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Call for Action to Prevent Gun Violence in the United States of America
Interdisciplinary Group on Preventing School and Community Violence
February 28, 2018

School shootings and widespread community gun violence are far greater in the United States than other nations. America cannot be great and realize its promise of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness if our children are not safe from gun violence.

Although security measures are important, a focus on simply preparing for shootings is insufficient. We need a change in mindset and policy from reaction to prevention. Prevention entails more than security measures and begins long before a gunman comes to school. We need a comprehensive public health approach to gun violence that is informed by scientific evidence and free from partisan politics.

A public health approach to protecting children as well as adults from gun violence involves three levels of prevention: (1) universal approaches promoting safety and well-being for everyone; (2) practices for reducing risk and promoting protective factors for persons experiencing difficulties; and (3) interventions for individuals where violence is present or appears imminent.

On the first level we need:

1. A national requirement for all schools to assess school climate and maintain physically and emotionally safe conditions and positive school environments that protect all students and adults from bullying, discrimination, harassment, and assault;
2. A ban on assault-style weapons, high-capacity ammunition clips, and products that modify semi-automatic firearms to enable them to function like automatic firearms.

On the second level we need:

3. Adequate staffing (such as counselors, psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers) of coordinated school- and community-based mental health services for individuals with risk factors for violence, recognizing that violence is not intrinsically a product of mental illness;
4. Reform of school discipline to reduce exclusionary practices and foster positive social, behavioral, emotional, and academic success for students;
5. Universal background checks to screen out violent offenders, persons who have been hospitalized for violence towards self or others, and persons on no-fly, terrorist watch lists.

On the third level we need:

6. A national program to train and maintain school- and community-based threat assessment teams that include mental health and law enforcement partners. Threat assessment programs should include practical channels of communication for persons to report potential threats as well as interventions to resolve conflicts and assist troubled individuals;
7. Removal of legal barriers to sharing safety-related information among educational, mental health, and law enforcement agencies in cases where a person has threatened violence;
8. Laws establishing Gun Violence Protection Orders that allow courts to issue time-limited restraining orders requiring that firearms be recovered by law enforcement when there is evidence that an individual is planning to carry out acts against others or against themselves.

Congress and the executive branch must remove barriers to gun violence research and institute a program of scientific research on gun violence that encompasses all levels of prevention. We contend that well-executed laws can reduce gun violence while protecting all Constitutional rights.

It's time for federal and state authorities to take immediate action to enact these proposals and provide adequate resources for effective implementation. We call on law enforcement, mental health, and educational agencies to begin actions supporting these prevention efforts. We ask all parents and youth to join efforts advocating for these changes, and we urge voters to elect representatives who will take effective action to prevent gun violence in our nation.

Interdisciplinary Group on Preventing School and Community Violence
(in alphabetical order)

Ron Avi Astor, Ph.D., University of Southern California
George G. Bear, Ph.D., University of Delaware
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Nancy Guerra, Ed.D., University of California, Irvine
Robert Jagers, Ph.D., University of Michigan
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David Osher, Ph.D., Takoma Park, MD
Russell Skiba, Ph.D., Indiana University
George Sugai, Ph.D., University of Connecticut
Daniel W. Webster, Sc.D., Johns Hopkins University
Mark D. Weist, Ph.D., University of South Carolina

National Organizations Endorsing This Statement

Alliance for Excellent Education
American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare
American Art Therapy Association
American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work
American Association of University Women (AAUW)
American Board of Professional Psychology
American Council for School Social Work
American Counseling Association
American Dance Therapy Association
American Federation of Teachers
American Psychoanalytic Association
American Psychological Association
American Psychological Association Teachers of Psychology in Secondary Schools
Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare
Association for Positive Behavior Support
Association of Teacher Educators
Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESA)
Behavioral Institute for Children and Adolescents
Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy and Practice
Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports
Center for School Climate and Learning
Children's Mental Health Network
Clinical Social Work Association
Coalition for Juvenile Justice
Coalition for the Advancement and Application of Psychological Science
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
Committee for Children
Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (CCBD)
Council of Administrators of Special Education
Council of Combined and Integrated Doctoral Programs in Psychology (CCIDPIP)
Council of Directors of School Psychology Programs

Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology
Division of Educational Psychology, American Psychological Association
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice
GLSEN
International Bullying Prevention Association
International Charter For Compassion
International Charter For Compassion Women and Girls
Justice Policy Institute
Learning Disabilities Association of America
Maestral International
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health
National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE)
National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS)
National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE)
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Center for School Mental Health
National Council of Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology (NCSP)
National Education Association
National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health
National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Juvenile Justice Network
National Latina/o Psychological Association
National Partnership to End Interpersonal Violence
National PTA
National Register of Health Service Psychologists
National School Climate Center - NSCC
Parent Revolution
Protect All Children's Environment
Public Advocacy for Kids
Roots & Wings Institute for Family Excellence
Sandy Hook Promise
School Psychology, Division 16 of the American Psychological Association
School Social Work Association of America
School-Based Health Alliance
Search Institute
SEL for Prevention
Society for Community Research and Action
Society for Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics
Society for Prevention Research
Society of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, Division 53 of the American Psychological Association
Society of Counseling Psychology, Division 17, American Psychological Association
The Child and Family Evidence Based Practice Consortium
The Mental Health-Education Integration Consortium
The National Behavioral Intervention Team Association (NaBITA)
Trainers of School Psychologists
University Council for Educational Administration

Additional Organizations Endorsing This Statement

#CompassionConvos
Act Yakima
Adler University
African American Child Wellness Institute - Minnesota
Alberti Center for the Prevention of Bullying Abuse and School Violence, University at Buffalo
Alfred University
Arizona Association of School Psychologists
Arkansas School Psychology Association
Asociación de Psicología a Escolar de Puerto Rico (APEP)
Association for University and College Counseling Center Directors
Association of School Psychologists of Pennsylvania
Atlanta Behavioral Health Advocates, Emory University School of Medicine Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences
Baltimore City Association of School Psychologists
Baltimore County School Psychologists' Association
Begun Center for Violence Prevention Research and Education (Case Western Reserve University)
Bullying Research Network
California Association of School Psychologists
Center for Behavioral Education and Research
Center for Nonviolence & Peace Studies, University of Rhode Island
Center for Research on School Safety, School Climate and Classroom Management at Georgia State University
Center for Social Work Education, Widener University
Center X, UCLA
Central Michigan University School Psychology Program
Chicvara & Associates, LLC
Child Health and Development Institute
Clover Educational Consulting Group
Cognitive Health Solutions, LLC
College of Education and Human Development, University of Maine
Colorado Society of School Psychologists
Common Ground
Connecticut Association of School Psychologists
Connecticut Psychological Association
Contra Costa Community College District
Council for Children's Rights
Daniel L. Goodwin College of Education, Northeastern
Danville Area School District
Delaware Association of School Psychologists
Delaware Psychological Services
Department of Educational Psychology, Baylor University
Department of Teacher Education at the College of Charleston
Department of Teaching and Learning, School of Education and Human Development, University of Southern Maine
Derry Township School District, Hershey Pa
digiCOACH, Inc.
Family Services Network
Family Therapy Center of Boulder
Fizika Group
Florida Association of School Psychologists
Full Circle Community and Wellness
Futures Without Violence
Goleta Union School District
Gretchen Brion-Meisels, Harvard Graduate School of Education
HIGH IMPACT Mission-based Consulting and Training
Howard University School Psychology Program
ICONS - Individuals Collectively Overcoming Negative Situations

Illinois Chapter of American Dance Therapy Association
Illinois School Counselor Association
Illinois School Psychologists Association
Indivisible CD 19
Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma
Instructional Research Group
Interfaith Strategy for Advocacy & Action in the Community (ISAAC)
International Association of Addictions and Offender Counselors
International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals - Illinois Chapter
Iowa School Psychologists Association
Ironside Security Consultants, LLC
Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University
Journal of Applied School Psychology
Judge Baker Children's Center
Justice and Serious Mental Illness
Kappa Delta Pi, International Honor Society in Education
Lancaster Pediatric Associates
Lee'sSummit4SafeSchools
Literacy, Language, and Culture Department, University of Southern Maine
Little Sisters of the Assumption
Lives in the Balance
Louisiana School Psychological Association
Maine Psychological Association
Maine Resilience Building Network
Maryland School Psychologists Association
Massachusetts School Psychologists Association
McDermott-Sitzman Associates,PC
Metamorphosis Life Revitalizing Center, LLC
Michigan Association of School Psychologists
Michigan Psychological Association
Midwest PBIS Network
Midwest School Social Workers Council
Midwest Symposium for Leadership in Behavior Disorders (MSLBD)
Minnesota Public Health Association
Minnesota School Psychologists Association
Minnesota School Psychology Association
Minnesota School Social Workers Association (MSSWA)
Missouri Association of School Psychologists
Missouri Prevention Center, University of Missouri
Montana Association of School Psychologists
Montgomery County School Psychologists' Association (MCSPA)
Move Forward New York - Gun Control Task Force
MVP Pediatric and Urgent Care
National Association of Social Workers -Colorado Chapter
National Shattering Silence Coalition
Neag School of Education
Nebraska School Psychologists Association
Nevada Association of School Psychologists
New Directions Counseling Services
New Hampshire Association of School Psychologists
New Jersey Association of School Psychologists
New Leaders
New York Association of School Psychologists
NYC Leadership Academy
Office of Psychological Services, Baltimore County Public Schools
Ohio Psychological Association

