March 30, 2018

The Honorable Jared Polis

1727 Longworth House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

c/o Tom Clancy, Legislative Correspondent

By Email to:  tom.clancy@mail.house.gov

Re:  Protecting Americans from Gun Violence

Dear Representative Polis:

Thank you for your announcement on March 15 supporting a ban on assault weapons and bump stocks and supporting universal background checks, one day after students across our country demanded protection and change. Following one of the biggest marches in U.S. history on March 24, our country is well positioned to make groundbreaking change to end the senseless loss of life related to the proliferation of guns and automated weapons.

We urge you, and fellow lawmakers, to pursue a bipartisan path to enact commonsense solutions to reduce the threat of firearm-related injuries and fatalities beyond universal background checks, a ban on bump-stocks and similar devices, and an assault weapons ban. Some of these additional strategies would include --

* Passing H.R. 2598, the Gun Violence Restraining Order Act;
* Strengthening the collection and analysis of data related to gun violence and other violent deaths by increasing the funding for CDC's National Violent Death Reporting System;
* Preventing known or suspected terrorists from purchasing a gun;
* Expanding the research that identifies evidence-based strategies, programs and policies that prevent gun violence; and
* Providing sufficient funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other scientific agencies to further research the causes of gun violence and develop prevention strategies.

In 2016 in Colorado, more people died from firearm-related injuries (687 total deaths) than from motor vehicle crashes (627 total deaths.) [[1]](#footnote-1) Similar to national data, the majority of gun deaths in Colorado are suicide which account for 81% of all firearm deaths. [[2]](#footnote-2) The incidence of suicides and homicides with firearms has increased approximately fifty percent in the last decade. [[3]](#footnote-3) We must respond with swift, coordinated and bipartisan approaches to reduce this epidemic as called out by the American Public Health Association [Preventing Gun Violence Fact Sheet](https://www.apha.org/-/media/files/pdf/factsheets/160317_gunviolencefs.ashx?la=en&hash=AB71DE1BEDEBB2A797F8EC378E672791904FCF87) and the American Psychological Society [Resolution on Firearm Violence Research and Prevention](http://www.apa.org/about/policy/firearms.aspx).

We thank you for your leadership role in addressing this critical issue and for your past and current efforts to support health programs that protect our residents.

 Sincerely,



 Jeffrey J. Zayach, M.S.

 Boulder County Public Health, Executive Director

1. Colorado Vital Statistics, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 2 National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, CDC. (2016). 2003-2014, Colorado Deaths and Rates per 100,000. *Fatal Injury Reports 1999-2014, for National, Regional, and States (RESTRICTED)*. Retrieved April 27, 2016, http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal\_injury\_reports.html [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Colorado Vital Statistics, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)