

July 9, 2021

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair, House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee

Dear Chairman Leahy, Ranking Member Shelby, Chairwoman DeLauro, and Ranking Member Granger:

Representing a community that has too often in recent years faced the horrors of gun violence, the undersigned members of the Jewish community come together to urge you to provide increased support for important health and law enforcement programs that effectively combat this massive problem. In 2020, nearly 44,000 individuals in the United States died from gun violence, the highest fatality rate in more than two decades and significantly higher than the approximately 40,000 who died in 2019 and 2018. Many more individuals experienced devastating but non-fatal injuries.

Building on the deeply bipartisan Congressional support that resulted in new funding for CDC and NIH to research the causes of gun violence (included in the FY 2020 and 2021 appropriation bills for the first time in a generation), we recommend that Congress **take a comprehensive approach to addressing this growing crisis by incorporating the following recommendations into the FY 2022 appropriations bills:**

1. Significantly increase funding for scientific research at multiple relevant federal agencies to explore the causes, consequences, prevention and treatment of gun violence and how changing technology may be able to influence this problem, including by quadrupling funding (to \$100 million/year) for research into gun violence prevention at the Centers for Disease Control and National Institutes for Health.
2. Invest \$200 million at the Departments of Health and Human Services and Justice to establish a new Community Violence Intervention Initiative to implement evidence-based community violence interventions locally that will address gun violence in underserved urban neighborhoods. Violence intervention outreach programs decrease rates of firearm-related violence and homicides by addressing the underlying causes of violence.
3. Provide \$200 million in increased funding for the Department of Justice to improve enforcement of existing gun laws including more effective and rapid utilization of the existing background check system.
4. To limit the growing number of military veteran suicides, which exceed 6000 per year (a rate 1.5 times that of the non-veteran population) and with the vast majority involving

death by firearm, provide an additional \$1 billion to the Department of Veterans Affairs specifically directed towards suicide prevention.

As you continue to work on your respective Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations bills, we urge you to fully fund these programs at the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Justice, and Veterans Affairs. Each will play a vital role in combatting, preventing, and ending gun violence in America and result in healthier and safer communities.

If you have any questions about these funding priorities, please contact Stephan Kline from The Jewish Federations of North America at Stephan.Kline@JewishFederations.org, Dorian Karp from Jewish Women International at DKarp@jwi.org, or Tammy Gilden from Jewish Council for Public Affairs at tgilden@thejcpa.org.

Thank you for your consideration,

The Jewish Federations of North America
Jewish Women International
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
Ameinu
Baltimore Jewish Council
B'nai B'rith International
Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action
Jewish Community Relations Council of Broward County
Jewish Community Relations Council of Cincinnati
Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston
Jewish Federation of Broward County
Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta
Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago
Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County
Keshet: For LGBTQ equality in Jewish life
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies
Rabbinical Assembly
Rabbis Against Gun Violence
Shalom Bayit: Ending Domestic Violence in Jewish Homes
UJA-Federation of New York
Union for Reform Judaism
Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America

cc: Senator John Bozeman, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

Senator Roy Blunt, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

Senator Martin Heinrich, Chair, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

Senator Jerry Moran, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriation Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Senator Patty Murray, Chair, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

Senator Jean Shaheen, Chair, Senate Appropriation Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Representative Robert Aderholt, Ranking Member, House Appropriation Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Representative John Carter, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

Representative Matthew Cartwright, Chair, House Appropriation Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Representative Tom Cole, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

Representative Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Chair, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies