



MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

August 6, 2019

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
United States Senate
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Senator Graham:

I write to you as both Chief of the Houston Police Department and President of the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) to register strong support for the work you are doing to identify legislative changes to address the crisis of gun violence in America, especially in light of the Gilroy, El Paso, and Dayton shootings this past week.

We offer for your consideration the following solutions outlined in the attached MCCA Firearms Violence Policy endorsed by the police chiefs of the 69 largest cities in America:

- Universal Background Checks for all gun sales and transfers;
- Expanded screening for prohibited buyers to include persons with violent mental health history;
- “Red Flag/Extreme Risk” measures to prevent guns from reaching person who threaten and murder; and
- Legislation that permits court orders barring gun purchases in domestic violence cases.

HR 8, Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2019 has already passed the House and could be introduced immediately to the Senate for discussion and voting. This legislation is supported by over 90 percent of Americans. It would be a quick opportunity for your leadership and action to make a significant step to prevent further tragedy.

Below are a complete set of current bills MCCA is supporting, which offer immediate options for enacting gun violence solutions. We have also included copies of our letters of support for each of these bills for additional

- HR 8, Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2019 (February 7 Letter to Chairman Jerrold Nadler and Ranking Member Doug Collins)
- HR 1112, Enhanced Background Checks Act of 2019 (February 27 Letter to The Honorable James Clyburn)
- HR 1297, Law Enforcement Protection Act of 2019 (March 15 Letter to Chairman Jerrold Nadler and Vice Chair Mary Gay Scanlon)
- HR 1325, Protect and Serve Act of 2019 (March 18 Letter to Chairman Jerrold Nadler and Ranking Member Doug Collins)
- HR 435, National Gun Violence Research Act (April 15 Letter to Chairwoman Eddie Johnson and Ranking Member Frank Lucas)
- NICS Denial Notification Act of 2019 (May 2 Letter to The Honorable Lindsey Graham and The Honorable Dianne Feinstein)

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- Red Flag/Extreme Risk Legislation (May 25 Letter to The Honorable Lindsey Graham, The Honorable Dianne Feinstein, Chairman Jerrold Nadler, and Ranking Member Doug Collins)
- HR 1236, Extreme Risk Protection Act of 2019 (July 2 Letter to Chairman Jerrold Nadler and Ranking Member Doug Collins)

It's time for congress to act to reduce gun violence and the terrible toll it takes in our cities and in our nation.

Sincerely,

Art Acevedo
Chief, Houston Police Department
President, Major Cities Chiefs Association

CC: The Honorable Dianne Feinstein, The Honorable Marco Rubio, Chairman Jerrold Nadler, Ranking Member Doug Collins, The Honorable James Clyburn, Vice Chair Mary Gay Scanlon, Chairwoman Eddie Johnson, Ranking Member Frank Lucas

Attachments:

- *MCCA Firearms Policy, June 8, 2018*
- *HR 8, Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2019 (February 7 Letter to Chairman Jerrold Nadler and Ranking Member Doug Collins)*
- *HR 1112, Enhanced Background Checks Act of 2019 (February 27 Letter to The Honorable James Clyburn)*
- *HR 1297, Law Enforcement Protection Act of 2019 (March 15 Letter to Chairman Jerrold Nadler and Vice Chair Mary Gay Scanlon)*
- *HR 1325, Protect and Serve Act of 2019 (March 18 Letter to Chairman Jerrold Nadler and Ranking Member Doug Collins)*
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- *HR 1236, Extreme Risk Protection Act of 2019 (July 2 Letter to Chairman Jerrold Nadler and Ranking Member Doug Collins)*



NEWS FROM THE MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Rick Myers
Executive Director
Major Cities Chiefs Association
719-325-6665

Major Cities Chiefs Release Firearms Violence Policy

WASHINGTON, June 6, 2018 – On behalf of the largest law enforcement agencies in the Nation, Major Cities Chiefs Association President and Montgomery County Police Chief J. Thomas Manger issued a statement today announcing the release of an updated and expanded Firearms Violence Policy. Chiefs of Police gathered in Nashville, TN, and considered measures to prevent gun violence seen in recent cases in Florida, Texas, and throughout the Nation.

