



May 2, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Bondi
U.S. Attorney General
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Bondi:

As members of the Democratic Women's Caucus, we are deeply disturbed by the Trump Administration's efforts to roll back the resources and protections that keep survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, harassment, dating violence, and stalking safe. In the United States, 1 in 4 women 18 years and older have experienced severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their life.¹ 81% of women have reported experiencing a form of sexual violence or assault in their lifetime,² and this danger is even more heightened when an abuser has a gun. Approximately 4,500,000 women alive today have been threatened by an intimate partner with a firearm, and almost 1,000,000 women alive today have been shot, or shot at, by an intimate partner.³ We strongly urge you to prioritize the safety of our communities -particularly survivors- who are especially vulnerable to violence, in any consideration of existing or future changes to laws regulating firearms.

On February 7, 2025, President Trump signed an Executive Order instructing you to reexamine "all orders, regulations, guidance, plans, international agreements, and other actions of executive departments and agencies" to determine if they violate the Second Amendment. In "compliance" with this Executive Order, the Department of Health and Human Services revoked former Surgeon General Vivek Murthy's advisory declaring gun violence a public health crisis, which was made in response to an increasing number of firearm-related injuries and deaths in the United States. Despite non-partisan healthcare experts agreeing that gun violence poses a public health crisis, the Administration arbitrarily chose to roll back this call for necessary measures like background checks, secure storage, investment in community violence intervention, and increased oversight of the gun industry, all of which would make immense

¹ National Domestic Violence Hotline. (n.d.). Domestic violence statistics.

<https://www.thehotline.org/stakeholders/domestic-violence-statistics/>

² Department of Justice. (2025, March 20). *Withdrawing the Attorney General's delegation of authority*. *Federal Register*, 90(55), 13080–13084. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/03/20/2025-04872/withdrawing-the-attorney-generals-delegation-of-authority>

³ Savage, C. (2025, March 19). *Trump administration moves to restore gun rights to nonviolent felons*. *The New York Times*. <http://nytimes.com/2025/03/19/us/politics/trump-gun-rights-convicts.html>

progress to protect millions of women who have experienced gun violence or threats to gun violence at the hands of an abusive partner.

The idea that individuals found to be dangerous by a court of law should not have access to a firearm is not partisan or novel. Since its passage in 1994, the *Violence Against Women Act* made a promise to survivors that their abusers, who were subject to domestic violence protection orders, could not access guns. This has remained a bipartisan ideal, upheld most recently in the Supreme Court case *United States v. Rahimi*, in which a conservative majority upheld a federal ban on the possession of a gun by someone who has been the subject of a domestic violence restraining order.

On March 20, 2025, the Department of Justice (DOJ) published an interim rule that would allow the U.S. Attorney General or another DOJ official to restore the gun rights of individuals with criminal convictions.⁴ It was reported that the DOJ is working to determine how many years need to elapse for domestic abusers to regain access to guns.⁵ This is not only unacceptable, it is a total betrayal of survivors. Women are five times more likely to be killed when their abuser has access to a gun, and rolling back this commonsense protection would put survivors at risk.⁶ This rule comes after the Administration fired Elizabeth G. Oyer, the former Pardon Attorney at the Department of Justice, over her recommendation to not restore the gun rights of actor Mel Gibson due to safety concerns regarding his domestic abuse misdemeanor charge.⁷ After she was fired, she began receiving letters from her former employer stating that she is not authorized to disclose information about her work to lawmakers in a blatant attempt to scare her into silence, and therefore scaring survivors into silence.⁸

Furthermore, we are concerned that President Trump endorsed H.R. 38, the *Constitutional Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act*.⁹ This bill would require all U.S. states to recognize concealed carry permits granted by the home state of the individual, regardless of their own standards and requirements. One study found that in states with weak permitting laws, violent crime rates were 13-15% higher.¹⁰ That increase in violent crime will spread across the country – and by definition includes intimate partner violence like sexual violence, threats of physical or sexual violence, psychological/emotional violence, and stalking.¹¹ This law would also allow abusers to move their weapons across state lines to states with firearm possession laws that are more lax than their own, enabling abusers to wield a weapon simply

4 Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence. (n.d.). Domestic violence & firearms.

<https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/who-can-have-a-gun/domestic-violence-firearms/>

5 National Sexual Violence Resource Center. (n.d.). *Statistics*. <https://www.nsvrc.org/statistics>

6 Lynch, S. N. (2025, April 7). *US marshals were mobilized to warn fired DOJ lawyer over congressional testimony, attorney says*. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-justice-dept-mobilized-armed-marshals-warn-ex-lawyer-over-congressional-2025-04-07/>

7 Elkind, E. (2025, January 8). *House GOP mounts Trump-backed push to expand concealed carry permits for millions of Americans*. Fox News. <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/house-gop-mounts-trump-backed-push-expand-concealed-carry-permits-millions-americans>

8 Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence. (n.d.). *Concealed carry*. <https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/guns-in-public/concealed-carry/>

9 National Institute of Justice. (n.d.). *Intimate partner violence*. U.S. Department of Justice. <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/crimes/violent-crimes/intimate-partner-violence>

10 Everytown for Gun Safety. (2022, May 10). *2020 brought highest rate of gun-related deaths in more than 25 years*. <https://www.everytown.org/press/2020-brought-highest-rate-of-gun-related-deaths-in-more-than-25-years/>

11 Oyer, E. G. (2025, April 7). *Statement before the House and Senate Judiciary Committees: Hearing on Restoring Accountability and Attacks on the Rule of Law*. <https://www.schiff.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/20250407-Liz-Oyer-Hearing-Statement-4.7.25.pdf>

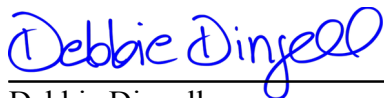
because they are in a different state. These potential public safety risks led to several law enforcement groups opposing the bill, citing that H.R. 38 would “severely erode public and officer safety.”¹²

Finally, we want to acknowledge the essential and unique role that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) plays in enforcing gun safety laws in the United States, to both prevent crime and create safer communities. Therefore, as the Administration considers the “reorganization” of federal agencies, we strongly urge that the ATF not be consolidated with any other subdepartment within the DOJ. The ATF has already faced chronic underfunding, and straining its resources even further would be a detriment to its ability to protect survivors, as they are the sole agency tasked with reducing gun violence.

