



MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

February 27, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Chairman Graham, and Ranking Member Feinstein,

I write to reaffirm the Major Cities Chiefs Association's (MCCA) support of H.R. 8, the *Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2019*. MCCA membership is comprised of Chiefs and Sheriffs of the sixty-nine largest law enforcement agencies in the United States and nine largest in Canada. Collectively, the MCCA represents over 79.9 million people and a workforce of 251,082 officers and non-sworn personnel.

One year ago today, the House of Representatives took an important step in addressing the issue of gun violence in the United States by passing H.R. 8. However, despite a nearly 25% increase in mass shootings over the past year, the Senate has not yet taken action on this bill.¹ The high profile, mass casualty, incidents that occurred across the country in 2019—for example in El Paso, Dayton, Midland and Odessa, Gilroy, Virginia Beach, Pensacola, New Orleans, Fresno, and Jersey City—clearly demonstrate that gun violence is a nationwide epidemic and Congress must do more to help address it.

U.S. law contains numerous provisions designed to prevent criminals, individuals struggling with mental illness, and violent predators from obtaining firearms. However, the internet purchase, private sale, and gun show loopholes have limited the effectiveness of these protections. Closing these loopholes is a core tenant of the MCCA Firearms Policy, which was approved by a vote of our membership in 2018. By addressing these loopholes, H.R. 8

¹According to the Gun Violence Archive "Past Summary Ledgers," mass shootings in the United States rose from 337 to 418 in between 2018 and 2019. *Please see:* <<https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/past-tolls>>

Albuquerque
Arlington
Atlanta
Aurora
Austin
Baltimore
Baltimore Co.
Boston
Buffalo
Calgary, Canada
Charlotte-Mecklenburg
Chicago
Cincinnati
Cleveland
Columbus
Dallas
DeKalb Co.
Denver
Detroit
Edmonton, Canada
El Paso
Fairfax County
Fort Worth
Fresno
Honolulu
Houston
Indianapolis
Jacksonville
Kansas City
Las Vegas Metro
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Los Angeles Co.
Louisville
Memphis
Mesa
Miami
Miami-Dade
Milwaukee
Minneapolis
Montgomery Co.
Montreal, Canada
Nashville
Nassau Co.
New Orleans
New York City
Newark
Oakland
Oklahoma City
Omaha
Orlando
Ottawa, Canada
Peel Region, Canada
Philadelphia
Phoenix
Pittsburgh
Portland
Prince George's Co.
Raleigh
Sacramento
Salt Lake City
San Antonio
San Diego
San Francisco
San Jose
Seattle
St. Louis
Suffolk Co.
Tampa
Toronto, Canada
Tucson
Tulsa
Vancouver, Canada
Virginia Beach
Washington
Wichita
Winnipeg, Canada
York, Canada

will save lives by helping keep firearms out of the hands of those who are not permitted to have them under the law.

Gun violence is more than just a public safety issue, it's an officer safety issue as well. MCCA member agencies, and law enforcement all across the country, have had far too many officers killed or wounded in the line of duty by individuals who should have been prohibited from purchasing a firearm. We must enact policies at the national level to help ensure these brave men and women return home safely after their shifts.

For the reasons outlined above, MCCA strongly encourages the Senate to take up and pass H.R. 8 as quickly as possible. We look forward to working with you to advance this important piece of legislation. Please do not hesitate to contact me at art.acevedo@houstonpolice.org if MCCA can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,



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