 5 of this resolution; (3) the amendments en bloc described in section 6 of this resolution; and (4) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 5. After debate pursuant to section 4 of this resolution, each further amendment printed in part C of the report of the Committee on Rules not earlier considered as part of amendments en bloc pursuant to section 6 of this resolution shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, may be withdrawn by the proponent at any time before the question is put thereon, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

SEC. 6. It shall be in order at any time after debate pursuant to section 4 of this resolution for the chair of the Committee on the Judiciary or his designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of further amendments printed in part C of the report of the

Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc offered pursuant to this section shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

SEC. 7. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1446) to amend chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, to strengthen the background check procedures to be followed before a Federal firearms licensee may transfer a firearm to a person who is not such a licensee. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees; (2) the further amendments described in section 8 of this resolution; (3) the amendments en bloc described in section 9 of this resolution; and (4) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 8. After debate pursuant to section 7 of this resolution, each further amendment printed in part D of the report of the Committee on Rules not earlier considered as part of amendments en bloc pursuant to section 9 of this resolution shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, may be withdrawn by the proponent at any time before the question is put thereon, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

SEC. 9. It shall be in order at any time after debate pursuant to section 7 of this resolution for the chair of the Committee on the Judiciary or his designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of further amendments printed in part D of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc offered pursuant to this section shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

SEC. 10. All points of order against the further amendments printed in parts B, C, and D of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution or amendments en bloc described in sections 3, 6, and 9 of this resolution are waived.

SEC. 11. On any legislative day during the period from March 13, 2021, through April 22, 2021—

(a) the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and

(b) the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment.

SEC. 12. The Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 11 of this resolution as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

SEC. 13. Each day during the period addressed by section 11 of this resolution shall

not constitute a calendar day for purposes of section 7 of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1546).

SEC. 14. Each day during the period addressed by section 11 of this resolution shall not constitute a legislative day for purposes of clause 7 of rule XIII.

SEC. 15. Each day during the period addressed by section 11 of this resolution shall not constitute a calendar or legislative day for purposes of clause 7(c)(1) of rule XXII.

SEC. 16. It shall be in order at any time through the calendar day of April 22, 2021, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules as though under clause 1 of rule XV. The Speaker or her designee shall consult with the Minority Leader or his designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to this section.

SEC. 17. The requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported through the legislative day of April 22, 2021.

SEC. 18. Section 4(d) of House Resolution 8, One Hundred Seventeenth Congress, is amended by—

(a) in paragraph (3), striking “and”;

(b) in paragraph (4), striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(c) adding at the end the following:

“(5) the Select Committee shall be composed of 16 Members, Delegates, or the Resident Commissioner appointed by the Speaker, of whom 7 shall be appointed on the recommendation of the Minority Leader.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from Minnesota, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, today, the Committee on Rules met and reported House Resolution 188, providing structured rules for consideration of H.R. 842, H.R. 8, and H.R. 1446.

For H.R. 842, the rule self-executes a manager's amendment by Chairman SCOTT, makes in order 19 amendments, and provides for 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and the ranking member of the Committee on Education and Labor.

For H.R. 8 and H.R. 1446, the rule makes in order eight and four amendments, respectively, and provides 1 hour of debate for each bill equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

The rule further provides en bloc authority and a motion to recommit for each bill.

The rule also adds an additional minority member to the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis.

Finally, the rule provides for recess instructions, suspension authority, and same-day authority from March 13 through April 22, and activates the Consensus Calendar.

Madam Speaker, this is the first time I have been able to be on the floor and present in almost a year. A year ago, as some of you know, I had an accident and proceeded to spend 6 weeks in the George Washington University Hospital intensive care unit, 4 of those weeks on a ventilator.

My sons came from California to be told by the doctors in a windowless room at George Washington that I had about a 10 percent chance of survival. The next day, they got a phone call, expecting to hear that their dad had died. Instead, the doctor told them that I was doing better.

Madam Speaker, I know that you know how grateful we are to have the wonderful gift of life, to share it with our children, and to be here in this sanctum sanctorum of American democracy. I am grateful. I am grateful to my staff, to the providence of our creator, and to my family.

Madam Speaker, our Nation is struggling, and not only because of the coronavirus pandemic. Our Nation needs bold, meaningful changes to make a real difference for average Americans. That is what the three bills before us today do. Each addresses its own epidemic: gun violence; inequality; and, unfortunately, an ugly part of human nature, greed.

Madam Speaker, nearly 40,000 people died from firearm injuries in the United States in 2019. History would show that enacting smart, evidence-based policies based on public health premises reduces this sad phenomenon.

Madam Speaker, 22 percent of U.S. gun owners acquired their most recent firearm without a background check. That means that millions of Americans got millions of guns with no questions asked. Approximately 80 percent of all firearms acquired for criminal purposes are obtained through private party transfers, which currently do not require background checks.

