



November 27, 2022

Senator Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Alex Padilla
United States Senate
The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Ban Assault Weapons (S.736) and Expand Background Checks (S.539)

Dear Senators,

Buffalo. Uvalde. Highland Park. Odessa. Dayton. Aurora. Parkland. Poway. Orlando. Las Vegas. Tree of Life Synagogue. Sandy Hook. Waffle House. San Bernardino. These are just some of the deadliest mass shootings in America. And now again at Club Q in Colorado Springs. They all have one thing in common: the shooter used an AR-15-style assault weapon and in many of these examples background checks were evaded as well.

These AR-15-style weapons of war are uniquely lethal. They are designed to be lightweight, maneuverable, easy to conceal, and fire quickly — allowing for the most murders in the shortest amount of time. Their increased lethality is why they are the weapon of choice for America’s mass shooters. In shootings in which assault weapons or high-capacity magazines are used, 155% more people are shot and 47% more people are killed compared to those without them. These weapons of war have no place in civilian hands.

As your constituent and a supporter of Brady (www.bradyunited.org), I ask that you urge Senate leadership to bring S.736, the Assault Weapons Ban of 2021, to a vote. This life-saving legislation would ban the sale, transfer, manufacture, and importation of new military-style assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines. The U.S. House of Representatives passed this legislation in July. With gun violence surging across America, it is urgent that the Senate advance this legislation.

Data shows that a federal ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines is highly effective in saving lives in mass shootings. When a federal ban was in effect from 1994-2004, America saw a 37% decline in gun massacres and a 70% decline in assault weapons traced to crime. That means countless lives saved from preventable tragedies. But after Congress let the ban expire in 2004, mass shooting deaths increased by 347%.

I also ask that you urge Senate leadership to bring S.529, the Background Check Expansion Act, to a vote. This legislation would prevent senseless gun violence by expanding background checks to all private gun sales and most transfers. Background checks are proven to save lives. The House has already passed similar legislation, and the Senate must act and take up this life-saving bill for a vote immediately.

Evidence proves background checks are highly effective. Since Jim and Sarah Brady led the fight to pass the 1994 Brady Bill, the Brady Background Check system has blocked approximately 4.5 million unlawful gun transactions and transfers. States that require background checks on all handgun sales suffer less than half as many mass shooting incidents as those without the requirement as well as 35 percent fewer gun deaths per capita. Including 53 percent fewer law enforcement officers shot and killed in the line of duty and 47 percent fewer women shot by intimate partners.

However, deadly gaps in current law have emerged over the years. Today, 1 in every 5 gun sales occurs without a background check, largely due to the rise of online gun sales and gun shows, which facilitate private sales. Businesses and individuals have exploited these loopholes for profit.

Senators, I greatly appreciate your past support for gun safety, but we cannot wait any longer to pass S.529 and S.736. Even though you face a very full agenda in the coming lame duck session of Congress, Americans need and deserve relief from this scourge of gun violence afflicting the country. Each day we wait, more than 100 Americans are killed with guns. **One last time, I urge you to implore Senate leadership to prevent tragedies and save lives by bringing S.529 and S.736 to a vote. Thank you for your time and consideration on this important issue. My community is counting on your support.**

Sincerely,

Name (please print): _____

Address: _____
