



A Passionate Voice for Compassionate Care

June 1, 2022

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, and Leader McCarthy;

On behalf of the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), the national leadership organization of more than 2,200 Catholic health care systems, hospitals, long-term care facilities, sponsors, and related organizations, **I am writing to urge you to take meaningful action to address the continued gun violence and mass shootings affecting our country.**

Catholic health care providers too often are at the frontline of our nations ongoing and senseless gun violence. Every day in our hospital emergency rooms, the devastating impact of gun violence and mass shootings can be seen. The tragic loss of life and the related life-long mental health impacts on survivors, is a reality which is seen every day in hospitals across our country. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2020 alone more than 45,000 people across the United States lost their lives because of firearms.¹ In addition to this incalculable tragic loss of life, each year gun violence contributes to approximately \$2.8 billion in inpatient and hospital emergency room visits alone.² This is a profound health, economic, and moral crisis.

There are many positive actions we can take to create policies which begin to reverse the ongoing growing trend of gun violence and mass shootings. This includes:

- Requiring completed background checks for the sale or transfer of all firearms, including gun shows and online merchants;
- Providing funding for the CDC to conduct public health research into firearm morbidity and mortality prevention;

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Firearm Violence Prevention factsheet, available at <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/firearms/fastfact.html>

² Gani, F., Sakran, J. V., & Canner, J. K. (2017, October). Emergency Department Visits for Firearm-Related Injuries In The United States, 2006–14. Retrieved May, 2022, from <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/pdf/10.1377/hlthaff.2017.0625>

- Banning the purchase and sale of assault-style weapons;
- Temporarily prohibiting an individual from purchasing or possessing firearms when deemed by a judge to pose a danger to self or others; and
- Banning the purchase and sale of high-capacity ammunition magazines.

These policy options are just some of the steps we can take to protect life and end the ongoing firearms related public health crisis. While we recognize the challenges of coming together to pass gun and community safety legislation, continued failure to take any meaningful action is unconscionable. We therefore urge you to work expeditiously to come together and pass meaningful legislations so that we can make our communities safer and healthier.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sr. Mary Haddad". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sr. Mary Haddad, RSM
President and CEO