

On Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup> at 1:00AM, Dayton's Oregon District was bustling like it usually is with a diverse group of friends and neighbors enjoying a night out. People hopped between bars and restaurants as last call approached. Others waited in line at a popular taco truck for a late night snack.

But that all changed in an instant.

At 1:05am, a young man armed with an AR-15 pistol variant walked down an alley between two bars and began spraying high-capacity rounds into the crowd. He then turned down a crowded street as people tried to run for safety. Friends pulled each other into doorways to try to escape flying bullets. One man threw his girlfriend to the ground and covered her body with his own. People literally ran out of their shows.

Less than a minute later, 9 people were dead and 17 others had been shot. Dozens more were injured in the commotion. 32 seconds. In just 32 seconds 26 people had been shot. 9 families had lost loved ones and dozens more will never be the same.

The entire incident was over in half as much time as I have been speaking to you so far today.

In those 32 seconds, the shooter's weapon did exactly what it was designed to do – kill or injure as many people as possible in the shortest amount of time. It was a weapon designed to inflict maximum damage to human beings. It left a trail of destruction not on some foreign battlefield, but down a historic brick street in Dayton, Ohio. These shootings are more than just numbers and statistics.

The shooting occurred nearly two months ago, but our sidewalks are still stained even after numerous power washes. Many buildings and street signs still have bullet holes in them.

I visited the crime scene the morning after the shooting, and the thing I remember mostly clearly is the smell of the bleach. A street sweeper was being used to try to clean the road and men in hazmat suits were scrubbing the sidewalks. The meat still sat on the grill of the taco truck. Little yellow placards showing where bullet casings were found looked like they had been scattered without thought. I was in a place that was both completely familiar, and

completely foreign. I have seen crime scenes before. I have never seen anything like this.

And these are just the physical scars left by the shooting. In the weeks since, it has become very apparent that far more people are feeling the effects of this violence than those with physical injuries.

Young people who were in the District that night talk about their new fear of crowds. Bartenders in the neighborhood are consumed with anxiety at the sound of sirens. Neighbors dread the sound of fireworks after being awakened by gunfire.

Our whole city is hurting. All because a young man with a history of violent ideas could get his hands on a weapon capable of such destruction.

And yet, we are lucky. Just 32 seconds after the shooting began, Dayton Police neutralized the gunman. He was killed as he attempted to enter a bar where hundreds of people were hiding. If he shot 26 people on the street in 32 seconds, what could he have done in that bar?

We are so lucky that seven Dayton police officers were less than a block away when the shooting began. We are so lucky that these officers relied on their training and their courage and ran directly into the gunfire.

I have thought a lot about the bravery of the Dayton Police and the impossible situation that confronted them. Why do we ask our first responders to face down weapons that can do so much damage in so little time?

Our city has honored these heroes. The White House has honored these heroes. People from Dayton and around the country have expressed their gratitude.

But if we are serious about honoring and thanking our brave first responders, the best thing we can do is make sure they are never put in this situation again.

Police should not have to confront a weapon that can kill nine people in 32 seconds.

No one should.

The evening after the shooting, thousands of people gathered for a vigil on the same street where nine of their neighbors had died only hours earlier. When Governor Mike DeWine took the stage, hundreds of people shouted in frustration, "Do something."

Do something.

What happened in Dayton - and in too many other communities around this country - demands a response. We must ensure that no American - neither a young person on a casual night out nor a police officer on patrol - has to face down weapons capable of so much destruction.

I'm here on behalf of the citizens of Dayton to ask you to keep weapons like this off of our streets. I'm here to ask you to do something.