□ 1615

Ninety-six percent of the inmates surveyed, who were prohibited from possessing a firearm at the time they committed their crime, had obtained their firearm from an unlicensed private seller, avoiding the background check altogether.

In California, where I am proud to live and serve, all private gun sales must be completed through a licensed firearms dealer, requiring a background check—a universal background check and a mandatory waiting period. Not coincidentally—and the public health experts will let us know through their evidence-based research—California has the ninth-lowest rate of gun violence across the United States. Gun killings in Connecticut, similarly, fell by 40 percent after it required a mandatory background check and a gun safety course before the purchase of a gun.

We know what we need to do to help protect millions of Americans. Universal background checks are supported by decades of evidence. The Bipartisan Background Checks Act, H.R. 8, institutes universal background checks.

Additionally, the Enhanced Background Checks Act, H.R. 1446, ends the arbitrary rule that if a background check hasn't been completed in 3 days, the gun can be sold regardless.

I proudly support these bills because the evidence is clear that they will make our communities safer and save lives.

Madam Speaker, next, the rule will allow us to consider the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, or the PRO Act. The rise in inequality in this country has coincided with a decline in union membership. By most estimates, declining unionization accounted for about one-third of the increase in inequality—one-third—from 1980 through the 1990s through today.

If you watch the data over the years, as States move as a group toward less union coverage, those same States have much worse income inequality. You cannot address inequality without increasing access for working people to representation. Unions do not only raise wages for the workers they represent, but they have also been shown to moderate the compensation of executives.

On top of the obvious benefits you think of that are associated with the labor unions, like higher wages, safer workplaces, some of the others that come along with union membership also help address the inequities in our society.

Union workers are more likely to receive paid leave, are up to 28 percent more likely to have employer-sponsored health insurance, and are up to 54 percent more likely to be enrolled in employer-sponsored pensions. Not only do workers have better access to pensions, but their employers contribute an average of 28 percent more toward those pensions, retirement security for Americans, than nonunion employers.

As the chairman of the subcommittee of jurisdiction, I know that the PRO Act simply updates labor law to ensure that workers in today's economy are able to create and join labor unions to receive the same kinds of protections they see in other sectors. Nothing more.

As President Eisenhower once said during the largest expansion of the American economy in history, when labor unions had one-third of the workforce: "Only a fool would try to deprive working men and women of the right to join the union of their choice."

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from California for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I am also happy to see him back doing well. I appreciate that, and that we are here in the Chamber together.

Madam Speaker, we are here considering the rule for three controversial, divisive bills being moved forward by the majority with very little input from Republicans or the millions of Americans these bills will affect. Two of these bills are highly controversial gun control bills that undermine the constitutional right to bear arms.

H.R. 8, the so-called universal background check bill, would criminalize the private transfer of firearms. Combined with the restrictions already placed on private transfers during the pandemic, this makes it impossible for law-abiding gun owners to acquire or even borrow or lend firearms.

Universal background checks do not stop criminals. In fact, the majority of the criminals in State and Federal prisons who used a firearm during their offense got that firearm by stealing it, taking it from a family member or friend, or just an underground market. In 2013, the Department of Justice's National Institute of Justice researched universal background checks and determined that they would not be effective without additional restrictions on firearms.

The other gun control bill, the Charleston loophole bill, would permit the Federal Government to delay a firearm transfer indefinitely without any proof that the person is ineligible to possess a firearm. This bill undermines the ability for Americans to legally purchase a firearm, as it subjects firearm dealers to the mercy of the Federal bureaucracy.

Before we jump straight to this kind of constitutional overreach, it is important to remember that gun control legislation isn't going to stop criminals from gaining access to guns.

In the rural district I represent, many of my constituents are hunters, sportsmen, and law-abiding gun owners who utilize their Second Amendment rights. These bills undermine their ability to do so, and flies in the face of unity that has been promised by the President and Democrats.

Lastly, we are considering a bill that amounts to a union boss wish list that the majority is pushing, circumventing regular order and without input from the minority.

Madam Speaker, labor law must strike a balance—a careful balance between labor unions' rights to organize and employers' abilities to respond to these efforts. However, the PRO Act, a monumental rewrite of Federal labor law, will massively tip the scales in favor of unions, leaving employers and small businesses with massive costs and burdensome or vague legal standards.

Among the most egregious, a section of this bill is applying a one-size-fits-all standard for union contracts, rendering the franchise industry completely unviable by imposing a burdensome joint-employer Obama rule and requiring the disclosure of private information of employees to union organizers without their consent.

My great home State has a proud history of supporting organized labor, and I support employees' right to collective bargaining. However, this legislation before us today represents a misguided and unbalanced approach to labor law.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to think twice before supporting these bills that could permanently alter our job market and threaten our constitutional rights. I urge opposition to this rule, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), the distinguished chairwoman of the Committee on Appropriations.

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I am so glad he is back.

Madam Speaker, I rise to speak in support of the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, or the PRO Act.

