

#TheTimelsNow

The Honorable U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer
Hart Senate Office Building, 322
Washington, DC 20510

November 14, 2022

Dear Leader Schumer,

During his post-midterm press conference, President Joe Biden promised to build on the progress he has made to address the gun violence crisis and urged the Senate to “try like the devil” to ban assault weapons.

As gun violence continues to ravage our country and the nation experiences two mass shootings at the University of Virginia and the University of Idaho, survivors of gun violence are urging you to advance House-passed bipartisan gun violence prevention legislation. Specifically, we are asking you to hold a vote on the Assault Weapons Ban of 2021 during the remaining weeks of the 117th Congress and to ensure its passage by adding it to must-pass legislation before the end of the year.

This bipartisan House-passed legislation will prohibit future sale, manufacture, transfer, or possession of semiautomatic assault weapons and large capacity ammunition feeding devices – weapons of war that are designed to kill as many Americans as quickly as possible.

In addition to the tragic mass shootings in Uvalde, Buffalo, and Highland Park, during this Congress, our nation has experienced at least 877 instances of gun violence involving assault weapons, resulting in over 453 deaths and 714 injuries.

While a bullet from a regular handgun lacerates an organ, a round from an AR-15 style weapon shreds it, often proving fatal. According to the medical examiner who testified at the recent Parkland trial, the killer purposely chose the Smith & Wesson AR-15 because of its high-capacity magazines and ability to “kill effectively.” The weapon empowered the murderer to fire 39 rounds as quickly as he could pull the trigger, creating small entrance wounds in his victims but practically liquifying organs and causing extensive bodily damage.

The local pediatrician who rushed to Uvalde Memorial Hospital after the massacre of 19 children and two teachers at Robb Elementary School in Texas testified during a congressional hearing on gun violence and shared that children were “pulverized” and “decapitated” by AR-15 bullets. Tragically, DNA samples were required to identify the victims of the Uvalde shooting.

In fact, researchers estimate that if we banned access to such firepower, our nation would experience 70 percent fewer mass shooting deaths.

Throughout your career, you have stood with us to support reinstating the federal assault weapons ban. But as the Senate Majority Leader and a champion on this issue, we expect more than words. In this Congress, you have found creative ways to pass significant legislation by bringing together reluctant members of your own party and, at times, senators from the other side of the aisle.

As survivors of gun violence, we implore you to apply the same level of energy and tenacity to finding a pathway for banning assault weapons before the new year, chasing down every last opportunity to get these deadly guns off our streets and save lives.

Sincerely,

Families and Survivors Directly Impacted by Gun Violence in America

Karen Abrams, Highland Park, Illinois
Megan Ackerman, Los Angeles, California
Maneesha Agarwal, Atlanta, Georgia
Sarah Airola, Glenview, Illinois
Halleh Akbarnia, Glenview, Illinois
Martelle Ambrose, Jacksonville, Florida
Ellie Ander, Highland Park, Illinois
Betsy Argintar, Chevy Chase, Maryland
Paul Aylward, Omaha, Nebraska
Miyoshia Bailey, Chicago, Illinois
Sharon Baker, Goshen, Indiana
Ashbey Beasley, Highland Park, Illinois
Margot Bennett, Culver City, California
Cynthia Bruce, Manchester, Maryland
Sarah Coqueline (Coco) Bentaieb, Parkland, Florida
Amy Berger, Deerfield, Illinois
Kathryn Berkowicz, Schererville, Indiana
Marie Bertozzi, Leesburg, Virginia
Tika Bordelon, Seattle, Washington
Pamela Bosley, Chicago, Illinois
Trevon Bosley, Chicago, Illinois
Kitty Brandtner, Winnetka, Illinois
Cheryl Brooks, Westminster, Maryland
Donna Brown, Santa Monica, California
Stephanie Brown, Chicago, Illinois
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M Carr, Commerce, Michigan
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