Adopted by a vote of Chiefs at their meeting, the new policy statement includes calling on Congress to:

- Adopt a Universal Background Check for all gun sales and transfers;
- Expand screening for prohibited buyers to include persons with violent mental health history;
- Seek “Red Flag” measures to prevent guns from reaching persons who threaten violence and murder; and
- Urge legislation that permits court orders barring gun purchases in domestic violence cases.

The new policy reflects lessons learned from recent tragic gun murders and pleas of both parents and youth from Marjory Stoneman High School, in Parkland, Florida, who attended the Chiefs’ conference.

Chief Manger said: “As first responders, we have seen the toll that firearms violence takes on our communities and it is time that we as a Nation take the necessary steps to reduce the risk of such tragic events. Reform to this system is overdue and we must all play a role in keeping firearms off our streets and out of our schools.”

Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo said: “The Major Cities Chiefs Association joins with those we are sworn to protect in our commitment to reform that will reduce the threat of gun violence in America, and we will use the strength of our nationwide membership to move these important proposals forward.”

Miami-Dade Police Director Juan Perez said: “As representatives of the largest urban areas in the Nation, where gun violence takes the highest toll, we have seen first-hand the dangers that firearms pose to our cities and urge Congress to do everything it can to eliminate the incalculable risk that these firearms pose to our entire society.”

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Firearms Violence Policy

Adopted by Membership Vote on May 30, 2018

The Major Cities Chiefs Association has been a strong advocate for sensible gun policy for many years and has taken these positions on key issues.

Legislative Positions

- Adopt Universal Background Checks for all gun sales and close both gun show and internet loopholes
- Strengthen NICS definitions of prohibited purchasers to cover all appropriate domestic violence cases, with strict judicial procedures for appeal and reinstatement
- Support “Red Flag” legislation and regulations to preclude gun purchases by mentally disturbed persons with histories of violent behavior
- Ban “bump-stock” devices that replicate fully automatic weapons fire
- Maintain ATF regulations and restrictions regarding silencers
- Reinstate the assault weapons ban and encourage stiffer penalties for illegal guns
- Ban high capacity magazines (10+ rounds)
- Ban internet ammo sales, require in-person transactions, records of sales and licensing of ammo vendors
- Oppose legislation that would require States to recognize any and all concealed carry permits
- Oppose legislation that further erodes ATF authority
- Prevent known terrorists from purchasing firearms and/or ammunition

Policy Statements

- Establish a strong system for universal background checks to cover all firearms purchases, with no exceptions.
- Strengthen the national criminal instant background check system. The background check system does not have complete data and measures should be undertaken to ensure comprehensive reporting. Mental health information, for example, is inadequate, inconsistent and incomplete. The NICS system must be improved.
- Encourage aggressive federal prosecution of violent offenders using guns. Conviction in Federal Court generally results in stronger sanctions, removes the offenders from the streets and serves as a deterrent.
- Encourage mandatory reporting of all purchases, transfers and stolen firearms. This measure would assist law enforcement agencies with identification, criminal investigations and recovery of stolen firearms.
- Establish harsher penalties and aggressively prosecute straw purchasers, who are responsible for putting a substantial number of guns used in criminal acts. More aggressive prosecution with strong penalties would hold them accountable and act as a deterrent.
- Court orders can and should be used to prevent purchase of firearms by persons who pose a threat to public safety.
- Support and strengthen the authorities of ATF, rather than to restrict and handicap enforcement of gun laws.

Major Cities Chiefs is a professional association of Chiefs and Sheriffs representing the largest cities in the United States and Canada. Membership is comprised of Chiefs and Sheriffs of the sixty-nine largest law enforcement agencies in the United States and ten largest in Canada. The Chiefs serve more than 82 million people.



MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

February 8, 2019

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Committee on the Judiciary
Chairman
2132 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Doug Collins
Committee on the Judiciary
Ranking Member
1504 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Nadler and Ranking Member Collins,

The Major Cities Chiefs Association, representing the Nation's largest metropolitan law enforcement agencies, commends the Committee on the Judiciary for their efforts to advance H.R. 8: *Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2019*. Gun violence is a tragic and never-ending epidemic in our country that demands that we take steps to ensure background checks for all gun sales and transfers. This is the established policy of Major Cities Chiefs, approved by a vote of our membership.

Your hearing on February 7, 2019, showed how many murders have taken place because guns were obtained by serious criminals, disturbed persons and violent predators who should never have been permitted to purchase a firearm.