I am the daughter of a garment worker. So the fight for workers' rights has always had a special place in my heart. My mother toiled and worked every single day in the sweatshops in New Haven, Connecticut, sewing shirt collars and dresses. She was piecework, which meant she got pennies on the dollar.

As chair of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, I work every day to ensure that her early struggles were not in vain.

I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the PRO Act, introduced by the chair of the Committee, Congressman BOBBY SCOTT. It strengthens the right of working people to come together in unions to secure better wages and better working conditions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed the single biggest economic challenge of our times, which is that people's pay does not keep up with the rising costs of healthcare, education, and childcare.

And from 1980 to 2017, average incomes for the bottom 90 percent of households stagnated to a 1.1 percent increase, while skyrocketing more than 180 percent for the wealthiest 1 percent in this country. It is no coincidence that at the same time, union membership fell for a record low to 10 percent.

Economists at Princeton found that the alarming rise of income inequality since the 1970s can be at least partially attributed to the decline in union membership.

The PRO Act is about leveling the playing field for working people. It would directly address the issues facing workers across the entire economy and give equal access to the collective bargaining process. In sum, it would ensure workers' rights keep pace with the new economy.

As Nobel prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz has said: "Inequality is not inevitable. It is about the public policy choices we make, not globalization, not technology."

Madam Speaker, we have the opportunity today to choose a public policy that, in fact, will defend and protect working people in this country. Pass the PRO Act.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. RESCHENTHALER), my good friend and colleague from the Rules Committee.

Mr. RESCHENTHALER. Madam Speaker, I thank Representative FISCHBACH for yielding to me.

Madam Speaker, the rule before us today makes in order two pieces of legislation that this Chamber already considered last Congress. I am incredibly disappointed, yet once again, that we are considering legislation that makes it harder for law-abiding citizens to exercise their Second Amendment rights, but does nothing, nothing at all, to address the root cause of gun violence.

Despite what the majority claims, these bills would not have prevented any recent, high-profile mass shootings. These bills would not have prevented criminals from obtaining firearms. The overwhelming majority of criminals who commit crimes or are in possession of a firearm, they commit those crimes with firearms that were acquired through theft, the underground market, or straw purchases; and these are already illegal. Nothing in these bills would stop criminals from continuing to break the law.

Instead, H.R. 8 and H.R. 1446 would make it harder for domestic violence victims to protect themselves. It would give unelected bureaucrats the power to indefinitely delay legal gun purchases. It could even be used to create a national gun registry.

If you don't believe me, the Obama administration even said that universal background checks are unworkable unless you have a national registry. But let's just get back to the text.

As we pointed out last Congress, H.R. 8 is so poorly drafted that a transfer of a firearm to another person during a life-threatening emergency could land somebody in jail. That is how poorly this is drafted. So, again, these bills do nothing except penalize law-abiding citizens.

You know, I learned to shoot from my grandfather. I was very young and learned how to shoot in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. Guns and firearms are very important to me and to a lot of my constituents. I can attest and I can assure you that the vast majority of gun owners are hardworking, law-abiding citizens looking to protect their families, looking to hunt and shoot with their friends.

□ 1630

But my colleagues on the left would be wise to just stop their grandstanding and focus on solutions that have been proven to work, like improving law enforcement coordination, increasing information sharing, and giving authorities more resources

to actually prevent, deter, and prosecute firearm violence.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this rule, vote "no" on H.R. 8, and vote "no" on H.R. 1446.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD an article published in the March 3 USA Today titled: "Congress renews gun safety push with background check bills."

[From USA TODAY, Mar. 3, 2021]

CONGRESS RENEWS GUN SAFETY PUSH WITH BACKGROUND CHECK BILLS

(By Amanda Becker)

Congressional lawmakers this week revived an effort to enact significant gun safety laws for the first time in more than 25 years by introducing bills to establish a universal background check system that has broad support from the public.

The bills introduced Tuesday in the House and Senate would extend current federal background check requirements to transactions conducted by unlicensed and private sellers.

Legislation was reintroduced in Congress to extend background checks to transactions conducted by private and unlicensed gun sellers.

The gun safety group Giffords estimates that 22% of U.S. gun owners purchased their last firearm without completing a background check. Polling shows that more than 90% of Americans support a universal background check system.

The measures are what gun safety advocates predicted would be a first step in pursuing new gun laws now that Democrats control the White House and both chambers of Congress. In recent years, gun safety bills stalled even when they had bipartisan public support, in part because Republican Majority Leader Mitch McConnell did not bring them up for votes when he led the Senate from 2015 to 2021.

Rep. Mike Thompson, a California Democrat who chairs a congressional gun violence prevention task force, on Tuesday reintroduced bipartisan House legislation that would require background checks for all firearm sales. The House first passed the bill in 2019, one year after a mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, left 17 dead.

"Time and time again, we have seen that the American people want universal background checks, in fact public polling shows that the majority of people, Democrats, Republicans and independents, support this," Thompson said in a statement.

The Senate is evenly split between Democrats and Republicans, and the measure would have to pick up bipartisan support to pass that chamber given that most legislation must clear a 60-vote threshold.

"This Congress we will finally bring common sense gun reforms up for a vote in the House and the Senate, and the single most popular and effective proposal we can consider is universal background checks," Murphy said in a video about the effort.

When the House passed background checks legislation in 2019, the bill ran aground in the then Republican-controlled Senate, where McConnell, a Kentucky Republican, did not bring it up for a vote.

"Now, with Senate Democrats in the Majority, we have the opportunity to act on this overwhelmingly popular, lifesaving legislation to protect American communities," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said in a statement on the bill's introduction.

Advocates for new gun safety laws have hoped that with President Joe Biden in the

White House and Democrats controlling the House and Senate, there is an opportunity for action. The NRA is also grappling with multiple crises: New York's attorney general is investigating whether its leaders misappropriated more than \$60 million for personal use, and the NRA filed for bankruptcy in January. Its remaining officials insist the organization remains solvent, and it plans to reincorporate in Texas.

"This is the moment," said Shannon Watts, the founder of Moms Demand Action, a grassroots organization started in late 2012 that now has nearly 6 million supporters.

"We have a trifecta and they have a mandate to act on this. We have a grassroots army to support them and the NRA is weaker than they've ever been," she added.

Already this week, Rep. Jim Clyburn, a key Biden ally from South Carolina, reintroduced a bill that would close the so-called "Charleston loophole" that allows firearm purchases to move forward after three business days, even if a background check has not been completed. It is named for the 2015 mass shooting at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, where nine died after the gunman was able to purchase a firearm when the three-day window expired.

Last month, to mark the third anniversary of the Parkland shooting, Biden called for the passage of "common sense" gun safety laws. He cited a background checks bill among his top priorities.

The last major law passed to curb gun violence was the Federal Assault Weapons Ban enacted by Democratic President Bill Clinton in 1994. But even that had a 10-year sunset provision that has since expired. Several attempts to renew it, including by President Barack Obama in 2013 after Sandy Hook, all derailed in a Republican-controlled Senate.

Groups pushing for gun safety measures told The 19th earlier this year that a background check bill would probably be the starting point early in the Biden administration because it has broader bipartisan support than other measures. President Donald Trump acknowledged in 2019 that there was a "great appetite" for such a proposal after mass shootings in Ohio and Texas, as did McConnell, though he did not go on to bring it up for a vote.

A "red flag" bill giving courts the power to temporarily confiscate firearms from individuals deemed at risk or anti-gun trafficking legislation could be taken up next, the advocates said.

Biden advisers Susan Rice and Cedric Richmond met last month with gun safety groups that included Everytown for Gun Safety, Moms Demand Action, Giffords and Brady to discuss background checks, the proliferation of so-called "ghost" guns (homemade firearms or those with serial numbers removed) and violence intervention programs, the White House said.

Biden has also pledged to work with Congress to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act, which he worked on as a senator in the 1990s. In 2019, the House approved a VAWA provision to close the so-called "boyfriend loophole" that allows current and former unmarried partners convicted of abuse and stalking to continue to purchase firearms. That effort also stalled in the Senate. Democratic House leaders said this week they will be taking up VAWA reauthorization later this month.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, more than 90 percent of Americans support a universal background check system. Passing this legislation is simply common sense, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from

the 26th District of Texas (Mr. BURGESS), who is another one of my colleagues on the Rules Committee.

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for the time.

Madam Speaker, I am concerned about H.R. 1446, the Enhanced Background Checks Act, that is part of this rule. This bill would eliminate the 3-day waiting period for a National Instant Criminal Background Check system determination. Under current law, if no determination is made within 3 days, a firearms sale may proceed. This bill that will be before Congress this week would expand the 3 days to require a 10-business-day waiting period with an additional 10 days allowed for the Attorney General to process any petitions.

But rather than eliminate the 3-day waiting period, we should be removing from commerce those firearms that are sold to individuals who are later found to be ineligible.

In 2016 the Department of Justice Inspector General audit found that less than 1 percent of those who were sold a firearm and then found later to be ineligible through the delayed background check were investigated and prosecuted.

According to a 2018 Government Accountability Office report, the FBI conducted just over 25 million firearm background checks through the NICS system that year. One percent of attempted purchases were denied, or about 181,000. If only 1 percent of those denials were investigated, that still leaves 179,000 NICS denials where an individual may have been inappropriately sold a firearm, but, in fact, were never investigated. Even one firearm illegally in commerce, unfortunately, can lead to tragedy.

Rather than place further burdens on law-abiding gun owners, we should be investigating and prosecuting those who have obtained a firearm illegally. Enforcement of our existing laws would be the first step to preventing gun violence.

During rules consideration, I submitted an amendment to H.R. 1446 to require the Department of Justice Inspector General to report to Congress on the number of NICS denials referred for investigation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield the gentleman from Texas an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for the time.

