



AN OPEN LETTER to PRESIDENT OBAMA & MEMBERS of CONGRESS

Forty-three years ago, following the shootings of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Senator Robert F. Kennedy, Congress passed a law to prevent dangerous people from possessing guns. The 1968 law bars felons, the mentally ill, drug abusers, and other dangerous people under federal law from possessing guns.

In 1993, Congress passed the Brady Bill, named for President Reagan's press secretary James Brady, who had been critically wounded in the assassination attempt on President Reagan. The Brady Bill created a system of background checks that helped to make real the purpose of the 1968 law.

But in the wake of the tragic shooting in Tucson, it is clear that the system is flawed and too many dangerous people are still able to buy guns. In Tucson and at Virginia Tech, the killers should have been barred from buying guns, but their records were not in the background check database as they should have been. At Columbine High School, the shooters went around the system by getting their guns through a purchase from an unlicensed seller at a gun show.

Altogether, in the years since 1968, 400,000 Americans have been murdered with guns. **That's 34 Americans each and every day.**

IT'S A NATIONAL CRISIS THAT CALLS FOR A NATIONAL RESPONSE. WE MUST FINALLY FULFILL the PROMISE MADE AFTER THE KING and KENNEDY ASSASSINATIONS.

We need leadership from the President and Congress to fix the broken background check system by taking two important steps:

- Ensure the names of all the people who should be prohibited from buying a gun are in the system
- Close the loopholes in the background check system by requiring a background check for every gun sale

We can't wait for yet another tragedy before we do something about this. Together, we can honor those we have lost by making sure we do something to prevent another tragedy from happening again.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor, New York City
Co-chair, Mayors Against
Illegal Guns

Martin Luther King, III
President and CEO, King Center
Eldest Son of Martin
Luther King, Jr.

Thomas M. Menino
Mayor, Boston
Co-chair, Mayors Against
Illegal Guns

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend
Former Lt. Governor, Maryland
Eldest Child of Robert F.
Kennedy

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