The lack of a background check for private sales and gun shows completely contradicts the purpose for which NICS was established – to keep guns out of the hands of those who do harm. Our thanks to Representative Thompson and the many cosponsors who have heard our call for action.

We applaud the Committee for the introduction of this Bill, and we look forward to Congress passing this Act as it leads the way in protecting our Nation from more acts of gun violence that could have otherwise been averted. Law enforcement officials and victims of gun violence have asked you for leadership and you have answered us. Please know you will have our strong support.

Sincerely,

Art Acevedo
President, Major Cities Chiefs Association
Chief, Houston Police Department

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MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

February 27, 2019

The Honorable James Clyburn
Majority Whip
U.S House of Representatives
Washington, DC, 20015

Dear Representative Clyburn:

I write to you as President of the Major Cities Chiefs Association to thank you for introducing HR 1112, the "Enhanced Background Checks Act of 2019," and to register the strong support of police chiefs from the largest law enforcement agencies in the Nation.

FBI records show that thousands of prohibited purchasers were able to buy firearms because the current three-day period was not adequate to confirm their unlawful status, including the tragic case in Charleston. If this bill has been law in 2015, the terrible tragedy that occurred at the Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston could have been avoided. For all the major police agencies in the nation, we say that this cannot be allowed to happen again. HR 1112 will help us to ensure that background checks can be completed before weapons are sold and that dangerous individuals who should not have them are unable to purchase them.

The Major Cities Chiefs Association has strongly advocated for the strengthening of the background check system, which is exactly what this important legislation would do. HR 1112 is bipartisan, sensible gun safety legislation 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 it takes in our communities every day.

We commend your leadership and pledge our continued support for measures to strengthen the background check system. You can count on our support in the House and in the Senate – we need to get this bill enacted into law.

Sincerely,

Art Acevedo
President, Major Cities Chiefs Association
Chief, Houston Police Department

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March 15, 2019

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Committee on the Judiciary
Chairman
2132 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mary Gay Scanlon
Committee on the Judiciary
Vice Chair
1535 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Nadler and Vice Chair Scanlon,

The Major Cities Chiefs Association, representing the Nation's largest metropolitan law enforcement agencies, strongly support the "*Law Enforcement Protection Act of 2019*" which requires ATF regulation of concealable armor-piercing weapons.

The National Firearms Act does not currently require registration or regulation of such dangerous firearms and this bill would be a step in the right direction.

Through the National Firearms Act, regulation of such weapons does not ban ownership but ensures monitoring and caution for weapons that penetrate police body armor. A criminal record check for acquisition and possession of such weapons is a reasonable precautionary measure to protect law enforcement personnel from this deadly threat.

Through such legislation, the Major Cities Chiefs hope that Congress will adopt reasonable measures to both safeguard the rights of law-abiding gun owners - and also safeguard those who are sworn to protect the public. This bill will help to stem the continued flow of dangerous weapons into the hands of those who would prey upon our communities.

Sincerely,

Art Acevedo
Chief, Houston Police Department
Major Cities Chiefs Association



MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

March 18, 2019

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Committee on the Judiciary
Chairman
2132 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Doug Collins
Committee on the Judiciary
Ranking Member
1504 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Nadler and Ranking Member Collins,

I write to you as both Chief of the Houston Police Department and President of the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) to thank you for reintroducing H.R 1325, the “Protect and Serve Act of 2019” and to register the strong support of the nation’s police chiefs for this important legislation.

This legislation is near the hearts, and on the minds, of my colleagues across the nation. This legislation is deeply personal to me. As five of my officers were attacked in an ambush while investigating a suspected drug case earlier this year. In recent years, we’ve seen a dangerous trend of armed attacks on officers and we need to act now. For all the major police agencies in the nation, we say that lawmakers should continue to proactively enact laws that create federal penalties for those who deliberately target local, state, and federal law enforcement officers with violence.

The Major Cities Chiefs Association has strongly advocated for legislation that strengthens the penalty for violence against law enforcement, which is exactly what this important legislation would do. As officers put themselves in danger each day to protect our citizens, we should do our best to keep them safe; HR 1325 is a productive step in the right direction.

