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ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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September 20, 2013

Chairman Bob Goodlatte  
House Judiciary Committee  
2138 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Goodlatte:

After yet another mass shooting, this time resulting in the deaths of 13 individuals and injuries to others just blocks from the Capitol building at the Washington Navy Yard, we write to request that the Judiciary Committee commence hearings on the issues relevant to the subject of gun violence in America which are within the Committee's jurisdiction.

It is imperative that the Committee examine these issues. In the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, the Committee conducted hearings and moved legislation which ultimately passed into law.<sup>1</sup> Subsequent to the Columbine mass shootings in 1999, the Committee again conducted hearings and moved legislation to the House floor.<sup>2</sup> In the wake of the shootings at Virginia Tech, the Committee shepherded the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 to the floor, which was signed into law by President George W. Bush.<sup>3</sup>

However, after the mass shootings in Tucson, Aurora, Oak Creek, and Newtown, the Committee has conducted no hearings on these issues. Of course, we need to consider not only mass shootings, but the daily toll of gun violence that afflicts all of our communities. In one year, on average, over 100,000 Americans are shot in murders, assaults, suicides and suicide attempts, accidents, and police actions. Approximately 32,000 of these individuals die. Nearly 12,000 are murdered—more than 32 Americans every day.<sup>4</sup> This is unacceptable and we must

<sup>1</sup> "Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996," Pub. L. 104-132 (1996).

<sup>2</sup> "Violent and Repeat Juvenile Offender Accountability and Rehabilitation Act of 1999," H.R. 1501, 106<sup>th</sup> Cong. 1999.

<sup>3</sup> "NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007," Pub. L. No. 110-180 (2007).

<sup>4</sup> *There Are Too Many Victims of Gun Violence*, BRADY CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE, <http://www.bradycampaign.org/sites/default/files/GunDeathandInjuryStatSheet3YearAverageFINAL.pdf>, The Brady Campaign averaged the most recent three years of data from death certificates (2008-2010) and estimates of emergency room admissions (2009-2011) available via CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control's Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System, [www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars/](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars/).

do more to examine the scourge of gun violence in order to develop solutions to make us all safer.

While most of us are on record supporting a number of bills designed to reduce gun violence, in calling for hearings on this subject, we are not prejudging the conclusions the Committee may reach. What is most important at this time is that we hear from victims, law enforcement, researchers, and other experts so that the Committee can better understand the scope and cause of this problem and determine what future action is necessary.

We look forward to discussing these matters with you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

John Conyers Jr.

Blahy

Karen Bass

Gerrald Nadler

Gudys Chu

Sheila Jackson Lee

Steve Cohen

Joe Garcia

Melvin L. Watt

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