

National League of Cities Open Letter to Congress

As bipartisan leaders of the nation's cities, towns, and villages, we plead with you to enact stronger federal laws that help us protect all our kids, residents, and communities from gun violence. In the month of May, 44 mass shootings have occurred in communities across our country, killing 60 people and injuring 209, and even more deaths have resulted from gun violence other than mass shootings. These could have been prevented if we had stronger federal laws to protect our nation's residents.

In cities, towns and villages across our country, kids should not have to go to school worrying about being shot, people should be able to go to the grocery store without the fear of being killed because of the color of their skin, and worshippers should not fear going to their place of worship thinking they could be targeted because of their beliefs.

We are a nation of laws, but our laws are not sufficient when it comes to guns. The City of Uvalde, Texas joins the list of communities like Buffalo, New York; Parkland, Florida; Newtown, Connecticut; and far too many others who have faced the deaths of innocent residents at the hands of those who should never have had access to guns. The list of mass shootings keeps growing. At the same time, state lawmakers roll back gun laws, and federal lawmakers do nothing.

Consistent with the National League of Cities' [National Municipal Policy](#), which consists of consensus-driven federal policy positions crafted and approved by the bipartisan membership, we call on Congress to quickly enact stronger laws that keep guns out of the hands of individuals who intend to commit violence, as well as support stronger mental health systems by:

1. Shutting down the illegal sale and distribution of firearms and gun trafficking;
2. Requiring a waiting period of up to 30 days for the purchase or transfer of all guns so that local police agencies may check the criminal and mental health status of purchasers;
3. Banning the manufacture, sale, importation, or transfer of all automatic and semi-automatic assault-type weapons;
4. Requiring 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;
5. Helping state and local governments enact extreme risk protection orders, also known as red flag laws;
6. Requiring every state to include people who have been adjudicated as mentally ill or have been committed to any mental institution to be registered as a prohibited person in the national instant criminal background check system;
7. Establishing a national commission that consists of federal, state, and local officials, gun rights advocates, survivors of gun violence, law enforcement officials, and medical and mental health providers to recommend legislative solutions aimed at reducing gun violence in the United States;

8. Ensuring that all Americans have access to adequate physical and mental health care, including mental health parity and the provision of comprehensive services to address mental health needs for persons with general mental health conditions, serious mental health diagnoses, and substance use disorders; and
9. Increasing federal funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to support data and indicators that will inform local strategy in cities and towns across our country as they address the issue of violence in their communities.

We represent communities that are small and large, urban and rural, conservative and liberal. We understand that the status quo is not enough to keep our communities safe. We pledge to do what it takes to keep our kids, residents, and communities safe. We are calling on all Members of Congress to do the same. Congress must pass strong bipartisan legislation that protects our Second Amendment rights while ensuring public safety.

Sincerely,

[Name], [Title]

[City], [State]