



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
**School Psychologists**

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Senator Dianne Feinstein  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

On behalf of the National Association of School Psychologists, and our 25,000 members who are committed to ending gun violence and improving school and community safety, we are pleased to support S. 4278, the Age 21 Act. This bill raises the age requirement from 18 to 21 to purchase, or to receive via personal transfer, a military style assault weapon (e.g., an AR-15) as defined by this legislation, and high-capacity magazines. This legislation would align with the existing age requirements already in place to purchase a handgun. Research demonstrates that gun laws that restrict access to high-powered weapons that are capable of mass destruction in a short period of time reduce gun related deaths<sup>1</sup>. This legislation clearly is a meaningful step toward addressing the gun violence epidemic in this country. To be clear, although we are in support of this legislation, and urge its swift passage, either as a standalone bill, or as part of a larger package, we will continue to fight for the full reinstatement of the assault weapons ban, which also banned high-capacity magazines. Multiple empirical studies demonstrate a significant rise in mass shootings following the expiration of the ban<sup>2</sup>, and state laws limiting magazine size are associated with a nearly 50% reduction in fatal mass shootings<sup>3</sup>.

Gun violence prevention advocates have called for increased restrictions on civilian access to military style weapons of war for decades. Congressional inaction has resulted in countless and entirely preventable tragedies including the school shooting at Robb Elementary in Uvalde, Texas; the racially motivated shooting in Buffalo, NY; and the school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. In each of these instances a teenager legally purchased a military style assault weapon to carry out these horrific acts of violence. There are countless other examples of senseless death caused by legally purchased weapons of war, which serve no positive purpose in the hands of civilians..

It is time for Congress to enact meaningful violence prevention and gun safety policies. Passage of S.4278 is a step in the right direction. Thank you for your leadership on this bill.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Minke, PhD, NCSP  
Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> National Association of School Psychologists. (2019). Gun Violence and Youth [Research summary]. Bethesda, MD: Author.

<sup>2</sup> DiMaggio C, Avraham J, Berry C, Bukur M, Feldman J, Klein M, Shah N, Tandon M, Frangos S. Changes in US mass shooting deaths associated with the 1994-2004 federal assault weapons ban: Analysis of open-source data. *J Trauma Acute Care Surg.* 2019 Jan;86(1):11-19. doi: 10.1097/TA.0000000000002060. PMID: 30188421.

<sup>3</sup> Webster DW, McCourt AD, Crifasi CK, Booty MD, Stuart EA. Evidence concerning the regulation of firearms design, sale, and carrying on fatal mass shootings in the United States. *Criminology Public Policy.* 2020;19:171–212. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12487>