



September 8, 2019

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing this letter because your urgent, personal intervention is needed to stem the endless massacres of our fellow Americans by gunfire. In the month of August, 51 Americans were killed in mass shootings alone, and many others were killed in the daily tragedy of gun violence in our communities. We have a responsibility to make our schools, shopping centers, houses of worship and other public places safer. The American people are crying out for their elected representatives to stop the epidemic of murder and mayhem that is shattering families and communities across the country. You are uniquely positioned to answer their call.

On September 3rd, Majority Leader McConnell made the following statement: "We're in a discussion about what to do on the gun issue in the wake of these horrendous shootings. I said several weeks ago that if the president took a position on a bill, so that we knew we would actually be making a law, and not just having serial votes, I'd be happy to put it on the floor. The administration is in the process of studying what they're prepared to support, if anything, and I expect to get an answer to that next week."


Leader McConnell's statement demonstrates that Republicans in Congress are now prepared to follow you on the issue of gun safety. This is a significant change because in the past, their fealty to the National Rifle Association prevented Republicans from supporting gun safety measures advanced by President Obama and every other president who has attempted to confront this issue.


Just last month, you expressed support for stronger background checks which the NRA has long opposed. You now have a historic opportunity to save lives simply by indicating your support for H.R. 8, the House-passed universal bipartisan background check legislation currently being blocked by Leader McConnell and the Republican majority in the Senate. This bill would close the gaping loophole in the law that allows private gun sellers to evade existing background check requirements. While closing this loophole will not stop every shooting, it will undoubtedly save many lives by helping to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous individuals. In fact, this is the very loophole that reportedly allowed the gunman in the Odessa, Texas shootings to buy the assault rifle he used to murder seven people and to injure more than 20 others on August 31st.

We implore you to seize this moment when your leadership and influence over Republicans in Congress on the issue of guns is so critical. Please do not squander it by acceding to NRA-backed proposals or other weak ideas that will do nothing to stop the continuing, horrific spread of gun violence and may, in some cases, actually make our communities less safe. We believe you have a unique opportunity to save American lives by giving political cover to your fellow Republicans to finally pass meaningful gun safety legislation. The time for you to act is now, before more lives are lost.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

  
NANCY PELOSI  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives

  
CHARLES E. SCHUMER  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. Senate