

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 4, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Majority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-107, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable James Clyburn
Majority Whip
H-329, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Chairman, House Committee on the Judiciary
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Katherine Clark
Assistant Speaker
United States House of Representatives
2448 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Hoyer, Majority Whip Clyburn, Assistant Speaker Clark, and Chair Nadler,

Gun violence in the United States is at an all-time high. Nearly every American will know at least one victim of gun violence in their lifetime.¹ At the start of this Congress, House Democrats promised to build on the success of passing the Bipartisan Background Checks Act and the Enhanced Background Check Act in the 116th Congress.² However, over the last 14 months these remain the only gun violence prevention bills passed out of the House of Representatives. As Americans throughout the country continue to be victimized by gun violence, we must act with the necessary urgency. Therefore, we are urging the House Judiciary Committee and House Leadership to advance gun violence prevention legislation for markup and to the House floor for consideration.

In 2020, firearm deaths reached their highest level on record. With 45,222 total gun deaths, 2020 represents a 14 percent increase from the year before, a 25 percent increase from five years

¹ <https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-violence-statistics/>

² <https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/02/politics/congress-gun-legislation/index.html>

earlier and a 43 percent increase from a decade ago.³ Gun violence is ripping family members away from their loved ones while imposing long-lasting trauma on communities. The rate of gun deaths of children 14 years of age and younger rose by 50 percent from 2019-2020.⁴ **We cannot continue to allow gun violence to be a normal part of everyday life.**

A driving factor of gun violence is the influx of illegally trafficked firearms. Research shows that the flow of guns tends to move from states with weaker gun laws to those with stronger gun laws.⁵ The ATF reports that nearly 60,000 guns are trafficked across state lines each year.⁶ Further, from 2010 to 2019, 29 percent of total crime guns recovered and traced were first purchased from a licensed gun dealer in a state other than the one in which the crime was committed.⁷ Senseless gun violence is plaguing the nation, and states where it is easy to purchase a gun, are contributing to this violence in responsible states and cities with strong gun laws.

Gun violence is a worsening epidemic that is impacting every corner of the United States. Gun violence is not an isolated urban issue; gunfire death has increased in suburban and rural areas as well.⁸ The below bills will not prevent law-abiding citizens from purchasing guns and clarify current U.S. law to ensure our rules are enforced as intended. We respectfully ask that you consider the following bills to be called to markup and receive action on the House floor:

- **H.R. 748, Ethan’s Law (DeLauro, CT).** This bill creates federal requirements for safe gun storage if there is a reasonable expectation that children or prohibited persons might be able to access them and establish strong penalties for any violations.
- **H.R. 882, the Keeping Guns from High-Risk Individuals Act (Kelly, IL).** This bill prohibits the sale or transfer of guns to individuals who have been convicted of certain aggressive and high-risk behaviors.
- **H.R. 2280, the Prevent Gun Trafficking Act (Kelly, IL).** This bill specifies the prohibition of straw purchasing of firearms, making straw purchasing a federal crime.
- **H.R.4118, the Break the Cycle of Violence Act (Horsford, NV).** This bill would provide federal grants to communities for evidence-informed community violence intervention and prevention programs designed to interrupt cycles of violence.
- **H.R. 5245, the Gun Trafficker Detection Act (Casten, IL).** This bill requires gun owners to report lost or stolen firearms to law enforcement within 48 hours.

³ <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/02/03/what-the-data-says-about-gun-deaths-in-the-u-s/#:~:text=On%20a%20per%20capita%20basis,per%20100%2C000%20people%20in%201974.&text=There%20were%206.2%20gun%20murders,of%207.2%20recorded%20in%201974.>

⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/05/us/american-children-gundeaths.html#:~:text=The%20number%20of%20children%20and,sharply%20during%20the%20coronavirus%20pandemic.&text=The%20Centers%20for%20Disease%20Control,to%20the%20end%20of%202020.>

⁵ <https://everytownresearch.org/rankings/>

⁶ <https://everytownresearch.org/report/stolen-guns-pose-a-tremendous-risk-to-public-safety/>

⁷ <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/frequently-asked-questions-gun-trafficking/>

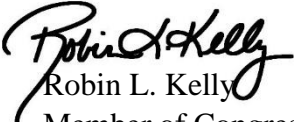
⁸ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2021/06/14/2021-gun-violence/>

- **H.R. 6225, the Federal Firearm Licensee Act (Kelly, IL).** This legislation expands the applicability of federal firearms laws to “facilitators” of firearm sales, such as sellers at gun shows and on online marketplaces, which, in several states, are currently permitted to host large commercial marketplaces that allow for the transfer of firearms to purchasers without first initiating a background check to determine whether the buyers are prohibited under applicable state and/or federal law.
- **HR 6639 Protect Children Through Safe Gun Ownership (Levin, MI).** This bill will limit the unsupervised use of guns by minors, require firearms to be stored securely and provide grants to school districts to educate the community on the need for safe storage.


This is not an exhaustive list of gun-related bills that need action. There are dozens of bills that will collectively address this issue, including legislation to address gun industry standards, oversight, and accountability, and the House Judiciary Committee and House Leadership need to take action, markup these bills, and pass them out of the House.

We cannot accept that gun violence is just a facet of everyday life. In the United States, no child should be afraid to go to school or walk around their neighborhood. No spouse should be afraid to come home at night. No American should be afraid to go to work or their place of worship. And no human being should be afraid to go to a shopping mall or baseball field, nightclub or movie theater, concert, or college campus.⁹ We are tired of the excessive gun violence in our communities and are urging action on bills that will help reduce senseless gun violence.

Sincerely,


Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress


Sean Casten
Member of Congress


Steven Horsford
Member of Congress


Andy Levin
Member of Congress

Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress

Shontel M. Brown
Member of Congress

Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress

André Carson
Member of Congress

Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

Adriano Espaillat

Dwight Evans

Jesús G. “Chuy” García

⁹ <https://democrats.org/where-we-stand/the-issues/preventing-gun-violence/>

Member of Congress

Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

Alan S. Lowenthal
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Haley Stevens
Member of Congress

Dina Titus
Member of Congress

Member of Congress

James R. Langevin
Member of Congress

Grace Meng
Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress

Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress

David Trone
Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Marie Newman
Member of Congress

Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress

Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress