

March 25, 2021

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Vice Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy, Vice Chairman Shelby, Chair Murray, and Ranking Member Blunt:

As you consider appropriations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, **the undersigned 202 national, state, and local medical, public health, and research organizations write to ask you to provide \$50 million in funding shared evenly between the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to conduct public health research into firearm morbidity and mortality prevention.**

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, communities across the U.S. continue to suffer from the public health crisis of firearm-related injuries and deaths. In 2019, the most recent year for which we have data, firearm-related injuries led to 39,707 fatalities.<sup>i</sup> A public health approach to firearm violence prevention is urgently needed to promote health equity and address the disproportionate burden of this epidemic on communities of color. The foundation of this approach is rigorous research that can accurately quantify and describe the facets of an issue and identify opportunities for reducing its related morbidity and mortality.

We would like to thank Congress for providing \$25 million for this public health research to the CDC and NIH in FY20 and for continuing this funding in the *Consolidated Appropriations Act* for FY 2021. This initial investment was a crucial step toward applying a public health approach to increasing gun safety and reducing firearm-related injuries and deaths, and we are excited to see these funds contributing to important research projects that are now underway. The CDC has made 18 awards for two- and three-year projects to improve scientific understanding of firearm-related violence and to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of prevention strategies.<sup>ii</sup> The NIH is funding research on the determinants of firearm injury, the identification of those at risk, and the evaluation of innovative interventions.<sup>iii</sup> These projects will advance our knowledge of how to keep communities safe, with some researchers focusing on particular groups such as U.S. Army soldiers and veterans, children, and residents of rural and urban areas.

This initial investment is important, but increased funding is still needed to overcome the decades-long lack of federal funding that set back our nation's response to the public health issue of firearm-related morbidity and mortality. Over time, additional funding can generate research into important issues such as the best ways to prevent unintended firearm injuries and fatalities among women and children; the most effective methods to prevent firearm-related suicides; the

measures that can best prevent the next shooting at a school or public place; and numerous other vital public health questions. Continued and expanded investments are essential to the success of this important work.

**Our groups strongly urge the Senate to increase funding to the CDC and NIH for firearm morbidity and mortality prevention research to a total of \$50 million as part of FY 2022 appropriations.** Continued and expanded funding could support the creation of additional, large, multi-year studies and accelerate the rebuilding of a research community that shrank in the decades before Congress restored this federal funding. Robust and sustained research on motor vehicle crashes and subsequent legislation has helped save hundreds of thousands of lives through public health interventions, including seat belts and other safety features. The same approach can help reduce firearm-related injuries in our communities, including ensuring that the CDC and NIH are able to adequately fund non-biased, evidence-based research into this public health priority.

Our organizations stand ready to work with you to support this critical effort. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

**National Organizations:**

AANS/CNS Joint Section on Pediatric Neurological Surgery  
Academic Pediatric Association  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Neurology  
American Academy of Nursing  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Anthropological Association  
American Art Therapy Association  
American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
American Association of Neurological Surgeons  
American College of Emergency Physicians  
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American College of Physicians  
American College of Surgeons  
American Educational Research Association  
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention  
American Medical Association  
American Medical Student Association  
American Medical Women's Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Osteopathic Association  
American Pediatric Society  
American Physical Therapy Association  
American Psychiatric Association

American Psychoanalytic Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Public Health Association  
American School Counselor Association  
American Society for Clinical Pathology  
American Society of Pediatric Nephrology  
American Society of Pediatric Neurosurgeons  
American Society of Pediatric Otolaryngology  
American Sociological Association  
American Thoracic Society  
American Trauma Society  
Association for Psychological Science  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)  
Association of Departments of Family Medicine  
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors  
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs  
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
Association of Pediatric Program Directors  
Association of Population Centers  
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health  
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials  
Big Cities Health Coalition  
Brain Injury Association of America  
Catholic Health Association of the United States  
Center for American Progress  
Child Injury Prevention Alliance  
Children's Defense Fund  
Children's Hospital Association  
Coalition for the Promotion of Behavioral Health  
Coalition to Stop Gun Violence  
Congress of Neurological Surgeons  
Consortium of Social Science Associations  
Council of Pediatric Subspecialties  
Council on Social Work Education  
Doctors for America  
Emergency Nurses Association  
Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
Futures Without Violence  
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality  
Healthy Teen Network  
International Association of Forensic Nurses  
Jewish Federations of North America  
Jewish Women International  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Association of School Nurses  
National Association of School Psychologists  
National Association of State Emergency Medical Services Officials  
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
National League for Nursing  
National Network of Public Health Institutes  
National Organization for Women  
National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives  
National Safety Council  
National Women's Health Network  
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies  
North American Primary Care Research Group  
North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition  
Pediatric Endocrine Society  
Pediatric Policy Council  
Population Association of America  
Prevention Institute  
Safe States Alliance  
Sandy Hook Promise  
School Social Work Association of America  
Scrubs Addressing the Firearm Epidemic  
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine  
Society for Advancement of Violence and Injury Research (SAVIR)  
Society for Pediatric Anesthesia  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Society for Prevention Research  
Society for Social Work and Research  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine  
The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention  
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health  
The Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America  
The Society for Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics  
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons  
Trust for America's Health  
Ujima, Inc., The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community  
YMCA of the USA  
ZERO TO THREE

**State and Local Organizations:**

A Friend of Mind  
Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Academy of Pediatrics - Arizona Chapter  
American Academy of Pediatrics California Chapter 1  
American Academy of Pediatrics California Chapter 2  
American Academy of Pediatrics California Chapter 3  
American Academy of Pediatrics - Colorado Chapter

American Academy of Pediatrics - Hawaii Chapter  
American Academy of Pediatrics New York Chapter 2  
American Academy of Pediatrics New York Chapter 3  
American Academy of Pediatrics Puerto Rico Chapter  
American Academy of Pediatrics Vermont Chapter  
American Academy of Pediatrics, Maine Chapter  
American Academy of Pediatrics, Utah Chapter  
Arizona Public Health Association  
Brain Injury Association of America-Kentucky Chapter  
Brain Injury Association of Kansas and Greater Kansas City  
Brain Injury Association of Louisiana  
Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts  
Brain Injury Association of Michigan  
Brain Injury Association of New Hampshire  
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia  
Children's Wisconsin  
Colorado Public Health Association  
DC Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Delaware Academy of Medicine / Delaware Public Health Association  
Delaware Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Florida Chapter - American Academy of Pediatrics  
Georgia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Hawaii Public Health Association  
Idaho Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Idaho Public Health Association  
Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Illinois Public Health Association  
Indiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Iowa Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Kansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Kentucky Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Louisiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Louisiana Public Health Association  
Maine Association of Psychiatric Physicians  
Maine Public Health Association  
Maryland Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
The Maryland Psychiatric Society, Inc.  
Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Michigan Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Mississippi Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Missouri Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Montana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Moore Center for the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse  
NC Public Health Association  
Nebraska Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Nevada Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Nevada Public Health Association

New Hampshire Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
New Hampshire Psychiatric Society  
New Jersey Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center - Rutgers School of Public Health  
New Jersey Public Health Association  
New Jersey School Counselor Association, Inc.  
New Mexico Pediatric Society  
New York State Public Health Association  
North Carolina Pediatric Society  
North Dakota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Northern California Psychiatric Society  
Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Oklahoma Chapter - American Academy of Pediatrics  
Oregon Pediatric Society  
Oregon Public Health Association  
Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Pennsylvania Public Health Association  
Rhode Island Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Rhode Island Psychiatric Society  
Rhode Island Public Health Association  
South Carolina Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
South Dakota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Southern California Public Health Association  
Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Tennessee Public Health Association  
Texas Pediatric Society, the Texas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
UNC Hospitals Trauma Center  
Utah Public Health Association  
Virginia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Virginia Public Health Association  
Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
West Virginia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Wisconsin Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Wisconsin Public Health Association  
Wyoming Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

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<sup>i</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [online]. Accessed February 16, 2021. Available at: [www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars](http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars).

<sup>ii</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Firearm Violence Prevention: Funded Research. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/firearms/funded-research.html>. Accessed February 4, 2021.

<sup>iii</sup> National Institutes of Health, Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research. NIH awards grants for firearm injury and mortality prevention research. Available at: <https://obssr.od.nih.gov/nih-awards-grants-for-firearm-injury-and-mortality-prevention-research/>. Accessed February 4, 2021.