



September 12, 2025

Dear Members of Congress:

Gun violence is an epidemic that no nation should accept as routine. Every moment of delay means more shattered families and stolen futures.

Tragically, a new school year is all too often marked by a new school shooting, and activists and elected officials across political affiliations have become victims of gun violence. This week, we saw two prominent examples, including a school shooting in Colorado that injured students, and the assassination of public figure Charlie Kirk at a university in Utah. Earlier this summer, we saw a series of politically motivated instances of gun violence including the shootings of multiple Minnesota state legislators and their family members. These acts of violence are unconscionable as they endanger our most sacred institutions, like schools and government. Schools and universities must always be safe spaces where young people can learn, thrive, and build their futures without the threat of violence or intimidation. Just yesterday, bomb threats made against Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) forced at least eight campuses into lockdown and spread fear among students, faculty, and staff. All these instances of violence threaten the health and stability of our nation and democracy. **That is why we are calling on Congress to immediately pass comprehensive gun safety reform. Our communities cannot bear another day of violence. We need reform now.**

For more than a century, the League of Women Voters has stood at the forefront of advocacy and education on policy issues, including gun safety reform. The League has studied the needs of communities hit hard by gun violence, gathering data, listening to survivors, and working locally in states like Florida, Illinois, and Colorado to craft policy solutions grounded in lived realities. We have long served as a trusted messenger for legislators, submitting detailed recommendations to Congress supporting laws like the *Bipartisan Safer Communities Act* and pushing for background check law reforms, assault weapon bans, and more. We also empower voters with nonpartisan information and defend democracy through policy engagement and accountability. When voices are needed in the halls of power, the League delivers with integrity and persistence, and our members' voices in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, with more than 750 affiliates — matter now more than ever.

Addressing gun violence as an epidemic requires common-sense reforms, including: (1) closing the gun show loophole, (2) providing universal background checks, and (3) banning assault weapons and placing limits on high-capacity ammunition magazine size. Legislation is necessary to significantly reduce gun violence and promote public safety and health.

Banning Assault Weapons and Limiting Magazine Size

Congress must pass legislation to ban all military-style semi-automatic assault weapons. Two-thirds of registered voters nationwide support a ban on the sale of assault weapons.¹ These devices allow shooters to fire numerous rounds in rapid succession without having to stop and reload. Assault weaponry has been a central part of the mass killings in schools and public meeting places in the last ten years. Furthermore, placing limits on magazine size is a common-sense solution to shootings that risk multiple lives. This limit should include magazines and other ammunition feeding devices that hold more than ten ammunition rounds.

Closing Gun Show Loopholes

¹ <https://thehill.com/homenews/news/457481-two-thirds-support-assault-weapons-ban-fox-news-poll/>



Only federally licensed firearms dealers are required to conduct background checks. However, only 40% of guns are sold through a federally licensed dealer.² Approximately 97% of voters want Congress to expand background checks to all gun sales, including gun owners and vendors.³ Background check expansions must be enacted immediately to reduce gun violence in our communities.

Providing Universal Background Checks

All firearm transfers should require background checks. In the 25 years since the Brady Bill, more than three million illegal firearm transfers have been prevented. In 2015 alone, an average of 619 individuals per day were deemed by law to be too dangerous to possess a gun and were blocked by this system. Background checks are conclusively effective and have saved countless lives. A November 2024 poll commissioned by Brady United, showed that 79% of 2024 voters supported background checks, including 73% of Trump voters.⁴

A Mandate for Reform

The *Bipartisan Safer Communities Act* passed in 2022 instituted some policies that have moved us closer to addressing this issue, but we must do more to protect our communities. With the recent attacks, we join a renewed call to pass comprehensive legislation.

There is no time to wait. Throughout the country, local and state League affiliates have held online and in-person meetings with their neighbors to discuss the crisis of gun violence. We will continue to testify before state legislatures and meet with community members to find common ground and determine policy solutions, but we urge Congress to pass common-sense and comprehensive gun reform legislation to curb gun violence now. The League will continue to demand less words and conversations and more action. The League implores Congress to bring bipartisan legislation that will close the gun show loophole, provide universal background checks, ban assault weapons, and place limits on high-capacity ammunition magazine size.

We look forward to working with you to move legislation forward and want to be a resource as you determine next steps. Please reach out to Rebecca Goldman, rgoldman@lwv.org with questions about the League's gun policy position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. Stewart".

Celina W. Stewart, Esq.
CEO
League of Women Voters of the United States

2 <https://www.aap.org/en/advocacy/state-advocacy/universal-background-checks-for-gun-purchases/?srsltid=AfmBOoplqI3eL4rKV2xCjlkBP1CPReT1DLQv5W0I3ML39RwEFpBZHw9H>

3 <https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/background-checks/universal-background-checks/>

4 https://brady-2-stage.s3.amazonaws.com/2411086_Brady-United_Election-Research_Memo_D5_EH-1.pdf