



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE CONGRESS FROM THE NATION'S MAYORS

Dear Mr. President and Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate:

Again and again and again, Americans are stunned by senseless acts of violence involving guns. Friday's tragedy targeting young children in Newtown is incomprehensible. Too many times this year, mayors have expressed shock at a mass shooting. Even more frequently, many of us must cope with the gun violence that occurs on the streets of our cities.

Through The U.S. Conference of Mayors we have sent our condolences to the victims, their families, and their community. We know that Newtown First Selectman Patricia Llodra and Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy continue to do everything possible to help the families of those killed and the entire community cope with so much loss and pain.

The Conference has been calling for sensible gun laws to protect the public for more than 40 years. Mayors and police chiefs from cities of all sizes have worked together in this effort over the years.

We urge you to take immediate action: the President to exercise his powers through Executive Order and Congress to introduce and pass legislation to make reasonable changes in our gun laws and regulations. Specifically we call on you to:

- Enact legislation to ban assault weapons and other high-capacity magazines being prepared by Senator Dianne Feinstein and others;
- Strengthen the national background check system and eliminate loopholes in it; and
- Strengthen the penalties for straw purchases of guns.

We know that preventing gun violence – whether it is a mass shooting in a school or a murder on a street corner – will take much more than strengthening our gun laws. We need to reverse the culture of violence in our nation so that a violent act isn't the first response to settling a difference or compensating for a wrong. We support the idea of establishing a bi-partisan Commission that looks at the broader issues of violence in our country. We need to strengthen and more adequately fund our mental health system so that we can identify troubled individuals earlier and get them the help they need. But strengthening our gun laws should not have to wait for these other actions to occur. The time for action is now!

We believe that with this latest national tragedy and the high incidence of gun violence that continues to plague our streets, we have reached a tipping point. The nation's mayors pledge to work with you to build a safer America for our children and all of our citizens.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Nutter
Mayor of Philadelphia
President

Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor of New York City

Antonio R. Villaraigosa
Mayor of Los Angeles
Past President

Rahm Emanuel
Mayor of Chicago

Kevin Johnson
Mayor of Sacramento
Second Vice President

Joseph P. Riley, Jr.
Mayor of Charleston
Past President

Thomas M. Menino
Mayor of Boston
Past President

Donald L. Plusquellic
Mayor of Akron
Past President

Tom Cochran
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