

SAMPLE LETTER FOR FEDERAL LEGISLATORS

Dear Member of Congress,

Last week we all grieved as 19 children and two teachers were killed at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. We are still grieving after the racist massacre of 10 Black shoppers at a Tops grocery store in Buffalo, NY by an avowed white supremacist. We share this grief as human beings. You likely know that since January 1, 2022 there have been 27 shootings at schools across America and nearly incalculable shootings at our churches, malls, block parties, baby showers, graduations, grocery stores, etc. Add in the shooting deaths resulting from domestic violence and suicides and we are left staring at nothing more than a colossal public health crisis.

To that end, I write to encourage you to support efforts focused on addressing this crisis. Specifically, I encourage you to act on the following:

Violence Against Women Act:

We can protect women, children, and first responders from potential harm by passing the Violence Against Women Act. This will remove gun ownership rights from domestic violence offenders. Gun deaths as a result of domestic violence is the second leading cause of deaths by shooting and one of the leading causes of death of women in this nation.

- Pass the act and ensure violent offenders cannot legally access guns or other weapons

Assault Weapons Ban:

Data shows that once this ban was repealed, gun violence of all kinds rose sharply in our nation, including mass shootings. An AR-15 was used in Buffalo, Uvalde, Parkland, the list goes on. Banning the future manufacture, sale, import, or transfer of AR-15s and other assault weapons along with high caliber and high capacity magazines will make our communities safer.

- Reinstate the nationwide assault weapons ban
- Offer a nationwide buy back program for all currently owned assault weapons

Research Funding Focused on Reducing Violence Committed by and against Children:

We can address this problem, but it will take bi-partisan support of serious research identifying root causes of this violence and practical solutions to address this problem.

- Please increase funding for research at the federal level on causes of and actions that can be taken to reduce violence committed by young adults, and against children and teens.

Responsible Gun Storage:

The largest number of gun deaths each year are suicides, often with young adults using guns owned by their parents. In addition, there are children who find guns and inadvertently harm themselves.

- Please pass legislation requiring guns be stored with a trigger lock in place. This will help prevent needless deaths and the misuse of guns in a home.

- Please require the purchase of a gun safe in homes with a registered long rifle

Licensure & Training:

Permit laws are the single most effective way to reduce gun violence. States with permit laws of any kind have less gun violence than those without.

- Please provide incentives to states where permit and training laws already exist, and to those where they are expanded, or are enacted.
- Please increase the purchase of handguns and long rifles of any kind nationwide to 21 years of age.

Background Checks:

Background checks are among the easiest laws to thwart through private party sales, straw man sales and some gun shows and trading of weapons.

- Please establish processes and upgrade technology to help states share this information seamlessly and quickly to maximize public safety.
- Please ban the sale and/or transfer of firearms of any kind at all gun shows

The Holy Scriptures of the Christian faith call us to take action by working together to transform a society marked by violence into one of peace. I believe each of the steps outlined above will move us as a nation toward that peace.

While we pray for the persons and their loved ones who have been harmed by acts of gun violence, we are also called to do what we can to prevent the possibility of more bloodshed. That being the case, I pray for you and all of this nation's political leaders - may you have the courage to follow through on these actions and may you and your loved ones be safe and blessed.

Sincerely,

SAMPLE LETTER FOR STATE LEGISLATORS

Dear State Legislators,

Last week we all grieved as 19 children and two teachers were killed at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. We are still grieving after the racist massacre of 10 Black shoppers at a Tops grocery store in Buffalo, NY by an avowed white supremacist. We share this grief as human beings. You likely know that since January 1, 2022 there have been 27 shootings at schools across America and nearly incalculable shootings at our churches, malls, block parties, baby showers, graduations, grocery stores, etc. Add in the shooting deaths resulting from domestic violence and suicides and we are left staring at nothing more than a colossal public health crisis.

Twenty-seven school shootings. To that end, I write to encourage efforts to reduce school shootings focused on:

Expanding Mental Health Access:

- Please increase investments in mental health services and raise the gun ownership age to 21.

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