Sincerely,

Art Acevedo
Chief, Houston Police Department
Major Cities Chiefs Association

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MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

April 15, 2019

The Honorable Eddie Johnson, Chairwoman
Science, Space, and Technology Committee
2306 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Lucas, Ranking Member
Science, Space, and Technology Committee
2405 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Johnson and Ranking Member Lucas:

The Chiefs and Sheriffs for the Nation's largest metropolitan areas are deeply concerned about gun violence in America. As a key element in a comprehensive national strategy, we support H.R. 435, the "National Gun Violence Research Act".

Americans should be alarmed that "...In the last 50 years, more individuals in the United States have died from gunshots than in all wars in which the United States was a combatant, combined...The rate of gun violence deaths in the United States is more than double that of other high-income nations..."

Our Association supports broad efforts to stem the tide of gun violence and we strongly endorse a research agenda to help accomplish this goal. We encourage the members of Congress to pass this legislation and allow for nationwide unity to analyze, document and prevent gun violence in the future.

Sincerely,

Art Acevedo
Chief of Police
Houston Police Department
President, Major Cities Chiefs Association

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May 2, 2019

The Honorable Lindsay Graham
United States Senate
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable Senator Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Feinstein:

Preventing crime and protecting the public are the top priorities of Chiefs and Sheriffs across the Nation. For this reason, the 69 largest metropolitan police jurisdictions support the NICS Denial Notification Act. This bill will provide our officers another tool in the effort to reduce the tide of violent gun crime in America.

It is illegal for felons to purchase a firearm, yet many offenders still attempt to acquire a gun. With federal resources limited, it is unlikely that these criminals will be evaluated by federal authorities, leaving it up to local law enforcement to track these attempts and remove criminals who commit or attempt to commit gun crimes from the communities we are sworn to protect.

For the first time, this bill will provide for notification of State and local law enforcement that there has been an attempt to illegally acquire a firearm.

Our Nation's police officers and the public look to you for leadership. Please know that we will stand with you and look forward to working with you to enact this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Art Acevedo
Chief, Houston Police Department
President, Major Cities Chiefs Association



MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

March 25, 2019

The Honorable Lindsay Graham
United States Senate
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Senator Graham and Senator Feinstein:

I write to you as both Chief of the Houston Police Department and President of the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) to register strong support for red flag legislation.

By permitting the temporary, court ordered, removal of firearms from persons designated as dangerous, red flag laws serve as an important gun violence prevention measure. Presently, this process only exists on the state-level, but a federal measure would help ensure consistent enforcement across state lines and protect due process rights as enumerated in our constitution. The protection of American's right to due process will ensure that the red flag law will be a common-sense solution to gun violence and not an egregious display of government overreach. Congress must contemplate red flag legislation that effectively preempts gun violence, but also requires high standards for evidence and does not impede on the liberties of law-abiding citizens.

Sensible red flag laws could have played a critical role in preventing tragedies like in Newtown, CT and Parkland, FL. For all the major police agencies in the nation, we say that this cannot be allowed to happen again. Effective red flag laws will strive to identify the most mentally disturbed members of society and take deadly weapons out of their hands before the next tragedy senselessly takes more lives.

The Major Cities Chiefs Association has strongly advocated for red flag laws that ensure due process protections. Preventing the mentally ill from using guns in yet another avoidable tragedy is bipartisan, sensible gun safety legislation 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 it takes in our cities and in our nation.

Sincerely,

Art Acevedo
Chief, Houston Police Department
President, Major Cities Chiefs Association

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MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

July 2, 2019

Chairman Jerold Nadler
House Judiciary Committee
2132 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Doug Collins
House Judiciary Committee
1504 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Nadler and Ranking Member Collins,

Preventing crime and protecting the public are the top priorities of Police Chiefs and Sheriffs all across our nation. That is why the Law Enforcement leaders from the largest metropolitan police agencies in the U.S. are supporting H.R. 1236, The Extreme Risk Protection Act of 2019. Extreme Risk laws will reduce the risk of firearms related deaths and they keep guns out of the hands of dangerous individuals.

Helping local law enforcement build the capacity to enforce these laws through training and technical assistance is critically important to identifying threats and preventing violence from occurring. This legislation will assist States in their implementation as more of them enact these extreme risk laws.

Our Nation's Police Officers, as well as the public, are looking to you for leadership and to prevent violence. The Major Cities Chiefs stand with you in support of the Extreme Risk Protection Act of 2019.

Sincerely,

Art Acevedo
Chief, Houston Police Department
Major Cities Chiefs Association

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