



February 22, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
United States Senate Majority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington D.C., 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives
1233 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. McConnell, Mr. Ryan, and Members of the 115th United States Congress:

We speak on behalf of the students who have perished before us. We stand with the students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas. We have accepted the responsibility to speak in the face of injustice and refuse to be silenced.

We represent the GLAAD Campus Ambassadors, a group of 130 students from colleges and universities in more than forty states nationwide. We strive to accelerate acceptance for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people in our communities and beyond. Together with GLAAD, the world's largest LGBTQ media advocacy organization, we amplify issues facing LGBTQ youth.

Make no mistake. Gun violence is an LGBTQ issue.

Since the fatal massacre at Columbine High School in 1999, we have witnessed more than 25 fatal school shootings in the United States. In total, there have been more people killed by gun violence in the last eighteen years than were killed by gun violence in the entire Twentieth Century. These numbers are at once shocking and unacceptable.

Our generation was born into the gunpowder left behind at Columbine, and we have witnessed an unprecedented progression of gun violence ever since. As students, we have learned about our national history in the same textbooks that have shielded us from stray bullets. We have grieved the tragic and untimely deaths of our young neighbors at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, witnessed the destruction of peace at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, and mourned the loss of our community at the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando.

We and all Americans deserve to live in a country where we need not fear going to school, practicing our religion, or celebrating with friends. Our childhood has been tainted with memories of hiding beneath desks while our society grows numb to tragedy and our representatives in Washington and in far too many state legislatures fail to act. The unique talents, passions, and abilities of our generation are too precious to be lost to gun violence.

We believe that everyone - regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, documentation, ability, or religion - has the right to exist in public without the fear of violence or harm. We refuse to accept the degradation of our society through senseless acts of unchecked gun violence and rampant domestic terror. We refuse to allow our lives to hang in the balance between gun lobbyist groups and our state and national elected leaders.

Death is not partisan. Preventing death should not be partisan. We urge you to protect our generation and the generations before and after us by enacting sensible gun reform that bans high powered assault weapons, bans bump stocks, requires universal background checks with no loopholes, and prohibits gun ownership for those convicted of domestic violence. This epidemic of mass murder has left our society in tatters, but these reforms would at least allow us to believe that the deaths before us have not been in vain, while serving the interest of protecting others from harm.

Every day, we are reminded of the young lives lost in Columbine, Virginia Tech, Newtown, Las Vegas, Sutherland Springs, San Bernardino, Orlando, Aurora, Charleston and Parkland. We are their voice now. We are their votes. We will remember.



campus ambassadors

Sincerely,

Aaron Giglio, CUNY Guttman Community College
Adrian Vega, Stanford University
Aisling McDermott, Le Moyne College
Andre Menchavez, University of Washington
Antonio Hernandez, University of Texas at Austin
Arlin Pedregon, University of New Mexico
Benjamin Webster, University of Maryland Eastern Shore
Bobby Brooks, Texas A&M University
Brianna Peralta, Avila University
Briannah Hill, University of Colorado
Brooklyn Riepma, The College of Idaho
C Mandler, Bard College
Carter Kohler, Ithaca College
Christina King, Boston College
Corinne Beverly, Virginia Commonwealth University
Daniel Segobiano, University of California Santa Cruz
Devin Outten, University of Maryland Eastern Shore
Donnie TC Denome, Pitzer College
Dorothy McIntush, Texas A&M University
Dylan Barker, Cleveland State University
Dylan Mattimore, University of California Riverside
Emma Loudon, Princeton University
Fausto Cardenas, University of Central Florida
Federico Yniguez, California State University Long Beach
Gabriel Brown, Marshall University
Gregory Gushiken, University of Hawaii at Manoa
Halley Fine, Colby College
Hannah Oliver, Central Washington University
Harold López, Florida International University
Isaac Kovnator, College of Staten Island
Jacob Sutherland, University of California San Diego
James Washburn, Cornish College of the Arts
Jason Gurevitch, Colby College
Jay Williamson, Ithaca College
Jayson Bijak, University of Houston
Jeremy Wang, Brown University
Jonathan Leggette, The Evergreen State College
Joon Park, Boston College
José Granados, University of Texas at Austin
Josiah Masie, University of Wyoming
Kali Villarosa, Skidmore College
Kathleen Warner, Point Loma Nazarene University
Kay Moran, University of Oklahoma
Kayla Inman, St. John's University
Kayla Santos, Rutgers University
Kylan Kester, Morehouse College
Leah Juliett, Western Connecticut State University
Leigh Fresina, Louisiana State University
Leo Richardson, Castleton University
Malachi Robinson, Montclair State University
Mark Young, Del Mar College
Mason Bernardo, Western Washington University
Matthew Keating, Harvard College
Megan Banning, Arizona State University
Mikaela Ashburn, Ohio University
Miles Joyner, University of South Carolina

Morgan Pasquier, University of Washington Tacoma
Nick Fiorellini, Bard College
Nicole Gemmiti, Berklee College of Music
Noah Perkins Deal, Prairie View A&M University
Olivia Zayas Ryan, Elon University
Owen Logios, University of Connecticut
Palmer Haasch, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
Prin Luis, University of South Florida
Ramenda Cyrus, Northwestern University
Rebecca Shoptaw, Yale University
Riley McGrath, Bridgewater State University
Rosemary Mulvey, Ithaca College
Rowan Berry, Rhode Island College
Rowan Hepps Keeney, Barnard College
Ryan Wagstaff, University of Washington
Savannah Green, Clark Atlanta University
Serena Garnett, Penn State University
Shayna Maci Warner, UCLA
Skylar Freels, University of Southern California
Skylar Rungren, University of Maine
Sophia Alexander, University of California Berkeley
Sorrel Rosin, University of Oregon
Sunanda Tamrakar, University of Pittsburgh
Taylor Dolniak, Point Park University
Teagan Rabuano, New York University
Tevis Robinson, Columbia University
Therynn Ibert, University of Houston
x rance, Ithaca College
Zakiyyah Forrest, Armstrong State University
Zipi Diamond, St. Olaf College