

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Statement on National Gun Violence Awareness Day

June 2, 2023

In the last year alone, we've lost more than 40,000 Americans to gun violence. Countless other survivors of gun violence will carry the trauma for the rest of their lives.

In the last 2 years, I've been able to sign the most significant gun safety legislation in decades and have taken dozens of executive actions. But it's not nearly enough. I will keep fighting to do everything I possibly can, but the reality is that it will take congressional action to make the kinds of meaningful reforms we need to keep our communities safe.

A broad majority of Americans want to see commonsense reforms that would curb our gun violence epidemic, like establishing universal background checks, requiring safe storage of firearms, and finally banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.

But instead of listening to their constituents, Republicans in Congress continue to do the bidding of the gun lobby. Instead of shielding our kids from gun violence in their classrooms, Republicans in Congress are focused on shielding gun manufacturers from liability.

At a time when guns are the number-one killer of kids in America, it shouldn't be this hard to convince Republicans in Congress to keep weapons of war off our streets and to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people. Even a majority of responsible gun owners support commonsense actions to save lives and keep our communities safe.

State lawmakers must step up as well. I'm encouraged by the growing number of States working to pass commonsense measures like "red flag" laws and assault weapons bans, but we have to do more. And Americans must demand more.

It is within our power to realize a future where our malls, grocery stores, movie theaters, and places of worship are safe from the threat of gun violence. Where parents aren't gripped with anxiety dropping their kids off at school every single day. Where our children don't learn to duck and cover before they learn to read and write. But it will require Congress to act.

Today and every day, Jill and I hold those killed and injured by gun violence, and their loved ones, in our prayers. And we pray for the day that we can honor their memory with meaningful action to address a crisis of gun violence that has gone on for far too long.

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