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House of Representatives

Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor heroes from the theater shooting in Aurora, Colorado on July 20, 2012. Twelve lives were taken, seventy were injured, and hundreds suffered emotional trauma. Yet even in this tragedy, we saw incredible heroism that night—those who sacrificed themselves to save others, those who helped others while badly wounded themselves, and lives that were saved by the tireless efforts of first responders and medical teams.

These men inspired me to act on a National Heroes Day Resolution:

John Larimer, age 27, was a Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class and cryptologic technician who was stationed at Buckley Air Force Base in Aurora for about a year. He was murdered protecting his girlfriend and his friend inside the theater, jumping into action to protect them once the shooting began. John was the youngest of five siblings from Crystal Lake, Illinois.

Jonathan Blunk, age 26, served his country in three tours in the Middle East. His desire was to become a Navy Seal. He was at the theater with a girlfriend when the shooting started and immediately pushed her under the seats, saving her life. Jonathan was shot multiple times and suffered a fatal gunshot wound to his heart. He left behind a widow and two small children in Reno, Nevada.

Matt McQuinn, age 27, was in love with his girlfriend and wanted to marry her and start a family. When the shooting began, he leaned over his girlfriend to get her out of harm's way. She was shot but survived. He was shot nine times; the most of anyone in the theater. He was survived by his parents, brothers, and girlfriend in Ohio.

Alex Teves, age 24, was born and spent his early years in New Jersey before moving to Arizona and then onto Colorado where he earned a master's in psychology the month before he was killed. He counseled kids with unique learning and emotional challenges at Humanex Academy. He was murdered after pulling his girlfriend down to safety, leaving himself exposed; a bullet hit him in the forehead as he whispered comforting words of love. He was the oldest of three siblings.

After his death, Alex's parents, Caren and Tom, began the "No Notoriety" movement asking that the media stop concentrating its coverage on the shooters for the sake of public safety. This movement is widely endorsed by law enforcement and on both sides of the aisle.

These individuals inspired me to introduce a resolution with my colleagues from the Colorado Congressional Delegation to designate July 20th as "National Heroes Day" to honor their memory and all those who save lives and improve their communities.

Those whose loved ones have been taken by horrific acts of violence, have honored their memories with action and now ask us to do the same. I will always remember the exceptional acts of courage displayed

by those in Aurora and will continue working with my colleagues to enact meaningful reforms to prevent these horrific acts of violence.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Perlmutter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress