

Congress of the United States

November 25, 2020

Joe Biden
President-elect
Wilmington, DE

Dear Mr. President-elect:

As leadership of the House Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, we congratulate you and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris on your victory and we look forward to working with you to build a safer and more secure America. While our communities have been devastated by the Coronavirus pandemic, we are also experiencing a silent public health crisis of gun violence. Despite the pandemic, gun violence is at unprecedented levels, with more than 570 mass shootings and more than 16,800 people killed this year. We will need respected and seasoned leaders within the Administration to address these crises.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is the first line of defense in the effort to end gun violence. Its leader should have extensive knowledge of the agency, its mission, and a commitment to gun violence prevention. There is no one better qualified than David Chipman. David has vast experience in all aspects of the ATF mission, including investigating firearms cases, as well as arsons that occurred in Black churches and bombings like Oklahoma City. He is prepared to lead the agency because of his significant experience developing programs and processes to prevent violent crime. David is uniquely positioned as a true firearms expert who has both the agency/law enforcement experience, and policy credentials to address gun violence in a meaningful way. He will lead the agency with integrity and fairness.

Like you, we believe gun violence is a public health emergency. No one knows this better than Dr. Joseph V. Sakran. A gun violence survivor and trauma surgeon, Joseph has dedicated his life to helping people and to promote healthy, safe communities. As “America’s doctor,” he would bring a strong medical and policy background that can help us address the dueling public health crises of Coronavirus and gun violence. Joseph has focused on public health issues over his entire professional career that is focused on prevention. This includes advising members of the U.S. Senate on coronavirus response, work place safety in the private sector, and development of educational curriculum around injury prevention. He has proven to be an excellent coalition builder and communicator. In these unprecedented times, he is ready to speak clearly and honestly with the American people about our health crises.

We know your deep and abiding commitment to ending gun violence in our communities. We hope you will consider Mr. Chipman and Dr. Sakran for their wealth of experience, knowledge, and trustworthiness. Our Nation has great challenges before it. However, we also have a great opportunity to make lasting change and save the lives of so many people in America. We commit to working with your Administration to build back better.

Sincerely,

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