



April 3, 2017

Dear Members of the U.S. Senate:

We implore you to block the confirmation of Judge Neil Gorsuch as the United States Supreme Court Justice. Despite the fact that over 100,000 Americans are killed or injured by guns annually, the corporate gun lobby has chosen Judge Gorsuch to push its agenda to oppose and repeal gun safety laws to put guns everywhere in America,

One year ago, Senator Majority Leader [Mitch McConnell blocked the confirmation hearing for Judge Merrick Garland](#) stating that he “can’t imagine that a Republican majority in the United States Senate would want to confirm, in a lame duck session, a nominee opposed by the National Rifle Association [and] the National Federation of Independent Businesses.” The National Rifle Association (NRA) effectively blocked Judge Garland’s confirmation during Barack Obama’s Presidency and it worked to influence the elections with a \$30 million investment to elect Donald Trump for President.

And now, the NRA is throwing its full support for Neil Gorsuch. The NRA stated that [Judge Gorsuch “has an impressive record that demonstrates his support for the Second Amendment”](#). According to the NRA, “During his tenure on the Tenth Circuit, Gorsuch has demonstrated his belief that the Constitution should be applied as the framers intended. To that end, he has supported the individual right to self-defense. Specifically, he wrote in an opinion that “the Second Amendment protects an individual’s right to own firearms and may not be infringed lightly.” In addition, it was recently reported that the [NRA foundation launched a \\$1 million television advertising campaign](#) to help confirm Judge Gorsuch.

During Judge Gorsuch’s confirmation hearing last week, Senator Diane Feinstein asked Judge Gorsuch if he agreed with Justice Antonin Scalia’s statement that “the Second Amendment was not unlimited,’ and that “‘Weapons that are more useful in military service, M-16 rifles and the like, may be banned without infringing on the Second Amendment.’ and his response was evasive but telling. He responded that the “Heller makes clear the standard that we judges are supposed to apply. The question is whether it is a gun in common use for self-defense, and that may be subject to reasonable regulation. That’s the test as I understand it. There is lots of ongoing litigation about which weapons qualify under those standards. And I can’t prejudge that litigation.”

We have significant concerns with Judge Gorsuch's responses to Senator Feinstein's questions. According to [Adam Skaggs](#), a litigation director of the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence and Americans for Responsible Solutions, "the Supreme Court in *Heller* expressly declined to answer many questions about the Second Amendment, so the pledge to apply *Heller* faithfully doesn't say much if anything about how the nominee would rule on numerous important questions that *Heller* explicitly left open – like whether churches and grocery stores can prohibit firearms, whether it violates the Second Amendment to require background checks on gun sales or whether the Constitution includes a sacrosanct right to walk on public streets carrying an assault rifle in plain view." and "the reference to guns "in common use" echoed a test that gun lobby lawyers are pushing aggressively in a range of lawsuits that could have profound – and negative – public safety effects. Under the "common use" standard proposed by the gun lobby, once any gun or accessory achieves market share sufficient to make it "common," it becomes constitutionally immune from regulation – no matter how many lives could be saved by regulating it."

With declining number of households with adults owning firearms, the corporate gun lobby has worked for decades to rebrand military-style assault weapons as modern sporting rifles for the purpose of increasing its market share. Any reasonable person knows that a weapon that can kill 20 children and six educators in a matter of minutes in an elementary school or kill and injure over 100 people in a nightclub is far from common. Yet, the corporate gun lobby will continue to file lawsuits against states that banned or regulated assault weapons and high capacity magazines after the Sandy Hook tragedy.

Judge Gorsuch's history of standing with corporations, his use of the gun lobby's language, and his elusive and evasive responses to questions regarding the Second Amendment, demonstrate that he will likely stand with the corporate gun lobby and not with the Americans who have been killed or injured by weapons of war. As the corporate gun lobby continues to push the courts to overturn the gun safety laws across this nation, we need a Supreme Court Justice who shares Justice Scalia's view that "the Second Amendment rights are not absolute" and the amendment does not grant the "right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner whatsoever for whatever purpose".

The framers of our Constitution expected the Government to adapt the Constitution therefore the Constitution has been ratified 27 times since 1787. Clearly, the Second Amendment rights are not absolute and we need Supreme Court Justices to adequately interpret the Second Amendment to address the modern public safety needs in the new millennium. We no longer live in an era of muskets, gunpowder, and militias.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Newtown Action Alliance

African American Ministers In Action (AAMIA)

Alliance for Gun Responsibility

Arizonans for Gun Safety

Battle Born Progress

CeaseFire Pennsylvania

Chicago Survivors

Coalition Against Gun Violence, Santa Barbara

Colorado Ceasefire Legislative Action

Connecticut Against Gun Violence

Family and Children's Ministries, Disciples Home Missions, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Franciscan Action Network

Gays Against Guns
Global Justice Institute
God Before Guns
Greenwich Council Against Gun Violence
Gun Lobby Watch
GunControlToday
Hoosiers Concerned About Gun Violence
Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence
Jessi's Message
Maine Gun Safety Coalition
Michigan Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Nebraskans Against Gun Violence
New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence
New Yorkers Against Gun Violence
North Carolinians Against Gun Violence
Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence
One Pulse for America
Pride Fund to End Gun Violence
Progressive Congress Action Fund
Protect Minnesota
Reston-Herndon Alliance To End Gun Violence
Rhode Island Coalition Against Gun Violence
States United to Prevent Gun Violence
Stop Handgun Violence
The Campaign to Keep Guns Off Campus
Women Against Gun Violence
Women's Voices Raised for Social Justice

