



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0916

August 12, 2019

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230, the Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell:

I applaud you for your recent comments on the need to consider legislation expanding gun background checks and red flag laws in the wake of the horrific shootings in El Paso and Dayton. I also urge you to work expeditiously to ensure that these important measures pass with strong bipartisan support.

Like you, I am a strong supporter of the 2nd Amendment, but our laws cannot be effective if there are gaping loopholes that allow criminals and deranged individuals to purchase firearms over the Internet or at gun shows without background checks.

According to a recent report, a staggering 22 percent of gun owners who purchased a firearm within the last two years did so without a background check. That's why I voted in favor of the *Bipartisan Background Checks Act* (H.R. 8), legislation to expand background checks for gun purchases and close these dangerous loopholes. It provides several common-sense exemptions, allowing the transfer of guns between close family members, law enforcement and hunters.

More than 90 percent of gun owners - and the rest of America - support this approach.

I would also like to see Congress consider red flag laws, also known as extreme-risk protection orders, like the one signed into law by then-Florida Gov. Rick Scott. Disturbing revelations about the shooters in El Paso, Dayton and Parkland highlight the need to allow courts to issue temporary orders barring individuals from possessing guns based on some showing of imminent danger or threats, while providing important due process protections.

Last year, Congress proved it is capable of coming together on a bipartisan basis to find meaningful ways to address senseless violence by passing the *Stop School Violence Act* and the *Fix NICS Act*. These new laws will help train students, school personnel and law enforcement to

more easily identify early warning signs of violence as well as improve the national database of people who are adjudicated mentally ill or otherwise disqualified from buying guns.

I appreciate your steadfast commitment to reducing gun violence, and I look forward to your prompt response on this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vern Buchanan", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Vern Buchanan
Member of Congress