



July 10, 2013

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski, (MD), Chairman  
The Honorable Richard C. Shelby, (AL), Ranking Member, and  
Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room S 128, The Capitol, Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy, (VT)  
The Honorable Tom Harkin, (IA)  
The Honorable Patty Murray, (WA)  
The Honorable Dianne Feinstein, (CA)  
The Honorable Richard J. Durbin, (IL)  
The Honorable Tim Johnson, (SD)  
The Honorable Mary L. Landrieu, (LA)  
The Honorable Jack Reed, (RI)  
The Honorable Mark L. Pryor, (AR)  
The Honorable Jon Tester, (MT)

The Honorable Tom Udall, (NM)  
The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen, (NH)  
The Honorable Jeff Merkley, (OR)  
The Honorable Mark Begich, (AK)  
The Honorable Christopher Coons, (DE)  
The Honorable Rod Cochran, (MS)  
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, (KY)  
The Honorable Lamar Alexander, (TN)  
The Honorable Susan M. Collins, (ME)  
The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, (AK)

The Honorable Lindsey Graham, (SC)  
The Honorable Mark Kirk, (IL)  
The Honorable Daniel Coats, (IN)  
The Honorable Roy Blunt, (MO)  
The Honorable Jerry Moran, (KS)  
The Honorable John Hoeven, (ND)  
The Honorable Mike Johanns, (NE)  
The Honorable John Boozman, (AR)

Dear Senators,

On behalf of the National Physicians Alliance (NPA), I am writing to express our strong opposition to any proposed cuts in funding for research to address the root causes and public health implications of gun violence in our country. The NPA is a 501(c) 3 organization representing physicians across medical specialties. We view gun violence as a public health crisis, appropriately addressed through a preventive framework, and we support a comprehensive approach to this issue.

The NPA supports robust, dedicated funding for the National Violent Death Reporting System and for the Centers for Disease Control to enable research on gun violence. As a nation we should embrace the quest for unbiased data that will inform wise strategy around gun violence prevention. Effective, economical policies require a grounding in evidence. We must take this responsibility seriously.

Past legislative riders have destructively blocked and defunded public health research on gun violence by the CDC, to our nation's shame. All public health and epidemiology work depends on robust data collection. We will be better able to address the country's epidemic of gun violence with improved data on gun-related deaths and injuries, gun ownership, access to guns, safety interventions, and the impact of many societal variables on the incidence of gun violence over time. We therefore call on legislators to vigilantly protect federal funding for research on gun violence as a public health issue, and for research on methods to improve gun safety.

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns. The National Physicians Alliance stands ready to contribute to ongoing policy deliberations. Please do not hesitate to be in touch.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cheryl Bettigole".

Cheryl Bettigole, MD, MPH  
President, National Physicians Alliance