

Dear UCWC Board of Directors,

As you know, I am the Gun Violence Prevention point person here at UCWC, and the liaison for UUJusticePA. I am sure you understand how difficult it is to really stem the tide of gun violence, especially with a legislature dominated by a party that is more concerned with gun rights than gun safety. With the 2020 election over, our hopes were dashed in PA for getting a majority in Harrisburg who would work for our cause. In this light, CeaseFire PA and other organizations are working to build a coalition of leaders and groups in PA who see common cause in attacking the gun violence problem. We are hoping to recruit UCWC to be a coalition member to sign on as a partner of a growing coalition of groups that advocate for a Common Agenda.

The problem of gun violence in PA has risen steadily over the last 10 years, rising from around 1200 deaths per year to 1,544 in 2018. Gun sales are skyrocketing: in the last quarter alone, the amount of background checks was up 80%. Even more importantly, the number of people whose sales were denied at the point of sale was up 148%, which means a stunning number of prohibited purchasers were attempting to buy firearms. With more guns comes more suicide, more violence in our homes, and more community violence.

In these tough times, we need solutions that will save lives, and we are working with Pennsylvanians from all walks of life to advance a three-pronged Common Agenda to Stop Gun Violence that CeaseFire PA--after years of working as Pennsylvania's leading gun violence prevention organization--believe will most effectively save lives:

1. Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs) will reduce firearms suicides, mass shootings, domestic violence, and even community violence/homicides.

2. Universal Background Checks- would prevent those with violent histories and other potentially dangerous individuals from purchasing a long gun from a private/non-licensed seller.

3. Lost or Stolen Gun Reporting -would help prevent illegal firearms falling into the hands of people with violent intent.

To get this Common Agenda to Stop Gun Violence on the books in our Commonwealth, we need the support of faith groups like ours. This time around, we need your signature. Your commitment will be no more than being willing to advocate for the Common Agenda by stating so on your website (which I will put on my social justice area for GVP) and permitting the coalition to include your name along

with over 100 groups, including a UU Congregation near Pittsburg, and UUJusticePA. To sign on, just click and fill out this form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Sdh-izsJBVcqET_8be0oxjDBAWyE3ZMhhkUA7WVZOfl/edit

The more people and groups that join this campaign, the more likely it is that the legislature will move to protect Pennsylvanians, not guns, in this new legislative session. With your help, we can make it happen.

Thanks for your consideration. Only together can we reduce gun violence.

Sincerely,

Tom Buglio

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UUJusticePA- Gun Violence Prevention

CeaseFire PA