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STATEMENTS ON UNANIMOUS SUPREME COURT DECISION TODAY IN *UNITED STATES V. CASTLEMAN* TO PROHIBIT DOMESTIC ABUSERS FROM HAVING GUNS

Decision Rejects Gun Lobby Argument to Arm Dangerous People; Protects Women and Children

The Supreme Court ruled unanimously today in *United States v. Castleman* that federal law bars people convicted of misdemeanor domestic abuse charges from having guns. [The Court's opinion](#), by Justice Sotomayor, will help protect abused women and children from gun violence. [Mayors Against Illegal Guns submitted an amicus brief](#) in this case.

"Women and children are safer today because of the decision by the Supreme Court to enforce the federal law barring domestic abusers from possessing guns as it was intended," said Mayors Against Illegal Guns Chairman John Feinblatt. "We know that access to a gun is what often turns domestic violence into domestic homicide – in fact, the presence of a gun in a domestic violence situation makes it five times more likely that a woman will be killed. The court wisely rejected the attempts by the Washington gun lobby to arm the very people who should not have guns in their hands and instead, stood with women, children and the law enforcement officers who protect them."

"The stakes were high in this case – had the court ruled in the other direction, tens of thousands of dangerous convicted batterers would be legally allowed to possess guns once again – and it's all part of a concerted effort by the gun lobby, through our courts and in our state legislatures, to make it easier for domestic abusers to have guns," said Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America founder Shannon Watts. "Instead, the court agreed with chiefs of police of more than 50 major American cities, leading domestic violence groups and the American Academy of Pediatrics that these criminals should not be armed. American mothers are grateful that the Supreme Court voted to keep us and our children safe."

The case involved a convicted domestic abuser and gun trafficker named James Castleman. Castleman was convicted under Tennessee law for a misdemeanor domestic assault on the mother of his child. Seven years later, federal agents discovered that Mr. Castleman was illegally trafficking guns. Federal law prohibits gun possession by anyone convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence, and Castleman was charged with illegal gun possession because of his conviction for battering the mother of his child.

Castleman, backed by an [amicus brief by the Gun Owners of America](#), argued that his conviction for domestic assault should not count as a prohibiting misdemeanor crime of domestic violence because only misdemeanors involving “strong or violent” force should prohibit gun possession. The Supreme Court unanimously rejected his argument.

Research on [the role of guns in domestic violence](#) situations has found that:

- On average, 46 American women are shot to death each month by current or former intimate partners.
- The presence of a gun in a domestic violence situation makes it five times more likely that the woman will be killed.
- Over the past 25 years, more intimate partner homicides in the U.S. have been committed with guns than with all other weapons combined.
- In 2011, 44% of women murdered with guns in the U.S. were killed by current or former intimate partners.
- More than half of mass shootings involve domestic violence. In at least 57% of the mass shootings between January 2009 and September 2013, the shooter killed a current or former intimate partner or family member.
- Women in the U.S. are 11 times more likely to be murdered with guns than women in other high-income countries.
- In states that require background checks for all handgun sales, there are 38% fewer women murdered by intimate partners.

About Mayors Against Illegal Guns

Since its creation in April 2006, Mayors Against Illegal Guns has grown from 15 mayors of major American cities to more than 1.5 million grassroots supporters – making us the largest gun violence prevention advocacy organization in the country. The bipartisan coalition, founded by former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and former Boston Mayor Thomas Menino, has united mayors, gun violence survivors and everyday Americans around these common goals: protecting communities by holding gun offenders accountable; demanding access to crime gun trace data that is critical to law enforcement efforts to combat gun trafficking; and working with legislators to fix weaknesses and loopholes in the law that make it far too easy for criminals and other dangerous people to get guns. The group recently joined forces with [Moms Demand Action](#), the leading grassroots movement of American mothers working to prevent gun violence. Learn more at www.mayorsagainstillegalguns.org or on Twitter @DemandAction.

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. In just one year, the organization has more than 150,000 members with a chapter in every state in the country. The group recently joined forces with [Mayors Against Illegal Guns](#), the largest gun violence prevention organization in the country. For more information or to get involved visit www.momsdemandaction.org. Follow us on Facebook www.facebook.com/MomsDemandAction or on Twitter @MomsDemand.