



June 7, 2022

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals that champions the health of all people and communities, I write to express our strong support for H.R. 7910, the Protecting Our Kids Act and H.R. 2377, the Federal Extreme Risk Protection Order Act. Passage of these commonsense bills will be a positive step forward in protecting our communities and addressing the nation's ongoing gun violence epidemic.

In 2020, the most recent year for which we have data, firearm-related injuries led to 45,222 fatalities, an increase of nearly 15% over the previous year. Yet Congress has repeatedly failed to enact legislation to help address this public health crisis. The recent devastating killing of 21 people, including 19 elementary school children in Uvalde, Tex., the killing of 10 people in Buffalo, N.Y., the four lives lost at the hands of a gunman in Tulsa, Okla. and the many other instances of gun violence across the country are tragic reminders of the magnitude of the gun violence crisis in the U.S. We cannot allow these senseless killings to continue, and Congress must act now to pass legislation to help prevent future tragedies.

H.R. 7910, the Protecting Our Kids Act includes important provisions to reduce gun violence in the U.S. including:

- Prohibiting the sale of semi-automatic rifles and shotguns to anyone under the age of 21
- Prohibiting certain large capacity ammunition magazines and bump stocks for civilian use
- Imposing new prohibitions on straw purchases and gun trafficking activities
- Ensuring that so-called ghost guns are subject to federal firearm background check requirements
- Strengthening requirements for safe storage of firearms in the home and incentivizing other safe storage best practices

H.R. 2377, the Federal Extreme Risk Protection Order Act would set a national standard by allowing federal courts to issue ERPOs. ERPOs allow family members or law enforcement to petition a judge to temporarily remove a firearm from a person deemed at risk of harming themselves or others. Nineteen states and the District of Columbia have laws authorizing courts to issue an ERPO and we must ensure that these orders are an available option in every state to prevent gun violence before it happens.

We strongly urge all members of the House to support these important gun violence prevention bills when they come to the floor this week and we stand ready to work with you to enact the additional legislation that is needed to protect our communities from gun violence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Georges C. Benjamin'.

Georges C. Benjamin, MD  
Executive Director