

WASHINGTON— U.S. Rep. Ed Pastor, D-Ariz., gave the following statement today on H. Res. 32, the resolution honoring Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords and the victims of the tragic shooting in Tucson, Ariz., which occurred on Jan. 8.

“Mr. Speaker, It is with great sadness I rise today to pay tribute to six innocent and precious Arizonans who, while participating in a public event designed to strengthen our democracy, so tragically lost their lives in a senseless act of violence last Saturday.

“I also want to pay tribute to those fourteen Arizonans, including our dedicated and beloved colleague, and my personal friend, Gabby Giffords, who were wounded. These Americans, all dedicated to freedom and all loving our country so much that they chose to use their Saturday morning to participate in a public event to make their government better, are recovering at different paces and with unique and different needs. The City of Tucson, Pima County, and the entire State of Arizona stand poised to assist and welcome these brave heroes back into our communities once they have recovered.

“Gabby continues to literally fight every minute for her life, and we are all reaching toward our God through prayer, contemplation, and silent whispers, in our unified effort to bring about her quick recovery and return to us here in the House of Representatives.

“Those who perished, Phyllis Schneck, Dorothy Morris, Gabe Zimmerman, Christina Taylor Green, Dorwin Stoddard, and John Roll will be missed by their families, their colleagues, their friends, and all Arizonans.

“Phyllis Schneck was described by her New Jersey hometown paper as a ‘lifelong conservative.’ Yet, she was there to see Gabby because she admired her. This is the perfect example of someone who wanted to step beyond the current vitriol in modern day politics and bring us together.

“Dorothy Morris was married to a former Marine Corps pilot, who was also wounded and recovering. We all know the patriotism and love of country every spouse of a Marine exhibits, and she was no exception.

“Gabe Zimmerman was one of us. A dedicated staff member to Gabby, it is said that he literally lived to serve his community. Sadly, he perished, but he perished fulfilling his calling and doing what he loved – helping the people of his town.

“Christina Taylor Green was just starting her political career. She had just been elected to her school’s Student Council, and she wanted to come see it done at the highest level. She wanted to see a pro, so she came to see Gabby. She was a special little girl who kept reaching for the stars – in politics, dance, baseball, whatever her heart desired.

“Dorwin Stoddard died shielding his wife, who was also wounded but is expected to recover. Following their regular Saturday outing, Dorwin brought his wife, Mavy, to see Gabby, because reportedly she wanted to tell Gabby what a good job she was doing. High school acquaintances, who reconnected after many years apart, they were a pillar of their church community, and we know Mavy will continue on, saddened and burdened, but hopefully not broken.

“Finally, Judge Roll had been working with Gabby and several of us in the delegation for the past several months trying to make the courts in Arizona more efficient and more responsive to both the victims and the accused. I knew him to be fair, dedicated, charming, professional, and loyal. He loved his family, his profession, his job, his community, and his country. Arizona and the nation will be a different place without him.

“Again, I am encouraged by the reports concerning all the wounded. These individuals are the perfect example of the strength of Arizonans and all Americans. They will recover, we pray, and they will not shy from continuing to serve their community.

“This is most true for Gabby. Gabby is special among us here in Congress. We all know that. We all love her pragmatism, her bipartisanship, her willingness to learn, her dedication to give, her compassion for her job and for each of us, and her spirit to continually strive to make the Eighth Congressional District, Arizona, and America a better place to live and work.

“Hopefully, it won’t be long much longer until we see her here, her smiling face with us again,

doing what she loves, and working hard for people of our country.

“Our prayers go to Gabby, all the victims, and the families of the deceased.”

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