

# U.S. House of Representatives

## Committee on the Judiciary

Washington, DC 20515-6216  
One Hundred Fifteenth Congress

October 2, 2017

The Hon. Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
The Capitol  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Speaker Ryan:

As Ranking Members of two of the Committees of jurisdiction with respect to H.R. 3668, the so-called “Sportsmen’s Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act,” we ask that you immediately announce that this legislation will not be taken up by the House of Representatives. It is not enough to simply hold a moment of silence, or place U.S. flags at half-staff; rather we believe that, in the wake of the horrific shootings last evening in Las Vegas, you must clearly state that the House will not seek to make matters worse by passing this legislation, which includes a number of provisions that would make us more vulnerable to mass shootings and subject our citizens and law enforcement personnel to an increased risk of gun violence.

As we have previously noted, H.R. 3668 would (1) weaken regulation of the interstate transportation of firearms; (2) make it easier for private citizens to obtain silencers by removing silencers from the protections in the National Firearms Act (NFA), which currently restricts the possession and sale of certain particularly dangerous firearms and accessories; and (3) remove the “sporting purposes” clause which restricts the importation of firearms with certain features and remove the ability of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) to reclassify certain ammunition as “armor piercing ammunition.” As we have also noted, none of these provisions have been subject to consideration in markup by either of our Committees.

Obviously, the tragic killing of more than 50 people, with more than 500 more individuals injured in Las Vegas last night, highlights the danger of proceeding with such provisions – particularly the weakening of current protections with respect to the sale and possession of silencers. In active shooter situations, law enforcement must respond quickly to locate the shooter in order to prevent the carnage from continuing. Silencing or muffling the sound of gun shots would make this more difficult, preventing quick response, such as the brave actions of law enforcement to quickly locate and take action against the shooter last night and those of the police officers that located and took down the man who shot and killed five officers in Dallas last year. This situation illustrates the danger posed by the proliferation of silencers,

particularly when the regulation of them is proposed to be weakened substantially – even allowing them to be sold with no checks whatsoever in some circumstances.

Of course, gun violence is not just a matter of mass shootings and we must not treat it as such. On average, 31 Americans are murdered with guns every day and 151 are treated for a gun assault in an emergency room. This issue impacts all of us, in every community, and it will take all of us, working together, to address it comprehensively. We must take steps to make us safer, but proposals such as this bill, and others on the gun lobby's wish list, take us in the wrong direction.

For the foregoing reasons, we ask that, as Speaker, you promise the American people that the House will not bring to the floor legislation, such as H.R. 3668, which endangers us instead of protecting us from gun violence.

Sincerely,



John Conyers, Jr.  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary



Raúl Grijalva  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Natural Resources

CC: Nancy Pelosi, Democratic Leader  
Robert Goodlatte, Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary  
Rob Bishop, Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources