

**Gabby Giffords:** Yes, her name is Gabrielle, but she goes by Gabby around the Capitol. And, while I do not know her well, I know she is a genuinely nice person who is liked by all. Speaker John Boehner put it best when he said, "An attack on one who serves is an attack on all who serve." And, although Congresswoman Giffords was apparently the intended target of this abominable act by an evil man, we all know that there were many other victims. My prayers and those of my family are with Gabby, her family, all of those wounded, and the families of the six who lost their lives. A special prayer for the family of little 9-year old Christina Taylor Green. Their loss, although no greater than the others, is clearly the most senseless and heart wrenching.

There has been much hand-wringing over the nature of political discourse in this country as a result of this heinous crime. Those discussions are at best premature and perhaps inappropriate. At the time of this writing, the person who has been charged with this crime (whose name I will not mention because I do not believe that repulsive criminals deserve any notoriety) appears not to have had any particular political motivation other than derangement. Now is a time for grieving and healing and protecting the future. There will be plenty of time for politics later.

In the past, I have held several public events as a member of Congress similar to the one at which Congresswoman Giffords was shot down. Instead of being in front of a supermarket, they were in front of coffee shops and were attended by hundreds of people each time. At one of these, a couple of groups started shouting very incendiary remarks which incited a rapid and emotional response from everyday people in the crowd. We were concerned that violence could have erupted, so we had the police come and separate out the offending groups. At another of these "coffees", as I call them, we were required to have a substantial police presence as several groups, again, attempted to disrupt civil conversation. During the interruption, other unstable individuals created a safety concern for the law enforcement officers who were present.

I tell you this not to alarm you or to make any political judgments. I merely wish to make the point that more security is necessary to protect the public as well as Members of Congress at advertised public events at home. And, while I don't know if every single one of my colleagues has received threats, I do know that every Member I've talked to about this has - as have I. Although, until this past weekend there had not been a physical assault upon a Member in the last three decades, the threat is serious and always present.

The security provided by the Capitol Police in Washington is excellent and unmatched. We do not need similar full-time security when we are home. Nor, frankly, do I want it or would I accept it. But, we can use local law enforcement for better protection when the circumstances warrant it. (I've utilized Orange County law enforcement in the past and found the support to be excellent).

I am writing this as I am on an airplane traveling to deliver a speech. Any time any of us gets on an airplane, there is a risk. But, we do all we can to minimize that risk, and then we proceed with life. As Members of Congress, we need to have contact with you to do our jobs. We should keep doing that, while sensibly minimizing the risks.

I pray that Gabby Giffords will have the health and strength to give us her opinion soon. My guess is that she will agree.

Until next week, I remain respectfully,

Congressman John Campbell  
Member of Congress