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ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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February 21, 2018

Dear Chairman Goodlatte:

We write regarding the request by you and Oversight Chairman Trey Gowdy for a briefing by the FBI concerning its handling of a tip it received about the individual who has been identified as shooting and killing multiple people and injuring still more at Marjory Douglas Stoneman High School in Parkland, Florida on February 14.

While we recognize our Committee's oversight responsibilities with respect to the FBI, we fear that the Committee's course of action in response to the urgent threat of gun violence will be inadequate once again. Either in response to the daily toll of gun violence in our communities, or in response to the many mass shootings, in Tucson, Newtown, Charleston, Orlando, the Washington Navy Yard, Alexandria, Ft. Lauderdale, Isla Vista, Las Vegas, Sutherland Springs, and unfortunately many others, the Committee has failed to conduct a single hearing to examine the causes and propose ways we can prevent future shooting deaths.

With each such high-profile mass shooting that shocks our nation, our citizens cannot understand why Congress has not done more to address these issues. After the shooting in Parkland, many students at Marjory Douglas Stoneman High School, undergoing unimaginable grief, are bravely calling on elected officials to do more, demanding that we "never again" experience such a tragedy in our country.

There is no one legislative action that would prevent every shooting injury or death, but there is a range of sensible measures that we should consider without delay. Although the Committee reported legislation late last year which would help state and federal agencies submit more records to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, we must do more by extending the background check requirement to all gun sales. Among other things, we should enact legislation to provide incentives for states to allow families to seek gun violence restraining orders from courts to prevent loved ones who are dangerous from arming themselves. We should change our laws to prohibit the sale of assault weapons, at the very least to individuals younger than 21 years of age. Of course, we should *not* adopt legislation, such as national concealed carry reciprocity, which would only further endanger us, and we should not tie passage of helpful legislation concerning firearms, such as the "Fix NICS Act," to enactment of such harmful measures.

As for bump stock devices, such as the one used in Las Vegas to kill 58 and injure hundreds more last year, Congress should have already taken swift and necessary action. The President's statement yesterday, that the Administration is continuing to pursue a lengthy regulatory process concerning bump stocks, consistent with the process announced by the Justice Department in December, is out of touch with need to protect the public. Even if these devices were to be banned immediately, however, there would be much more we would need to do and it would be a mistake to consider action on that issue, by whatever means, sufficient under such urgent circumstances.

So far, your sense of urgency about this issue has focused solely on the FBI, but your request to Director Wray is no substitute for enacting meaningful legislation, which we know is necessary to make our citizens safer from gun violence. We therefore ask that, in addition to seeking information from the FBI about the tip it received about the Parkland shooter, you bring gun violence prevention legislation before the Committee without delay.

Sincerely,

Jeff Miller

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