

February 16, 2023

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
Chair  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education Subcommittee  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education Subcommittee  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Murray, Vice Chair Collins, Chair Baldwin, and Ranking Member Capito:

Our organizations comprise the Steering Committee of the [Gun Violence Prevention \(GVP\) Research Roundtable](#) coalition, a non-partisan group of national medical, public health, and research organizations dedicated to advancing the gun violence prevention research field. On behalf of our coalition, we write to congratulate you on assuming your respective leadership positions of the Senate Appropriations Committee and Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee in the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress.

We thank Congress for its bipartisan support over the last four years for research funding to develop an evidence-based approach to gun safety and injury prevention. Across this country, communities are suffering from preventable firearm-related injuries and deaths. Suicide, violent crime, and accidental shootings cause trauma to families, communities, and children affected by these preventable tragedies. In 2021, the most recent year for which we have data, firearm-related injuries led to 47,286 total fatalities.<sup>1</sup> The overall U.S. firearm homicide and firearm suicide rates in 2021 were the highest documented since 1993 and 1990, respectively.<sup>2</sup>

We need a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to reducing firearm-related suicides, violent crime, and accidental shootings. Rigorous prevention research that can accurately quantify and describe the roots of gun violence, inform strategies for responsible gun owners to avoid preventable injuries and deaths, and identify non-partisan opportunities for reducing the related morbidity and mortality is the foundation of such an approach.

Recognizing the seriousness of this issue, our groups came together to launch the GVP Research Roundtable coalition in October 2021. This non-partisan coalition serves as a hub for health-related organizations to highlight the critical impact of investments in research on reducing injuries and deaths from firearms.

We are grateful for the fourth consecutive year of bipartisan support for prevention research funding in fiscal year (FY) 2023, providing \$12.5 million each to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and National Institutes of Health (NIH), and \$1 million in dedicated funds for the National Institute of Justice for the first time. These investments are a crucial step toward applying an evidence-based approach to increasing gun safety and reducing firearm-related injuries and deaths, and we are excited to see these funds contributing to important prevention research projects that are now underway.

While these investments are important, increased funding is still needed to overcome the decades-long lack of federal funding that stalled research on firearm-related morbidity and mortality. CDC and NIH continue to receive many more high-quality proposals than they are able to fund, and additional funding can generate research into important questions, such as the most effective methods to prevent firearm-related suicides among veterans; the best ways to prevent unintended firearm injuries and fatalities among women and children; how to reduce firearm-related violent crime; and numerous other vital public health and crime prevention questions.

We appreciate the bipartisan support that this funding has received. We look forward to continued bipartisan leadership to advance this important research, and we stand ready to offer our support as a resource and work with you to address these urgent issues.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics

American College of Emergency Physicians

American Public Health Association

Association of American Medical Colleges

Safe States Alliance

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas R. Simon, et al. “*Notes from the Field: Increases in Firearm Homicide and Suicide Rates – United States, 2020-2021.*” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available at:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7140a4>.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*