AND Families of Victims of Gun Violence and Gunshot Survivors:

ARIZONA:

Caren Teves, Direct Family Member of Alexander C Teves, 24 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Phoenix
Pat Maisch, Witness who Stopped Gabby Gifford's Shooter, Tucson

CALIFORNIA:

Megan Ackerman, Gunshot Survivor, shot at age 14, Los Angeles
Mysti Knight, Direct Family Member of Phillip Levi Jr, 22 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Oakland
Anita Wills, Direct Family Member of Kerry Baxter Junior, 19 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Oakland
Theresa Fuller, Direct Family Member of a William C. Woodall, 57 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Sacramento
Tina Meins, Direct Family Member of Damian Meins, 58 y.o. Killed by a Gun, San Bernardino
Manjula Stokes, Gunshot Survivor & a Direct Family Member of Vinette, 67 y.o Injured by a Gun,
Woodland Hills

CONNECTICUT:

Kristin Froehlich, Direct Family Member of David Froehlich, 22 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Georgetown
David & Francine Wheeler, Parents of Ben Wheeler, 6 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Sandy Hook

FLORIDA:

Cynthia A. Kennon, Gunshot Survivor & Direct Family Member of Mary A Kennon, 26 y.or Killed by a Gun, Satellite Beach

GEORGIA:

Mike Fecht, Direct Family Member of Shani Fecht, 40 y.o. Killed by a Gun Atlanta

ILLINOIS:

Marsha Lee, Direct Family Member of Thomas Lee, 20 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Blue Island
Annette Nance-Holt, Direct Family Member of Blair D. Holt, 16 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Chicago
Camisha Pryor, Direct Family Member of Kaylyn Pryor, 20 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Chicago
Lamar Johnson, Direct Family Member of Timothy Wooten, 25 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Chicago
Maria Pike, Direct Family Member of Ricky Pike, 24 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Chicago
Mary Long, Direct Family Member of Eric Williams, 25 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Chicago
Pamela Bosley, Direct Family Member of Terrell Bosley, 18 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Chicago
Stephanie Brown, Direct Family Member of Darius Brown, 13 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Chicago
Tymeka Woods, Direct Family Member of Michael Flournoy, 16 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Chicago
Lutrice Boyd, Direct Family Member of Frederick J. Giles III, 21 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Chicago
Mary Kay Mace, Direct Family Member of Rynne Mace, 19 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Petersburg

INDIANA:

Stephen Miller, Direct Family Member of Tom Miller, 20 y.o. Killed by a Gun, South Bend

KANSAS:

LaTonya Boyd, Direct Family Member of Tyasha McNair, 21 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Topeka

KENTUCKY:

Haley Rinehart, Direct Family Member of Eli Parker, who was injured by a gun at age 4, Bowling Green

MAINE:

Judi & Wayne Richardson, Parents of a Darien Richardson, 25 y.o. Killed by a Gun, South Portland

MARYLAND:

Dorothy Paugh, Direct Family Member of Peter Lapa-Lilly, 25 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Nottingham

MASSACHUSETTS:

Nicholas Payne, Direct Family Member of Rebecca Payne, 22 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Boston

MINNESOTA:

Rachael Joseph, Direct Family Member of Shelley Joseph-Kordell, 56 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Minneapolis

NEW HAMPSHIRE:

Clai Lasher-Sommers, Gunshot Survivor, shot at age 13, Westmoreland

NEW MEXICO:

Joan Shirley, Direct Family Member of Kevin Scott Shirley, 17 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Sandia Park

NEW YORK:

Ruth and Clare Senchyna, Direct Family Members of Camilo Senchyna Beltran, 26 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Albany

Natasha Christopher, Direct Family Member of Akeal Christopher, 15 y. o. Killed by a Gun, Brooklyn

Shenee Johnson, Direct Family Member of Kedrick Ali Morrow Jr, 17 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Medford

Kim Russell, Gunshot Survivor, New York

Tom Campbell, Direct Family Member of John J Campbell, 50 y.o. Killed by a Gun, New York City

Marie Delus, Direct Family Member of Pierre-Paul and Jean-Paul Jr Killed by Guns, Queens

NORTH-KIVU PROVINCE:

Gerlance Musavuli, Gunshot Survivor & a Direct Family Member of Victims Killed by Guns in Beni and Luberto Territories, Butembo

OHIO:

Khary Penebaker, Direct Family Member of Joyce Penebaker, 27 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Cincinnati

SOUTH CAROLINA:

Rev. Sharon Risher, Direct Family Member of Mrs. Ethel Lee Lance, 70 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Charleston

Barbara Stowe, Direct Family Member of Patricia Springer, 39 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Greer

TEXAS:

Joy Hermansen McGaugh, Direct Family Member of Tom Hermansen, 68 y.o. Killed by a Gun, San Antonio

VIRGINIA:

Andy & Barbara Parker, Parents of Alison Parker, 24 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Smith Mountain Lake

Jacqueline Minifield.Brown, Direct Family Member of D'Londre Minifield, 20 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Winchester

Jeanette Richardson, Direct Family Member of Patrick Wyatt McKinley, 18 y.o. Killed by a Gun, Newport News