



Tuesday, Sept. 4th, 2019

President Donald J. Trump
Office of the President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We, the undersigned legislators of South Carolina, are deeply concerned about the recent mass shootings of innocent people by mentally deranged persons intent on murder. Making sense of each tragic act of violence and formulating appropriate policy responses designed to protect innocent Americans requires a proper understanding of the context and the facts.

According to the F.B.I. and the Bureau of Justice, overall property and violent crime rates have been in decline since 1993. These statistics show that violent crime rates have fallen from 747 per 100,000 people in 1993 to 382 per 100,000 people in 2017.

Nevertheless, public perception is that violent crime is continuously on the rise. We, the undersigned believe that this is due to the news media's sensational coverage of mass shootings. The reality is that Americans have been blessed with a steady decline in property and violent crime rates for 26 years, in no small degree thanks to the courageous acts of law-abiding gun owners who successfully stop or prevent tragic deaths every day. These instances go unmentioned by the mainstream media.

We, the undersigned are concerned that the overwhelming majority of mass shootings (over 94%) occur in "gun-free zones." While law-abiding citizens actually follow the law, mass murderers do not. This, of course, makes the law-abiding citizens vulnerable in "gun-free zones." "Gun-free zones" are in fact safe havens for criminals. You yourself have publicly acknowledged these mass murderers' use of "gun-free zones" in past speeches to the public.

We, the undersigned are extremely concerned that Congress is not addressing the real issue of "gun-free zones," instead of focusing on "red flag" laws. We believe that these "red flag" laws will be abused and used to target law-abiding citizens.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Health, 1 in 5 Americans suffers from a mental health issue in a given year. Absent the institutionalization of disturbed individuals, the person presenting actual threats to society will remain a threat after their firearms are removed. These individuals will still have access to vehicles, knives or countless other lethal items to commit mass murder.

In states like Maryland, Oregon, and California that have enacted these "red flag" laws, the individuals subject to "emergency protection orders" are effectively guilty until proven innocent. This flips due process on its head. "Red flag" laws erode the very cornerstones of our country, the right to keep and bear arms and due process. They also put law enforcement and citizens in adverse, unnecessary circumstances that will lead to more instances of police brutality and tragic death.

During your candidacy for President, the former administration used the F.B.I. and F.I.S.A. courts against you. We are urging you not to give the federal government any more power to bypass our Constitution. Furthermore, we the undersigned urge you to remember your oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States, which expressly prohibits taking the inherent human rights of Americans without prior due process. Specifically, these “red flag” laws are gross violations of the 2nd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 9th, and 10th Amendments. Regardless of the political pressure to do otherwise, we the undersigned lawmakers of South Carolina will stand together with you to protect and defend the rights of our citizens from unconstitutional Federal actions, which we have also sworn to do before God.

As Milton Friedman once said, “the government solution to a problem is usually as bad as the problem.” We, the undersigned believe that “red flag” laws will provide a false sense of security and only create new problems. Furthermore, mental health is greatly influenced by the strength of the family. As we pursue better laws to protect the innocent, we should remember that the best solution to violence and hate is not found in government action, but in families where a mother and father cultivate core values like love, virtuous character, and community.

Thank you in advance for your support of due process, the Second Amendment, and our Constitution.

Respectfully,

SC House Members:



Rep. Jonathon D. Hill



Rep. Stewart O. Jones



Rep. Josiah Magnuson



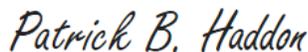
Rep. Ashley B. Trantham



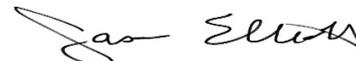
Rep. Craig A. Gagnon



Rep. Mike Burns



Rep. Patrick B. Haddon



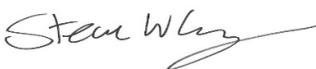
Rep. Jason Elliott



Rep. Bill Chumley



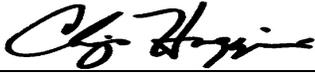
Rep. Garry R. Smith



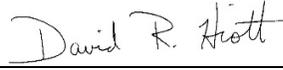
Rep. Steven W. Long



Rep. Tommy M. Stringer



Rep. Chip Huggins



Rep. David R. Hiott



Rep. Anne J. Thayer



Rep. Mark N. Willis



Rep. Bobby J. Cox



Rep. Cal Forrest



Rep. Rick Martin



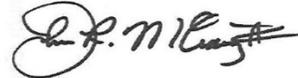
Rep. Heather Ammons Crawford



Rep. Chris Wooten



Rep. Nancy Mace



Rep. John R. McCravy III



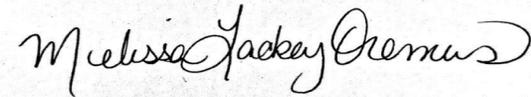
Rep. Alan D. Clemmons



Rep. Mandy W. Kimmons



Rep. Bill Herbkersman



Melissa Oremus
Republican nominee, District 84 (unopposed)



Rep. Bill Taylor



Rep. Steve Moss



Rep. Rita Allison



Rep. Sylleste Davis



Rep. Bill Hixon



Rep. Adam Morgan

SC Senate Members:



Sen. Rex F. Rice



Sen. Danny Verdin



Sen. Larry Grooms



Sen. Richard J. Cash



Sen. Wes Climer



Sen. Tom Corbin

cc: **Senator Lindsey O. Graham, 290 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510**
Senator Tim Scott, 104 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510
Rep. James E. Clyburn, 200 Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20515
Rep. Joe Cunningham, 423 Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20515
Rep. Jeff Duncan, 2229 Rayburn House Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20515
Rep. Ralph Norman, 319 Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20515
Rep. Tom Rice, 512 Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20515
Rep. William Timmons, 313 Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20515
Rep. Joe Wilson, 1436 Longworth House Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20515