Ohio School Psychologists Association
Oregon School Psychologists Association
Paris Union School District No. 95
Philadelphia Society of Clinical Psychologists (PSCP): The Psychology Network
PINE FORGE FARMS THERAPY CENTER
Portland (Maine) Public Schools
Prevention Section of the Society of Counseling Psychology, American Psychological Association.
Public Advocacy for Kids
Rainstorms to Rainbows
Respectful Ways Social Emotional Learning Curriculum
Rhode Island School Psychologists Association
Rio Grande Community Farm
Ripple Effects
ROC the Possibilities, Inc.
Safe & Humane Schools within the Institute on Family & Neighborhood Life, Clemson University
San Diego State University - School Psychology Program
School of Social Work, Leadership, & Youth Advocacy, Wheelock College
School Psychologists Association of Anne Arundel County
South Carolina Association of School Psychologists
Strategies for Youth, Inc.
Student Advocacy Inc.
Students for Peace and Social Justice, Elon University
Summit Area Indivisible
Summit Counseling Center
Summit County Progressive Democrats
Suzanne Dworak Peck School of Social Work
Team Up for Families
Texas Association of School Psychologists
The Connecticut Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment
The Salem Center for Therapy, Training and Research
The South Carolina Education Association
The Theater of the Oppressed Laboratory (TOPLAB), New York/New England
Trinity Washington University
UCLA Center for Public Health and Disasters
University of Kentucky School Psychology Program
University of Maryland School of Social Work
University of New England School of Social Work
UpBeat NYC
USC Rossier School of Education
USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work
Utah Association of School Psychologists
Vermont Association of School Psychologists
Violence Prevention Initiative, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
Voyages Preschool
Washington State Association of School Psychologists (WSASP)
Wayne State University—School & Community Psychology program
West Valley Resistance ASAP- Active Shooter Action Program
West Virginia Psychological Association
Wheelock College
Wisconsin School Psychologists Association

Excerpts from List of Individuals Endorsing This Statement

(View a complete list of over 4,400 individuals endorsing this document here)

Barbara J. Burns, Ph.D.	Duke University School of Medicine
Ayse Ciftci, Ph.D.	Purdue University
James Clyde DiPerna, Ph.D.	The Pennsylvania State University
George J. DuPaul, Ph.D.	Lehigh University
Tanya L. Eckert, Ph.D.	Syracuse University
Katie Eklund, Ph.D.	University of Missouri
Scott Frank, M.D., M.S.	Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine
Nicholas A. Gage, Ph.D.	University of Florida
Felipe Gonzalez Castro, Ph.D., MSW	Arizona State University College of Nursing and Health Innovation
Frank M. Gresham, Ph.D.	Louisiana State University
William L. Heward, Ed.D., BCBA-D	The Ohio State University
Stephen P. Hinshaw, Ph.D.	University of California, Berkeley; University of California, San Francisco
Robert H. Horner, Ph.D.	University of Oregon
Edward J. Kame'enui, Ph. D.	University of Oregon
Regina M. Koepp, PsyD, ABPP	Emory University - Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences
Jim Larson, Ph.D.	University of Wisconsin - Whitewater
Tamika P. La Salle, Ph.D.	University of Connecticut
John E. Lochman, Ph.D., ABPP	The University of Alabama
Celeste Malone, Ph.D., MS	Howard University
Jeffrey F. Milem, Ph.D.	University of California, Santa Barbara - Graduate School of Education
William Modzeleski	Sigma Threat Management Associates
Kamau Oginga Siwatu, Ph.D.	Texas Tech University
Elise T. Pas, Ph.D.	Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health
Thomas Power, Ph.D.	University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine
Wendy M. Reinke, Ph.D.	University of Missouri
Carol Robinson-Zanartu, Ph.D.	San Diego State University
Elina Saeki, Ph.D.	California State University, Los Angeles
Ronald G. Slaby, Ph.D.	Boston Children's Hospital
Jacqueline Sperling, Ph.D.	McLean Hospital/Harvard Medical School
Marcelo M. Suarez-Orozcom, Ph.D.	University of California, Los Angeles
Susan M. Swearer, Ph.D., LP	University of Nebraska - Lincoln
William G. Tierney, Ph.D.	University of Southern California
Carol Ann Tomlinson, Ed.D.	University of Virginia
Bradley White, Ph.D.	Virginia Tech
Roger P. Weissberg, Ph.D.	Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
Marleen Wong, Ph.D.	University of Southern California
James E. Ysseldyke, Ph.D.	University of Minnesota
Robert A. Zucker, Ph.D.	University of Michigan

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee: I'm Melissa Petrone Zavaras and I am testifying in opposition of HB20-1271 to "Repeal Red Flag Laws and Amend 72-Hour Hold." I was sitting at this same table one year ago in support of passing the Extreme Risk Protection Orders -- that was 41 weeks after my brother died by suicide. If the ERPO law would have been in effect on May 14, 2018, I wouldn't be here today, on behalf of my brother. Ninety-four weeks of pain and despair since my brother's death have yielded to 10 short weeks of hope and encouragement since this bill was signed into law January 1. As people fight to repeal this law, I am here again reliving memories that I wish I could erase. My brother had a mental health history and struggled with substance use. He was hospitalized on more than one occasion for suicidal attempts receiving the standard involuntary 72-hour hold. During the confusion and uncertainty, 72 hours didn't feel like enough time to gather a plan of support and treatment upon his release. Measuring someone's mental health is complex. And, it is dangerous and irresponsible to allow someone to be released too early. My brother's death -- by suicide -- by gunshot -- could have been prevented. Never mind the fact that he was able to purchase several guns with a mental health history. We knew my brother was not rational -- we knew he was in crisis -- we knew he possessed the unforgiving power of a gun -- and we knew there was no legal intervention. It's sickening when you fear the inevitable. When the dreaded 2 a.m. phone call becomes your reality. Suicide is the 7th leading cause of death in Colorado, and firearms are used in 50 percent of those suicides. You can't undo the permanence of a gun. This law is not about gun control. I think we can all agree that there are some people who cannot be trusted with guns. There is a misperception that ERPO is for those who are mentally ill. This law can protect everyone. This law is about putting more emphasis on responsible gun ownership rather than restricting guns outright. If you are a safe, non-threatening, responsible gun owner, this law won't remove your gun. People kill people and guns make that killing easier. ERPO is the much-needed government response in an era where we have sadly become accustomed to Colorado mass shootings and suicides. This isn't about prevention before we reach a crisis, it's about prevention in the midst of a crisis. This is personal for me. I couldn't do anything to save my brother the night he died, but I did my job fighting for this law one year ago, and I am here again today. I am counting on you to maintain this law; to help keep Colorado safe and spare other families what I lived through and what can be prevented in the future. Thank you for your consideration in opposition to this bill.

March 12, 2020

TO: Members, House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Peter Fogg , Colorado Faith Communities United to End Gun Violence (CFCU)

RE: HB20-1271: Repeal of ERPO and Changing the Standards for Involuntary Hold POSITION; Strongly Oppose

Greetings to Each of You:

My name is Peter Fogg. I am the Chair of CFCU's Advocacy Strategic Focus Area team, and on their behalf I want to express strong opposition to moving this bill forward. I had intended to testify in person today, but the advice of clinicians and health professionals world-wide to avoid environments such as those found in committee hearings at the Capital have led me reluctantly and with no pleasure to send you this letter instead. Thank you in advance for your consideration of its content today.

After less than three months of experience with ERPO implementation, and over two years of a public process to develop the legislation, we at CFCU find it an affront to the vast majority of Coloradans who support reasonable and fair regulations to reduce the epidemic of gun violence that this bill has been introduced. The sponsors and their supporters have decided that a procedure approved by 18 states which has proven to save lives and spare the collateral harm to others that result from firearm deaths and injuries is not even worthy of a sensible trial period in use. We all have heard their complaints and issues, culminating in the lawsuit filed by the Rocky Mountain Gun Owners et al in Denver Probate Court late last year, which has yet to be scheduled for hearing. Yet even the few uses of ERPO since January 1st of this year as reported by the media (eight in number) reveal that it has been used sparingly, wisely and fairly by law enforcement and the courts. This initial report card thus far dispels the contention that ERPO violates due process (which has not been found to be true by other states and the Colorado Attorney General), infringes on Constitutional rights (which are bestowed on all of us but can be suspended when they are violated or abused), and is a smoke screen for gun grabbing, which in itself impugns the true motives and intentions of those who worked on and supported passage of the bill. These are simply not acceptable arguments for overturning a

regulation designed to promote public health and safety. Some of those Coloradans who approve of firearms safety measures have been the victims of situations that ERPO can prevent, and some will undoubtedly be victims in the future if ERPO is repealed. As CFCU testified last week during the hearing before this committee of HB20-1276 (Domestic Violence Firearms Relinquishment), the sanctity and protection of life should be the highest priority in considering public firearm control measures, and should outweigh material, bureaucratic, ideological and other concerns that can be overcome with creative thinking, effort, collaboration and funding. Death and injury are permanent. We urge the Judiciary Committee to reject this bill. To paraphrase the late John Lennon (a victim of firearm violence himself), "All we are saying is give ERPO a chance." Thank you again for your consideration, and we hope you all and your families remain in good health during this COVID-19 event.

Sincere regards,

Peter L. Fogg
First Plymouth Congregation Church, UCC
Chair, Advocacy SFA Team – Colorado Faith Communities United

CONCERNING (1) REPEALING THE EXTREME RISK PROTECTION ORDER; AND (2) CHANGING THE STANDARD FOR AN INVOLUNTARY SEVENTY-TWO HOUR MENTAL HEALTH HOLD FROM "IMMINENT DANGER" TO "EXTREME RISK"

My name is Alana Smart and I'm testifying in strong opposition to HB 1271 as Co-Chair of Colorado Faith Communities United to End Gun Violence, a multi-faith Coalition of 42 congregations. <http://cfcu-co.org/>

Our thousands of members do not believe that thoughts and prayers are enough. We are called by our diverse faiths to take action to reduce the deaths and injuries caused by the *improper* use of firearms.

CFCU testified for ERPO both times it was introduced, because this bill is so urgently needed in Colorado.

- Colorado's suicide rate is now ranked sixth in the nation
- Firearms are used in over 50 % of completed suicides
- Almost 75% of firearm fatalities in 2018 were suicides

There's no question that firearm suicides can be prevented and removing *deadly means* is the first step in a comprehensive approach.

- CFCU offers QPR training within our congregations to teach the three steps anyone can learn to help prevent suicide.
- We also advocate for more behavioral health services and safe storage education.
- We regard ERPO as the suicide prevention tool of **last resort**—to be used when safe storage and voluntary removal are not possible

But we didn't stop with passage of ERPO. Our volunteers went on to research the lessons from other states with ERPO laws like Colorado's, that empower family and household members to file petitions. I sent you that research this morning.

- The clear conclusion is that ERPO can and does save lives, an estimated 10 - 20 per petition filed.
- There's even some evidence that mass shootings can be prevented.

it would be unconscionable to yank this life preserver after just two months of experience—what *exactly* is the problem this bill trying to solve, while putting so many lives at risk?

So let's talk about what's really needed now—a greater focus on effective implementation:

- more public education about ERPO by public health entities and non-profits engaged with suicide prevention.
- training for lay counselors on risk assessment, so they understand when it's appropriate to suggest ERPO
- And most importantly we need—champions—champions like Representatives Garnett and Sullivan, Senators Pettersen and Court, AG Phil Weiser and Sheriff Spurlock

As people of faith, we ask you to be a champion and join us in this lifesaving effort to reverse Colorado's rising suicide rate. Vote no for HB1271. Suicide rate is one Top 10 list none of us wants Colorado to be on.

Alana Smart, Co-Chair of Colorado Faith Communities United to End Gun Violence

