



The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein,

For nearly a century, CWLA has lead the child welfare field and engaged its network of public and private agencies and partners to advance policies, best practices and collaborative strategies that result in better outcomes for vulnerable children, youth and families. In light of the tragic events that have led the nation and our President to reconsider our priorities with respect to addressing gun violence as it relates to the safety of our young people, you recently introduced a bill that would stop the sale, transfer, importation and manufacturing of assault weapons as well as large ammunition magazines, strips and drums that hold more than ten rounds. CWLA would like to extend our support for the bill and are delighted that you are taking steps towards addressing an issue where reform is long overdue.

Gun violence represents a major threat to the health and safety of everyone in the United States, particularly children and teens. According to the most recent data, every thirty minutes a child or teen dies or is injured from gun violence. In 2010, 2,694 children and teens died from gunfire. As we work to frame the national agenda for the reduction of youth gun violence and victimization, our charge is to support strategies that move us toward achieving the goal of reducing the number of children, youth and families affected by gun violence and victimization, and ultimately prevent this violence. We believe that placing restrictions on the manufacture and sale of automatic weapons and bullet clips are essential components of a comprehensive and strategic approach to violence reduction and control.

Moving forward we also offer our knowledge and expertise in the area of mental health services and treatment for children and youth, which President Obama pointed to in his most recent proposal to combat gun violence as a much needed area to address. Improving access to mental health services and treatment is particularly important for children and youth in and at-risk of entering the child welfare system since the majority of youth entering care have diagnosable mental health disorders, but less than half of them receive treatment for their illness.

We thank you for your leadership on this important matter and look forward to working with you in the coming months to seriously address the safety as well as the physical, behavioral, and mental health needs of vulnerable children and youth as it relates to combating gun violence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine James Brown". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Christine James-Brown
President/CEO