Madam Speaker, this will provide an accurate accounting of the inefficiencies in the NICS system and provide a starting point to ensure full enforcement of our laws.

I was pleased that this amendment was made in order, and I hope all Members will support it when it comes to the floor for a vote.

But the underlying bill, H.R. 1446, should not pass this House.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I agree with my colleague and friend on the Rules Committee that we should enforce existing laws. In States like California where we have universal background checks, we have seen that gun violence has gone down, as I said in my earlier remarks. We have also seen that 30 percent of the guns used in criminal activity are actually imported into the State from other States.

To the previous comments that we need a national standard, that is why we need a national standard. It doesn't mean that States like California, Connecticut, and Massachusetts can't do these things, and it is a good laboratory, as Justice Brandeis said, that States should be the laboratory for innovation. We know these things work. So I would agree that we should enforce and get the revenue, the existing law.

But clearly, eliminating the background checks loophole would help make Americans safe.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from the Fifth District of Oklahoma (Mrs. BICE).

Mrs. BICE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Minnesota for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the combined rule and to the underlying measures, including H.R. 842, the PRO Act.

We find ourselves today, Madam Speaker, at a time when businesses are struggling just to stay afloat, and in many States, unemployment numbers remain high. The last thing Congress should be doing at a time like this is making it harder for workers to find good employment.

But that is just what the PRO Act would do. It cuts the opportunity for employers to make decisions based on what is right for their businesses, takes away the freedom of choice for workers who want to keep more of their paychecks, and makes it impossible for entrepreneurs to operate as independent contractors.

Proponents of this bill don't want you to know that the so-called ABC test, based off a flawed California State law and used in this bill to define employment, would essentially abolish independent contracting and upend the gig economy.

There is a reason that in the last few decades 27 States, including my home State of Oklahoma, have passed right-to-work laws. We the people want freedom in the marketplace, not a bill that does the bidding for union bosses. I implore my colleagues to oppose this bill and instead focus on solutions that make it easier for Americans to find good jobs in the economy.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOOD).

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. Madam Speaker, the bottom line is this rule would advance unconstitutional legislation that undermines the Second Amendment for law-abiding citizens. It is amazing that lawful gun ownership has been so politicized by the left that it is now common to ask someone their position on the Second Amendment, as if our constitutional rights are subject to opinion.

The question before us is not: Do we believe in gun rights? It is rather: Do we believe in the Constitution?

Currently, any firearm purchase from a federally licensed dealer is subject to a background check. But this legislation would expand this system—along with the fees and bureaucracy that comes with it—to private transfers.

For what other constitutional rights will we now assign a fee or a tax?

Our First Amendment rights?

Our Fifth Amendment rights?

This bill creates a de facto gun registry by involving the Federal Government in every gun transfer, including private transfers and gifts.

How else would we enforce these requirements?

For my Democrat friends who suggest that Conservatives and gun owners are paranoid about a national registry, Madam Speaker, you bet we are. We know our history, and we know what has happened in other countries.

Madam Speaker, I oppose this rule and all three of these bills.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I was hoping when I flew back last night that the fence would be gone from around the Capitol. Unfortunately, it is still there. But given the bills we have before us today, maybe it is only fitting when you look at the Capitol you see a fence around it. It makes the Capitol appear as if it is a capital of a more totalitarian state looking at the bills we have before us today.

The first bill is H.R. 8, the Bipartisan Background Checks Act. They call this an assault on the Second Amendment, something our forefathers put in the Constitution because they knew that the power in this country has to rest with the people. Instead, we have a bill here making it much more difficult to transfer a firearm and putting one in a position where they could face prison or a \$100,000 fine if they do something wrong.

It is just beyond belief. It is hard to believe when you look at this bill, Madam Speaker, that until 4 years ago when they began a war on the police, the murder rate in this country had fallen over 20 years in a row. Unfortunately, the majority is going to try to make it much more difficult to transfer a firearm as well as create a situation when you are waiting for your NICS check, if the FBI doesn't get back to you, you are delayed in getting a firearm.

Madam Speaker, I urge rejection of the rule.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I have one comment. The idea of opinions in the interpretation of the Second Amendment, there are 13 States, as I understand it, right now, who have universal background checks. All of them are working consistent with upholding the Second Amendment. Californians who have a universal background check can go out and legally buy a gun. It just decreases the number of deaths and injuries when you have this kind of law, Madam Speaker.

So I agree with the gentleman who spoke and said it shouldn't be about opinion. Neither of us decides what is constitutional in this instance. The courts do, and the courts have allowed local and State governments to implement these commonsense laws.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from the First District of Iowa (Mrs. HINSON).

Mrs. HINSON. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Minnesota for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the rule. I think we can all agree that guns should not be allowed to fall into the wrong hands. But these bills do nothing to stop the bad guys from illegally purchasing guns or reduce gun violence meaningfully. Instead, they punish law-abiding gun owners and arbitrarily deny Iowans their Second Amendment rights.

H.R. 1446 allows the government to delay the sale of a firearm for an indefinite amount of time. H.R. 8 infringes on the rights of law-abiding gun owners, criminalizing everyday transfers of guns between friends, family, and neighbors, including lending of weapons that were obtained lawfully.

Madam Speaker, these bills trample on the constitutional rights of Iowans, and I strongly oppose them.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, a correction. The bill doesn't say indefinitely for the background checks. It says 10 days with the availability of an additional 10 days for a maximum of 20 days. So it is not indefinite.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from the Third District of Florida (Mrs. CAMMACK).

Mrs. CAMMACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this rule as well as H.R. 8 and H.R. 1446, a/k/a the legislation to deny Americans their Second Amendment rights.

Common sense and data tell us that these bills will do nothing to prevent criminals from obtaining firearms or stop mass shootings in the United States. Instead, these bills will make it more difficult for law-abiding citizens

to exercise their constitutionally protected rights.

H.R. 8 would lead to a national gun registry which every American should be concerned about. Even former Obama officials acknowledge that universal background checks are only effective with a national registry in place. H.R. 1446 would lead to unnecessary and potentially indefinite delays in law-abiding citizens purchasing the tools necessary to defend their families and their homes.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim that H.R. 1446 would close a loophole, but we know the truth. The only loophole will be that the criminals will continue to get guns on the black market while lawful citizens are denied their rights.

As Members of Congress we swore an oath to defend the Constitution, and that includes the Second Amendment; and it reads plainly: shall not be infringed.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to stand up for all Americans' rights to bear arms, uphold their constitutional oath, and reject this rule and these horrendous bills.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I would just like to point out that having a gun in your home actually makes you more likely to be a victim of gun violence.

Of the over 40,000 Americans who lost their lives from gun violence in 2018—the last year we have up-to-date statistics—two-thirds of those were by suicide. This is one of the big contributing factors to what are the so-called diseases of despair which happen everywhere in this country right now in these difficult times, and it has gotten worse under COVID. But the proximity to the guns actually leads to more of an opportunity for people to be the victim of gun violence.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD a February 18 Washington Post editorial titled: "Maryland just closed a gun loophole. The state is safer for it."

[From The Washington Post, Feb. 18, 2021]

MARYLAND JUST CLOSED A GUN LOOPHOLE.

THE STATE IS SAFER FOR IT.

(By Editorial Board)

Given America's lurid history of gun violence, it is confounding that buyers can purchase firearms in some places without background checks. It's even more astonishing that it remains the case in a liberal stronghold such as Maryland, which suffered its own recent trauma owing to a deranged gunman bent on mass murder.

Lawmakers in Annapolis last week finally closed a loophole in state law that waived background checks for buyers who make private purchases of shotguns and rifles. Sales of handguns as well as shotguns and rifles from licensed dealers in Maryland have long been subject to mandatory checks through a federal database, but long guns were exempted when the transaction took place through private dealers, including those at gun shows.

The Democratic-controlled legislature pushed through the change this month by overriding a gratuitous veto cast last year

by Gov. Larry Hogan, a Republican, who made no public argument to defend the loophole beyond the fact that he had not proposed closing it. The change takes effect next month.

Gun rights advocates and their Republican allies in the legislature characterized the legislation as an assault on rural Maryland's way of life and a burden for hunters. In fact, whatever (probably slight) inconvenience some sportsmen might undergo because of the new law is outweighed by the obstacle it may pose for buyers who have no business owning firearms.

It does not take a feat of imagination to foresee an act of gun violence carried out by someone who, stymied by a background check conducted by a licensed dealer, turns to a private seller instead. Less than three years ago, a gunman nursing a grievance massacred five people and injured two others on a rampage through the newsroom of the Capital Gazette newspaper, in Annapolis. He used a shotgun. As it happens, he passed a background check when he purchased it; a previous conviction, in 2011, for criminal harassment, was a misdemeanor, not serious enough to forbid the sale. Yet even if he had been convicted of a felony, he might still have obtained a weapon easily by seeking out a private dealer—through an online inquiry, for instance. The chances that such a gunman would now succeed are diminished in Maryland.

No legislative measure is foolproof, and none will reliably defeat a determined gunman. The idea of gun control, rather, is to build a matrix of laws that deter and detect individuals who, were they to obtain a firearm, would pose a threat to themselves or others. Maryland's new law advances that cause.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, this isn't about taking away the rights of law-abiding Americans. Those claims are nonsense. This is about protecting the lives of all Americans.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from the Ninth District of Georgia (Mr. CLYDE).

Mr. CLYDE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the rule providing combined consideration for H.R. 8, H.R. 1446, and H.R. 842.

I want to focus on the first two. That is where Democrats are peddling their dangerous gun control agenda under the guise of working to stem the tide of firearms used in crime and under the guise of helping make our communities safer. These Democratic efforts are part of their larger radical and shameful ploy to slowly chip away at the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens.

As a Federal firearms dealer by trade, I remain staunchly opposed to any effort that abridges our God-given Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms—those inalienable rights recognized by the Constitution.

□ 1645

If enacted, H.R. 8 will criminalize many common and often necessary firearm transfers between law-abiding citizens while not reducing criminals' access to guns at all. I predict we will see more moms and pops get busted for

illegal possession or transfer of a firearm than we will violent gang members or criminals.

How on Earth will criminalizing moms and pops curtail firearms used in a crime? The answer is that it won't. My Democrat colleagues are naive to think that criminals are suddenly going to rush to the closest firearms dealer to buy a gun. I know.

Even more egregious than H.R. 8 is H.R. 1446, as it not only sets up a process by which American citizens would have to petition the government to exercise their right to bear arms, but it also extends the amount of time before a dealer can legally transfer a purchased firearm.

Current law provides a 3-business-day safety valve to ensure the government doesn't further infringe on the customer's constitutional rights, and that must not be extended.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the rule and "no" on the underlying bills.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I would like to point out to my friends and colleagues that, again, even Justice Scalia, in the Heller majority decision, said that local and State governments could enact reasonable gun violence protection laws.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Alabama's Second District (Mr. MOORE).

Mr. MOORE of Alabama. Madam Speaker, if enacted, H.R. 8 would turn law-abiding citizens into criminals in the name of preventing crime.

H.R. 8 would establish universal background checks that aren't universal at all, nor would we have prevented any of the recent crimes involving firearms. The criminals involved either passed a Federal background check or stole the firearms they used. This should prove that background checks aren't the problem.

This bill doesn't stop at the transfer of firearms, but it also requires background checks for temporary transfers of possession. Under this bill, simply handing a gun to someone could result in a penalty of up to 1 year in prison and a \$100,000 fine.

For example, this weekend, my son brought some of his friends over to the house to shoot skeet, and one of the young men borrowed my gun. So now, are we criminals when we loan a young man a gun for learning to shoot skeet?

I don't understand how in the world we are going to start to criminalize everyday activities in this country.

We are talking about a waiting period. Remember, when we got this mask, they told us 2 weeks to flatten the curve? We are a little over a year now.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. HARSHBARGER).

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the attempts to take away our Second Amendment rights.

As a gun owner myself, I am a strong supporter of the Second Amendment, and for me, this support is personal.

Years ago, myself and my employees were held at gunpoint in my own pharmacy. Fortunately, we all made it out safe. Do you want to know why we made it out safe? Because we had a gun as well.

But I know we were more fortunate than most who have a similar experience. I have utilized my gun carry permit ever since.

I believe Americans should have the right to defend themselves like I did. This experience is just one reason why I oppose attempts to weaken our right to carry.

Without our Second Amendment rights, we undermine our own rights to self-defense for ourselves, our businesses, and our families. This would be a terrible mistake, to try to take away our inalienable right to self-defense.

Madam Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in opposing any legislation that threatens our Second Amendment rights, including H.R. 8 and H.R. 1446.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Just a brief comment. In that same decision of Justice Scalia that I mentioned earlier, he said that Second Amendment protections are not unlimited, and that is the point of this bill. They have been done. They have been done constitutionally, as I said, by 13 States. And they statistically work.

I, too, have been robbed at gunpoint, but I didn't have to have a gun to survive. That was providence and the San Francisco Police Department.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to provide for consideration of Congresswoman HINSON's bill, H.R. 682, the Reopen Schools Act.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous materials, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, H.R. 682, the Reopen Schools Act, provides a safe and responsible path forward to reopen our schools and to get our students back in the classroom.

To speak further on the bill, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. HINSON), my colleague.

Mrs. HINSON. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Minnesota for yielding the time.

Madam Speaker, I rise today as a voice for the thousands of students

across this country who have not stepped foot in a classroom or on a playground for over a year.

In Iowa, our Governor has put students' education, their mental health, and their safety first. Our schools have reopened safely in Iowa.

My kids got on a school bus this morning and went to a classroom, and they rode that same school bus home. They got to play with their friends. They got to learn in a classroom.

Schools nationwide have to have a plan to reopen before it is too late for our students. The mental health toll of long-term school closures on our students is staggering. Recent data shows that mental healthcare claims for children ages 13–18—these are our teenagers, our next generation—have doubled over the past year, according to that data.

Emergency room doctors are saying that they are treating more and more young people in crisis than ever before. Now, it is being reported that students across the country have fallen off the grid. That is right. We don't know where they are. School districts can't find them.

As weeks out of school have turned into months, and months have turned into a year, our kids are the ones who are falling through the cracks, academically, emotionally, and physically.

Thousands of our youngest, most vulnerable Americans are unaccounted for. Enrollment is dropping, especially in rural areas in States like Iowa. So now, 1 year out of the classroom is turning into 2, at least. Who knows?

We must act. We must act today. We must act quickly. That is why I introduced the Reopen Schools Act. This legislation would ensure that our school districts are using money that was appropriated from this body, \$54 billion of it, on proven safety measures that will allow them to reopen safely as soon as possible and have a plan to do so.

Throwing more and more money at this problem, and then letting it go unused, is truly a disservice to taxpayers, and it is an injustice to our students.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in standing with our kids by defeating the previous question. It is an important issue for our next generation.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

On the last point, I would just say that in California, in particular, in my district, having had multiple conversations with teachers, their labor representatives, and superintendents, we are getting schools back open, but we are doing it in a way to make sure that it is done efficiently and safely for everyone, the students, most particularly, their families, and their teachers.

We have come so far in this country, those of us who have listened to the science and the Centers for Disease

Control. We just want to make sure it is done right, in the most efficient, effective way for the kids.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, the Centers for Disease Control has indicated schools can operate safely with students in the classroom, yet many schools across the country remain closed.

President Biden has chosen to side with political allies and big labor groups over scientists, and our students are being denied their right to a good education as a result.

Kids need to be in school, and we should follow the science and reopen the schools for in-person instruction now.

Madam Speaker, I urge a “no” on the previous question and “no” on the underlying measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague. Nicely done.

First, on the gun bills, of course, we are all respectful of the Speaker pro tempore's courage and the experience that she has had. For those of us who have had family members who have lost their lives because of gun violence—my dad is buried over at Arlington. He is a combat veteran from World War II who, a little over 30 years ago, took his own life.

As we know, the tragedies of homicide, as the Speaker pro tempore knows personally, and losing a loved one, as I know from losing a loved one to suicide—suicide is two-thirds of the total of people who die—both are awful.

All we are trying to do, at least in my mind, is listen to the research, listen to the examples of other developed countries and other States, and implement public health policy. It informs us that if we do it, we will save lives and injuries, and we will save billions of dollars that all of us pay for.

All of us respect the Constitution. We took an oath to it. All of us respect the Second Amendment. We might not have all agreed if we were there, but it is the law. The courts have allowed us to implement these laws, and they work.

I really don't understand, and maybe it is because of my own personal belief and also from my experience as a city council member, a mayor, a member of the California Legislature, and now in Congress, why we don't follow the research and the evidence that it saves lives, out of respect for all those people who have lost their lives to gun violence.

Then, on the PRO Act, as a former member of a Teamsters union, that job helped me to get through college when my dad had lost his job. I loaded trucks. It was that union that provided me protection and enough for myself and my coworkers.

When I moved to San Francisco, I didn't have any money. I got a job in a

hotel restaurant business, and I was in that local. Then, I was able to save enough money to go open my own businesses.

There have been some comments that somehow this bill would hurt small businesses. The reality is that people organize in environments where their employer is not treating their employees appropriately.

We know the inequality that Ms. DELAURO talked about, this historic inequality that is strangling our country and hurting so many working Americans, destroying the middle income that we have all benefited from, that opportunity to move up and to give to our kids something better than we had. That is the legacy of this country, and labor unions are a big part of that, and entrepreneurs and individual business owners are a big part of that. But it is the balance between these two.

As John Kenneth Galbraith said a long time ago, and he wrote a boring book about this, but it is interesting: Wages and capital have to have countervailing institutions. They have to balance each other.

As my friend from Minnesota said, it is a balance. Right now, after 50 years of attacks, starting with President Reagan, the working people in this country don't have the voice they once had. That not only hurts them and their kids; it hurts all of us.

When you have a robust middle class, and you have workers represented appropriately and proportionately, the country grows; there is more money to spend in businesses like mine; and there is a camaraderie, having teamwork. A good employer knows that, whether they have a unionized workforce or a nonunionized workforce.

Your employees are what make your business work. That is what gives you goodwill. That is what Americans took so much pride in, in the 1950s and 1960s, after World War II, after we had come to the great country we were after World War II, with a middle class that no one has ever seen on this planet. Since then, we have eroded that middle class.

The one most important thing to improve our economy is to give working Americans a voice. Let them join together. Let it be fair. A good employer will respect that and work with that.

As Eisenhower said, as I quoted in my opening, only a fool would try to keep a working American from organizing into a union.

Madam Speaker, I urge a “yes” vote on the rule and the previous question.

The material previously referred to by Mrs. FISCHBACH is as follows:

AMENDMENT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 188

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 19. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution, the House shall resolve into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 682) to encourage local educational agencies to resume in-person instruction at elementary and secondary schools, and for

other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and Labor. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. When the committee rises and reports the bill back to the House with a recommendation that the bill do pass, the previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 20. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 682.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 59 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CUELLAR) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 842, PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE ACT OF 2021; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 8, BIPARTISAN BACKGROUND CHECKS ACT OF 2021; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1446, ENHANCED BACKGROUND CHECKS ACT OF 2021; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 188) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 842) to amend the