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January 17, 2013

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein,

On behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), a non-profit professional organization of 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults, I am pleased to endorse the *Assault Weapons Regulatory Act of 2013* and to commend your tireless leadership on gun safety.

The recent Newtown, Connecticut massacre resulted in a day of sadness and grief for everyone who cares for children, but it was also a call to action for Americans. We must do more to ensure that children feel safe and are safe in their homes, schools and communities, and to diminish injury and mortality from gun violence that is occurring every single day. Enacting the *Assault Weapons Regulatory Act of 2013* would be an important first step toward achieving those goals.

Firearm-related deaths continue to be one of the top three causes of death in American youth.ⁱ Gun injuries cause twice as many deaths as cancer, 5 times as many as heart disease, and 15 times as many as infections.ⁱⁱ Clearly, gun safety is a serious public health crisis that requires a meaningful and persistent response. Our nation deserves nothing less than our vigilance in this regard.

The AAP supports reinstating the ban on assault weapons and prohibitions regarding high ammunition assault magazines as outlined within the *Assault Weapons Regulatory Act of 2013*. Reinstating the ban will certainly help reduce the destructive power of firearms along with common sense protections such as requiring broader mandatory background checks, weapon registrations and tracking of firearms.

Again, thank you for all that you do to protect children. The AAP stands committed and prepared to support these important gun safety policies. For more information, please contact Sonya Clay at 202-347-8600.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas K. McInerney MD".

Thomas K. McInerney, MD, FAAP
President

TKM/scc

ⁱ American Academy of Pediatrics, Council on Injury, Violence, and Poison Prevention Executive Committee. *Firearm-related injuries affecting the Pediatric Population*. Pediatrics 2012;130(5):e1416-e1423.

ⁱⁱ WISQARS (Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System). Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars).