

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 10, 2019

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
and Related Agencies
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
and Related Agencies
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray,

We write to request the inclusion of \$50 million in the Fiscal Year 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to conduct scientific research on the causes and prevention of gun violence in the United States.

In 2017 — the year for which we have the most recent, complete data — we lost nearly 40,000 lives due to gun violence.¹ It was the largest yearly number of fatalities on record since at least 1968, and the third consecutive year that the rate of firearm deaths increased in the United States.² It has become increasingly clear that gun violence in America is going to continue unabated until Congress takes meaningful action. Unfortunately, policymakers, healthcare practitioners, and researchers lack comprehensive, scientific information about the causes and characteristics of gun violence, which could help inform the development of strategies to prevent future tragedies. The appropriations we request will allow researchers to revive a dormant field of study.

Medical professionals have been vocal in recognizing gun violence as a public health crisis. More than 160 national, state, and local medical, public health, and research organizations consider the reduction of gun violence to be a public health priority. They have called for a comprehensive public health response and solution, including support for robust research in this area. Specifically, this coalition of medical and health organizations is urging Congress to provide the CDC with \$50 million in funding for firearm morbidity and mortality prevention research.³ Especially in light of the calls from the medical community to act on this public health crisis, we respectfully ask that you invest in evidence-based solutions to the gun violence epidemic by appropriating these funds to the CDC.

¹ Sarah Mervosh, *Nearly 40,000 People Died From Guns in U.S. Last Year, Highest in 50 Years*, N.Y. Times (Dec. 18, 2018), <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/18/us/gun-deaths.html>.

² *Id.*

³ Letter from medical, public health, and research organizations to Senators Shelby, Leahy, Blunt, and Murray (Feb. 21, 2019), https://downloads.aap.org/DOFA/Final%20CDC%20GVP%20Research%20Funding%20Letter%20Senate_2019.pdf.

It is imperative that we take this step because only the United States government is in a position to establish an integrated public health research agenda to understand the causes of gun violence and identify the most effective strategies for prevention. We thank you for your consideration of this important request.

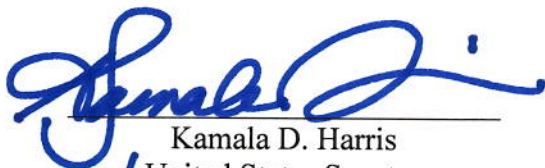
Sincerely,



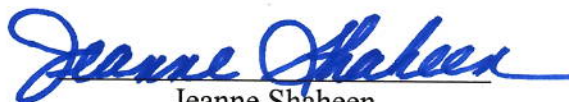
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



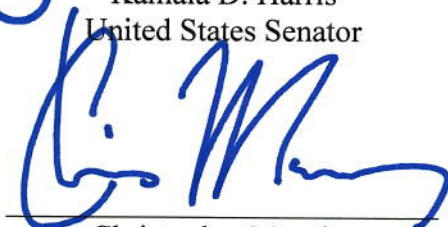
Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Christopher Murphy
United States Senator



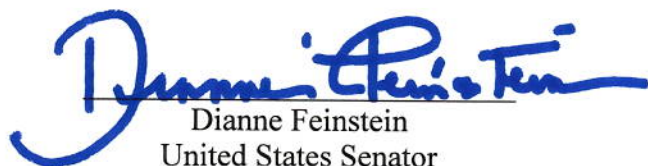
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



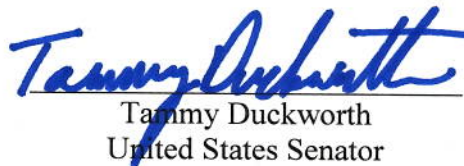
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



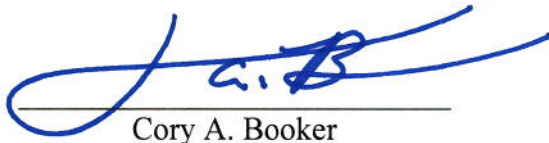
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
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Kirsten Gillibrand
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