



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 29, 2014

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****Note for Reporters and Editors: Information Regarding Friday Events at Senator Jeff Flake's Tucson and Phoenix Offices Included Below—Media Event Advisory Will Be Sent Today****

AS NEW POLL SHOWS BIPARTISAN MAJORITY OF ARIZONANS SUPPORT GUN SAFETY, ARIZONANS URGE SENATOR FLAKE TO PROTECT WOMEN FROM GUN VIOLENCE BY SUPPORTING BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR ALL GUN SALES

Days after Santa Barbara Shooting, Arizonans Call on Senator Flake to Support Reform, Cite Momentum for Reform in Arizona: Governor Brewer Recently [Vetoed Two Dangerous Gun Bills](#) and [Signed HB 2322, Life-Saving "Fatal Gaps" Mental Health Records-Reporting Bill](#)

[Poll Released Today by Everytown for Gun Safety](#) Shows 83 Percent of Arizonans—and 88 Percent of Women— Support Background Checks on All Gun Sales; More Than 65 Percent of Arizona Women Less Likely to Support a Candidate Who Opposes Background Checks

As [new polling](#) out today shows that a bipartisan majority of Arizonans support gun safety measures, Arizonans today urged Senator Jeff Flake to protect women from gun violence by supporting background checks on all gun sales. Just days after the Santa Barbara shooting that claimed the lives of six people and injured 13 – in which women were specifically targeted – Arizonans noted that [American women are 11 times more likely to be killed with a gun](#) than women in all other high-income countries and 57 percent of mass shootings involve domestic violence or violence against women. Background check laws work to prevent these harrowing statistics – in 16 states where background checks are required on all gun sales, 38 percent fewer women are shot to death by intimate partners. Arizonans also cited momentum for gun reform in the state with Governor Jan Brewer recently [vetoing two dangerous gun bills](#) and signing HB 2322, the life-saving "Fatal Gaps" mental health records-reporting bill into law, which Everytown and Moms Demand Action for Gun Safety worked to pass with overwhelming, bipartisan support from the state legislature.

[The poll](#), released today by Everytown for Gun Safety, shows that 83 percent of Arizonans—and 88 percent of Arizona women—support criminal background checks on all

gun sales. Results also show that over 65 percent of Arizona voters would be less likely to support a candidate who opposes background checks.

“In the wake of the horrific act of gun violence in Santa Barbara, it’s imperative that we recognize this moment as a call to action to protect women and kids from gun violence and prevent tragic mass shootings from continuing to happen in our communities,” said **Caren Teves, whose son Alex was murdered in the Aurora, Colorado movie theater shooting that claimed the lives of twelve people and injured 58 in 2012.** “Arizona state legislators and Governor Brewer implemented legislation to make sure we’re doing more to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people, and now it’s time for Senator Flake to stand with the 88 percent of women in Arizona who support background checks on all gun sales.”

“The tide is turning in Arizona when it comes to support for sensible gun laws—first with Governor Brewer’s veto of two dangerous gun bills, and now with the bipartisan support of the important Fatal Gaps law that will keep guns out of the hands of people with severe mental illnesses,” said **Kara Pelletier, Arizona State Chapter Lead for Moms Demand Action.** “Moms across Arizona stand with the community of Isla Vista, California in the wake of the shooting at UCSB that took the lives of six people—and we urge Senator Flake to, in turn, stand with us by supporting background checks that will help protect women from gun violence.”

“Arizona state lawmakers have taken important steps forward that reflect the will of the people in our state—and now we need Senator Flake’s leadership on the federal level to make background checks on all gun sales a reality,” said **Gerry Hills, the founder of Arizonans for Gun Safety.** “Time and time again we’ve seen tragedies happen without action from Congress, and I urge Senator Flake to help us take an important step toward stopping the bloodshed by supporting criminal background checks that will keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people.”

Information on Arizona’s Fatal Gaps Bill and Mental Health Reporting Nationwide

The Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, signed into law on November 30, 1993, requires that individuals pass a background check before purchasing a firearm from a federally licensed dealer. Once a purchaser receives approval from the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), the sale can proceed – a process that typically takes 90 seconds or less.

Since its inception in 1998, NICS has stopped more than 2.2 million gun sales to felons, domestic abusers, the severely mentally ill, and other dangerous people prohibited from having guns. But the background check system is only as good as the records that are submitted to it. If these records are not submitted by states, it can leave gaps in the system, and people like the shooter who killed 32 people at Virginia Tech in 2007—a man who was prohibited from buying guns due to mental illness, but whose record was never reported to NICS—can walk into a gun store, pass a background check, and buy a gun.

[HB 2322, Arizona’s Fatal Gaps Bill, which Everytown and Moms Demand Action worked to pass, will help close these fatal gaps in the system and keep guns out of dangerous hands](#) by requiring that Arizona submit records of individuals who are prohibited

from owning guns under federal law due to severe mental illness to NICS, ensuring they cannot pass a background check and buy a gun. With HB 2322, Arizona joins at least 17 other states that have enacted new record-sharing statutes or have amended existing law in significant ways.

**Information on Friday's Events at Senator Flake's Phoenix and Tucson Offices
(Separate Advisory Forthcoming):**

Phoenix:

What: Arizonans to Deliver Postcards to Senator Flake's Office, Call for Leadership
on Background Checks to Protect Arizona Women from Gun Violence
Who: Arizona Women, Families and Gun Violence Survivors
Where: Senator Jeff Flake's Phoenix Office
2200 East Camelback Road, Suite 120
Phoenix, AZ 85016
When: Friday, May 30 at 10:30 AM

Tucson:

What: Arizonans to Deliver Postcards to Senator Flake's Office, Call for Leadership
on Background Checks to Protect Arizona Women from Gun Violence
Who: Arizona Women, Families and Gun Violence Survivors
Where: Senator Jeff Flake's Tucson Office
6840 North Oracle Road, Suite 150
Tucson, AZ 85704
When: Friday, May 30 at 11:30 AM

About Everytown for Gun Safety

Everytown for Gun Safety is a movement of Americans fighting for common-sense policies that will reduce gun violence and save lives. Everytown is the largest gun violence prevention organization in the country with more than 1.5 million supporters including moms, mayors, survivors, and everyday Americans who are fighting for reforms that respect the Second Amendment and protect people. At the core of Everytown are Mayors Against Illegal Guns, founded in 2006 by former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and former Boston Mayor Tom Menino, and Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, a grassroots movement of American mothers founded on the day after Newtown. Learn more at www.everytown.org and follow us @Everytown

About Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America

Much like Mothers Against Drunk Driving was created to change laws regarding drunk driving, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America was created to build support for common-sense gun reforms. The nonpartisan grassroots movement of American mothers is demanding new and stronger solutions to lax gun laws and loopholes that jeopardize the safety of our children and families. Since its inception after the Sandy Hook Elementary mass shooting, Moms Demand Action has established a chapter in every state of the country and is part of Everytown for Gun Safety along with Mayors Against Illegal Guns.

Everytown is the largest gun violence prevention organization in the country with more than 1.5 million supporters including moms, mayors, survivors, and everyday Americans who are fighting for reforms that respect the Second Amendment and protect people. For more information or to get involved visit www.momsdemandaction.org. Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/MomsDemandAction or on Twitter at @MomsDemand

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