

Chairman Nadler, Ranking Member Collins, and members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony on crucial legislative issues affecting constituents in my district and across the country.

My hope is that you will strongly consider and pass two of my bills currently referred to this committee.

The first is H.R. 1671, the **NICS Denial Notification Act**, which will help state law enforcement better enforce existing gun laws and respond to warning signs of criminal behavior.

Keeping dangerous weapons out of the hands of dangerous people is a non-negotiable priority for my constituents.

Every year in Chicago, nearly 700 children are victims of gun violence. 66 of those children die as a result of injuries sustained from bullets. And across America, 89 people are killed daily—7 of those 89 are children.

Every day, mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and friends learn that a loved one has been killed by a bullet.

Over the past decade, we have seen mass shooting after mass shooting. In fact, just this summer, in a span of less than 13 hours, two communities in our country were faced with the tragedy of a mass shooting.

Thirty-two lives were cut short by gun violence in less than one day. We can do something about this.

On August 31, Midland, Texas suffered another senseless and tragic mass shooting.

As you may know, the perpetrator in that incident failed a federal background check in 2014 when he attempted to purchase a gun.

He later purchased a firearm through a private sale.

Taking action to prevent that scenario from ever happening again is why I have come here today.

My bill, the NICS Denial Notification Act, is one of the few bipartisan gun safety bills in Congress and would help state law enforcement better enforce existing gun laws by establishing an alert system to notify them when individuals legally prohibited from purchasing a firearm attempt to do so.

In 37 states and the District of Columbia, which rely on the FBI to run some or all of their background checks, state authorities are generally not aware when prohibited persons fail background checks run by the FBI.

As a result, these states and D.C. lack critical law enforcement intelligence that they could use to try to keep their communities safe.

By automatically notifying state and local law enforcement when a prohibited individual attempts to acquire a gun, we can help law enforcement intercept a dangerous person before they acquire a weapon and commit a violent crime.

Had this been law, there is a chance that the horrific mass shooting in Midland may never have occurred.

On a much different note, I also want to use this time to discuss my bipartisan JOLT Act.

H.R. 2187, the **Jobs Originating through Launching Travel Act** is aptly named as it is designed to give a “jolt” to the U.S. economy by improving inbound travel to the U.S., while simultaneously improving our national security.

Travel and tourism are crucially important to a district like mine in Chicago—but all over the United States, cities and towns, big and small benefit from a robust travel and tourism industry.

The impacts are felt in food service, lodging, transportation, retail, amusement and recreation attractions.

As our nation's number one service export, tourism generates \$2.5 trillion in economic activity every year with nearly \$200 billion in spending coming from visa-free travelers alone.

But of course, our ports of entry must be fortified, and the infrastructure improved in order to meet the needs and unique security challenges international travelers pose.

The JOLT Act deals with these issues and opportunities directly, providing for a safer, more prosperous country.

First, it encourages Canadian tourism to the United States by increasing the length of stay for Canadian visitors from 180 days to 240 days.

Canadian Snowbirds flock to states like South Carolina, Arizona, Florida, Hawaii, Georgia, Arkansas and

California for the winter months, creating a hugely positive impact for those local economies.

Second, the bill importantly renames the Visa Waiver Program to the more appropriate Secure Travel Partnership Program. This name change is more than rebranding.

It more accurately reflects the mission and security parameters required for qualified countries to participate.

This includes maintaining high airport security standards, supporting operation of an effective air marshal program, and cooperating with the U.S. to fight terrorism by sharing terrorist threat information.

Next, the bill makes visa processing more efficient setting a goal of 15 days for reviews of non-immigrant visas, creating a pilot program for processing visas by secure video conferencing, and better coordinating enrollment for visas and the Global Entry program.

Finally, the bill contains reporting requirements for DHS to share with Congress on how many people visited the United States under the secure travel partnership program, ways the program promotes travel security, and justification for DHS program management.

Not only does visa-free travel by our allies help to support one million U.S. jobs, but it also enhances international diplomacy and strengthens our national security.

Simply put, we should be doing everything we can to expand and strengthen a successful program that serves as a major component of our strategy to secure borders, building security partnerships and encouraging counterterrorism information sharing between the U.S. and member countries.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide this testimony. I look forward to working with you on passing these important legislative priorities and look forward to answering any questions you may have.