

October 10, 2017

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Hart Senate Office Building, Room: 331
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable David Cicilline
Rayburn House Office Building, Room: 2244
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein and Representative Cicilline:

On behalf of the 19,000 cities and towns represented by the National League of Cities (NLC), I write to express strong support for the "Automatic Gunfire Prevention Act of 2017" (S. 1916 / HR 3947). We thank you for your leadership to help close one of the most dangerous loopholes in our federal gun laws.

Unfortunately, this loophole led to one of the greatest horrific mass shootings in America. Las Vegas, a city that is infamous for its nightlife, casinos and entertainment, was brought to a standstill on the night of October 1, 2017, as a sniper took aim at concert goers from the 32 second floor of a hotel and killed 58 people and wounded hundreds more. Unfortunately, it is just the latest mass shooting among many; We must acknowledge that tragedies like the ones in Las Vegas and Orlando can occur in almost any city.

Local elected officials are concerned that the lack of political willpower to take action at the federal level is making it harder for our local law enforcement to prevent the gun violence that is plaguing our communities. While it's hard to imagine how someone like Stephen Paddock can easily purchase more than 40 firearms, including semi-automatic assault rifles that can be easily converted to make them automatic, and raise no suspicion as to his motives – it is a clear indication that our national background check system is severely broken and needs to be fixed.

Just as Congress came together in the aftermath of the greatest terrorist action on American soil to create The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (also known as the 9/11 Commission), we now ask Congress to come together in the aftermath of one of the most horrific mass shootings in America to create a commission that puts aside politics to find commonsense solutions to our nation's gun violence. We hope that Congress can quickly consider legislation that would create The National Commission on Gun Violence in the United States. The commission should consist of federal, state, and local officials, gun rights advocates, survivors of gun violence, law enforcement officials, and medical and mental health providers to offer recommendations to reduce gun violence in the United States.

Last year, NLC unanimously passed a resolution in support of federal efforts to reduce gun violence. In addition to urging Congress to create The National Commission on Gun Violence in the United States, the resolution calls on Congress to pass legislation that would:

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- Prohibit any person from knowingly transferring, purchasing, or attempting or conspiring to purchase or transfer, any firearm or ammunition from licensed or an unlicensed person on behalf of or at the request or demand of a prohibited person, known or unknown;
- Require a fully federally funded and completed background check within a reasonable time frame consistent with state and local laws for all gun sales or transfers, and requires that all unlicensed or private sellers use an FFL or participating law enforcement agency to facilitate a firearms background check through the National Instant Background Check System (NICS) on the purchase or transfer of any firearm to anyone;
- Provide increased funding and assistance to state and local governments to upload standardized real-time data to NICS;
- Provide funding to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to conduct comprehensive research to identify the underlying causes that lead to gun violence and mass shooting in communities;
- Provide federal funding for education and training in safe effective handling and secured storage of legal firearms; and
- Provide resources to the Department of Justice to work closely with State and local law enforcement to aggressively target and hold accountable licensed and unlicensed individuals who break the law by knowingly selling or transferring firearms or ammunition to prohibited persons, gun traffickers or straw purchasers.

While we know there are commonsense solutions to reducing gun violence, the division in our country over gun related issues makes it almost impossible to implement even the most basic solutions that would keep guns out of the hands of criminals and violent people.

We strongly believe that it is time for Members of Congress to put aside their political divisions and come together, as you have done so many times before in the aftermath of national tragedies like the one in Las Vegas, and find a solution that works for everyone.

NLC would like to work with you to take this opportunity to help foster a national dialogue on how we can reduce gun violence in our cities and keep our communities safe.

Thank you for your support of our cities. If you have any questions about our request to create The National Commission on Gun Violence in the United States, please do not hesitate to Yucel (u-jel) Ors, NLC's Program Director for Public Safety at ors@nlc.org or 202-626-3124.

Sincerely,



Clarence E. Anthony
CEO and Executive Director