We request that you cease efforts to roll back existing protections against gun violence and ensure that any future changes are evidence-based and consider the unique needs of survivors. We request a swift response to outline 1) the potential changes the Administration is considering as a result of its February EO 2) how the Administration intends to put the safety of survivors at the forefront of any policy related to firearm regulation, and 3) what resources the Administration intends to provide to staff at agencies who specifically support survivors to ensure that they are able to continue doing their essential work.

Additionally, we strongly encourage the Trump Administration to work closely with survivor advocacy organizations and victim service providers to formulate their policies based on the expertise of survivors and those who have dedicated their lives to supporting them.

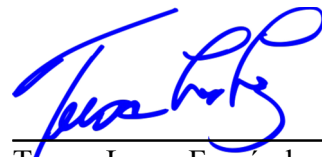
Sincerely,



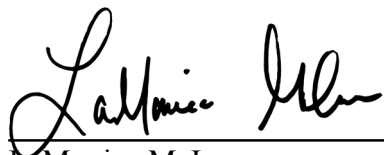
Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



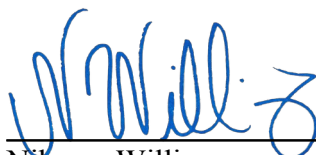
Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress



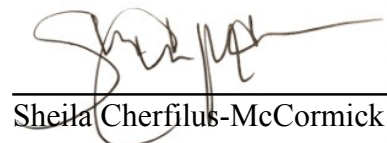
Teresa Leger Fernández
Chair



LaMonica McIver
New Member Liaison
Democratic Women's Caucus

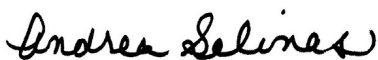


Nikema Williams
Chief Whip
Democratic Women's Caucus



Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress

¹² International Association of Chiefs of Police, Law Enforcement Action Partnership, National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives, National Black Sheriffs Association, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, & Prosecutors Against Gun Violence. (2025, March 25). *Statement of national law enforcement organizations on proposed concealed carry mandate* [Statement submitted to the House Judiciary Committee]. U.S. House of Representatives.
<https://docs.house.gov/meetings/JU/JU00/20250325/118065/HMKP-119-JU00-20250325-SD008.pdf>



Andrea Salinas
Congressional Hispanic
Caucus Liaison
Democratic Women's Caucus



Deborah K. Ross
Co-Chair
Policy Task Force
Democratic Women's Caucus



Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



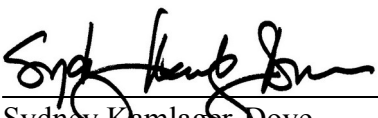
Joyce Beatty
National Leaders &
Advocacy Organizations
Liaison
Democratic Women's Caucus



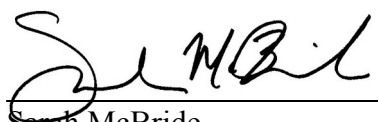
Melanie Stansbury
Co-Chair
Member Services Task Force
Democratic Women's Caucus



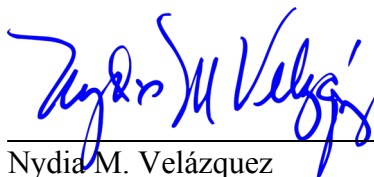
Norma J. Torres
New Democrat Coalition
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Sydney Kamlager Dove
Co-Chair
Policy Task Force
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Sarah McBride
Member of Congress



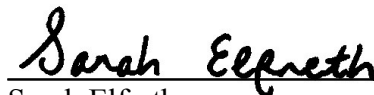
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Maxine Dexter
Member of Congress



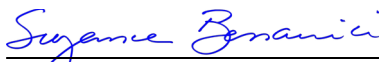
Delia C. Ramirez
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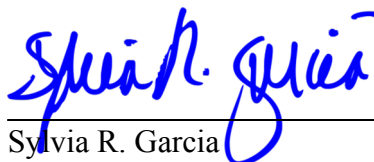
Sarah Elfreth
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



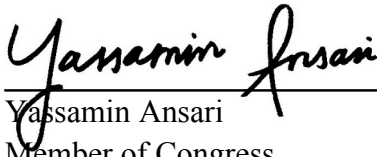
Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



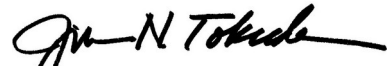
Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



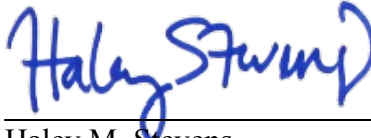
Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress



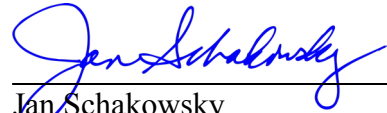
JM Tokuda
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Nanette Diaz Barragán
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Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
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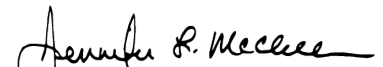
Julia Brownley
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Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress