



## THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

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March 22, 2021

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin  
Chair, Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Durbin,

We commend you for holding a hearing tomorrow, “Constitutional and Common Sense Steps to Reduce Gun Violence,” and register the strong support of the nation’s mayors for passage of sensible gun safety legislation, including universal background checks, extreme risk protection laws, and a ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.

We’re going to focus attention here on strengthening the background check system because important legislation has passed the House – HR 8, the Bipartisan Background Checks Act, and HR 1446, the Enhanced Background Checks Act – and we urge your Committee and the full Senate to act quickly on these bills.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors has had strong policy for many years in support of strengthening the background check system, which HR 8 would do. It would close serious loopholes in the background check system by requiring all firearm purchases—both handguns and long guns—to undergo a NICS background check, help prevent dangerous individuals from circumventing the laws on the books and obtaining deadly weapons, reduce firearms trafficking by prohibiting unlicensed transfers through unregulated secondary sales, and aid law enforcement’s ability to trace crime guns, which depends on licensed gun dealers’ sales records.

HR 1446 would further strengthen the background check system by helping us to ensure that background checks are completed before weapons are sold and that dangerous individuals who should not have them are unable to purchase them. If this bill had been law in June of 2015, the terrible tragedy that occurred at the Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston could have been avoided.

HR 8 and HR 1446 are common sense gun safety bills that will make our cities safer and in no way compromise gun owners’ rights. It’s time for Congress to act to reduce gun violence and the terrible toll gun violence takes in our cities and in our nation and pass them now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Cochran".

Tom Cochran  
CEO and Executive Director