

November 21, 2017

U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

The 33 undersigned national medical, public health, and research organizations write to urge you to find a bipartisan path forward for comprehensive legislative solutions to firearm-related injuries and fatalities.

On October 1, the U.S. experienced its deadliest mass shooting in modern history, as the massacre in Las Vegas left at least 59 dead and over 500 injured. Recently we again witnessed another deadly mass shooting at a church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, where 25 people were fatally shot. Over and over again, such mass shootings are the tragic inflection points that exemplify the daily toll that gun violence takes on the lives of Americans. In 2015, there were nearly 36,000 U.S. firearm-related fatalities.¹ It is critical that we address gun violence as the significant public health threat that it is, so that we can enact policies that significantly reduce firearm-related morbidity and mortality.

Policymakers have an opportunity to respond to this public health challenge with bipartisan solutions that reduce injuries and fatalities associated with firearms. Federal policy should address gun violence with the same dedication applied to other successful public health initiatives over the past 25 years, such as immunizations, public sanitation, and motor vehicle safety. Reducing injury and mortality through research and evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies has been proven to improve health, safety, and life expectancy.

Strengthening firearm background checks and supporting federal research and public health surveillance on firearm-related injuries and fatalities would provide meaningful progress in achieving a public health solution for this issue. We urge you to find a bipartisan path forward to enact commonsense solutions that address the public health threat of firearm-related injuries and fatalities. Our organizations stand ready to work with you to support that critical effort. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Pediatrics
American College of Physicians
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Medical Association
American Nurses Association
American Pediatric Society
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association

American Trauma Society
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Big Cities Health Coalition
Child Injury Prevention Alliance
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
FUTURES Without Violence
Health Resources in Action
National Safety Council
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives
Pediatric Policy Council
Prevention Institute
Public Health Institute
Safe States Alliance
Sandy Hook Promise
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine
Society for Advancement of Injury and Violence Research
Society for Pediatric Research
Trust for America's Health

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2015 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released December, 2016. Data are from the Multiple Cause of Death Files, 1999-2015, as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html> on Oct 24, 2017 8:29:45 AM