

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 4, 2013

Dear Colleague:

We all have been deeply affected by the tragedy that took the lives of 20 children and six adults on December 14<sup>th</sup> in the halls and classrooms of Sandy Hook Elementary School. As we reflect on the gun violence that plagues our nation and what we can do to save lives in the future, I invite you to cosponsor important legislation that I plan to introduce at the start of the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress. I have provided summaries of each bill below.

- **Large Capacity Ammunition Feeding Device Act of 2013**

High-capacity magazines allow dozens of bullets to be discharged without reloading. And while the causes of mass shootings are complex, one common thread has emerged: high-capacity magazines were used in every recent mass shooting—Newtown, Connecticut; Aurora, Colorado; Oak Creek, Wisconsin; Tucson, Arizona; and Blacksburg, Virginia. My Large Capacity Ammunition Feeding Device Act would ban the manufacture and transfer of these magazines, which can carry more than 10 rounds. It would reinstate this critical provision of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. Not only does a ban on high-capacity magazines have the support of a wide majority of Americans, it also crosses party lines. Even former President George W. Bush called for its reinstatement after it expired in 2004. High-capacity magazines are used by soldiers fighting wars; they do not belong on our streets and in our communities.

- **Gun Show Background Check Act of 2013**

At gun shows across the country, buyers can completely avoid background checks otherwise required by law. The Columbine High School shooters killed 13 people with weapons obtained at a gun show, and gun traffickers regularly patronize gun shows and buy weapons that wind up at crime scenes halfway across the country. My Gun Show Background Check Act would close the gun show loophole and ensure that those who would already fail a background check—such as felons and the severely mentally ill—cannot skirt our laws by buying firearms at gun shows from private sellers. In 1999, Senators voted for my amendment to close the gun show loophole, which passed the Senate but failed to become law amidst intense pressure from the gun lobby. Even though 89 percent of all Americans favor eliminating it, the gun show loophole still exists today.

- **Stop Online Ammunition Sales Act of 2013**

As we have seen far too many times, individuals intent on harming innocent Americans have easy access to not only weapons, but also enormous amounts of ammunition that make

large-scale atrocities possible. Ammunition sales are largely unregulated, allowing people to anonymously amass thousands of rounds. The suspect in the Aurora, Colorado movie theater shooting reportedly purchased approximately 6,000 rounds of ammunition over the Internet prior to killing 12 and injuring 58. This tragedy highlights the ability of individuals, intent on harm, to procure an arsenal of ammunition over the Internet without triggering the attention or suspicion of ammunition sellers or law enforcement. The Stop Online Ammunition Sales Act would require face-to-face purchases of ammunition and ensure that law enforcement is alerted to suspicious bulk purchases.

- **Denying Firearms and Explosives to Dangerous Terrorists Act of 2013**

Under current law, the government does not have the authority to stop a known or suspected terrorist from obtaining firearms or explosives. The Government Accountability Office has found that from February 2004 to December 2010, known or suspected terrorists have been cleared to buy firearms or explosives 1,321 times. This defies common sense and is contrary to the will of the American people. In fact, 76 percent of all Americans and 71 percent of National Rifle Association members support closing the Terror Gap. My bill, the Denying Firearms and Explosives to Dangerous Terrorists Act, would give the U.S. Attorney General the authority to block the sale of guns to known and suspected terrorists.

- **Alien Gun Violence Prevention Act of 2013**

Finally, the Alien Gun Violence Prevention Act addresses another dangerous loophole in our guns laws. In 1997, legislation was passed that prohibits nonimmigrant alien visa holders from possessing firearms. This law was enacted after a nonimmigrant alien shot six people and killed one person and himself atop the Empire State Building. Until recently, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) has interpreted the restriction to apply to all aliens present in the U.S. in a nonimmigrant classification, whether or not they needed a visa to enter the U.S. However, a recent ruling by DOJ's Office of Legal Counsel has determined that ATF cannot prohibit nonimmigrants who entered the U.S. *through the visa waiver program* from purchasing firearms. "Shoe bomber" Richard Reid and Zacarias Moussaoui, a 9/11 co-conspirator, entered the U.S. under the Visa Waiver Program. Unless a legislative fix is enacted, terrorists like these will be able to enter our country and legally arm themselves.

The time for action is now, and I am confident that the adoption of these proposals will help achieve the reduction in gun violence that we all so desperately seek. I urge you to join in co-sponsoring these important and common-sense gun safety measures. Please have your staff contact Lexie Kuznick of my staff at 4-7225 if you would like to cosponsor or have any questions about these pieces of legislation.

Sincerely,

