

May 6, 2022

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Nomination of Steven Dettelbach Esq. to be Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Chairman Durbin, and Ranking Member Grassley:

As the Dean of Rutgers University School of Nursing-Camden, New Jersey, I write to support the nomination of Steven Dettelbach as the Director of Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). The mission of the school of nursing is prepare competent nursing, advancing nursing science research and evidence-based practice to reduce health disparities and promote community health initiatives in the City of Camden and beyond. We educate nurses to become clinicians, researchers, leaders, and school nurses.

Given the recent news that firearm injury is now the leading cause of death in children, it is imperative that we support and join forces with our colleagues from the American Pediatric Surgical Association and others, as we too recognize how critical need to protect our communities and children from gun violence. The ATF's mission is to protect the public from crimes involving firearms, which too often impact children. Nurses speak and recognize the importance of this mission from firsthand experience in the care of children who sustain firearm injuries. We know what these injuries look like on-site when they occur, on the front-line of care when they are triaged at our hospitals and in the recovery stages.

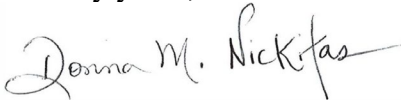
The Rutgers University School of Nursing-Camden is committed to improving children's safety, including firearm injury prevention. It is imperative that effective leadership be secured for the Federal agency charged to enforce the laws that protect our patients and their families. Mr. Dettelbach is an individual who has the capability for such effective leadership. He has functioned not just as a prosecutor but as an agent of positive change, and his prior work demonstrates that he can establish direction, alignment, and commitment to serve the mission of the ATF. Mr. Dettelbach combines a keen recognition of the obligations of his position with the ability to effectively engage stakeholders across diverse domains to pursue solutions.

Firearms are now the leading cause of years of potential life lost (YPLL) in childhood, having overtaken motor vehicle crashes as the main cause of YPLL since 2017. With pediatric injuries and deaths due to alcohol and tobacco (vaping), and firearms eclipsing those from other mechanisms, it is concerning that the ATF has had only one director confirmed by the U.S. Senate since 2006.

The Rutgers University School of Nursing-Camden commits to building partnerships with agencies in government to address the needs of our communities and children. As the number of opioid and gun related injuries and deaths climb in American children, we strongly believe that it is counterproductive to have a vacancy in the directors' position of the ATF. I believe that Steve Dettelbach, a federal prosecutor at Main Justice in the Civil Rights Division and in United States Attorneys' Offices for nearly 20 years, a counsel in the United States Senate Judiciary Committee and as a nominee for Ohio Attorney General in 2018, is well qualified. He has the professional experience and personal dedication to making this country a safer place for all our communities. I urge you to swiftly confirm Steve Dettelbach to be the next Director of the ATF.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective in support of this important nomination. I appreciate your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donna M. Nickitas". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Donna M. Nickitas, Ph.D., NEA-BC, CNE, FNAP, FAAN
Dean and Professor