

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 4, 2017

The Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
H-310 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable José Serrano
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Carter
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Homeland Security
2006 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Homeland Security
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Culberson, Ranking Member Serrano, Chairman Carter, and Ranking Member Roybal-Allard:

As you begin work on fiscal year 2018 appropriations legislation for both Commerce, Justice, and Science as well as Homeland Security, we urge you to give the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) the authority to prohibit suspected terrorists from purchasing firearms and explosives by closing a gaping loophole in our nation's homeland security.

Federal law currently designates nine broad categories of people as dangerous enough to bar them from purchasing or owning firearms. Astonishingly, suspected terrorists on the FBI Terrorist Watchlist are not one of those categories. Quite simply, this means that an individual can be considered such a substantial threat to the national security of the United States that the FBI prohibits them from boarding a plane, yet they still have the ability to easily and legally purchase a semiautomatic weapon.

From the terror attacks in Paris, San Bernardino and Charleston in 2015 to Orlando in 2016 and Kansas City in 2017, terrorists both foreign and domestic are increasingly using firearms to carry out their attacks. Congress has a responsibility to do all it can to keep firearms out of the hands of terrorists. A recent Government Accountability Office investigation found that individuals on the Terrorist Watchlist attempted to purchase guns from American dealers at least 2,233 times between 2004 and 2014, and they were successful in 2,043 or 91% of those times.

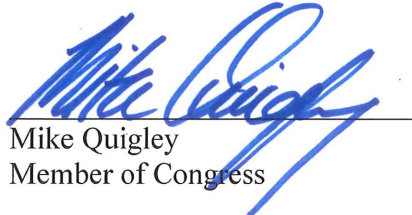
The American people, gun owning and not, overwhelmingly support responsible, common-sense gun safety reforms. This policy change, first proposed by President George W. Bush's administration, is the definition of a responsible, common-sense reform. A 2013 survey found that 80% of non-NRA gun owners and 71% of NRA gun owners support prohibiting people on the Terrorist Watchlist from obtaining guns.

Closing this loophole is a simple, responsible, and straightforward public safety measure. We urge you to seize on this critical opportunity to protect the American people and the national security of the United States. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress



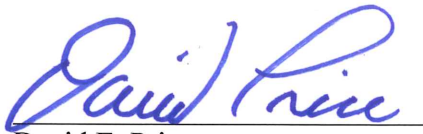
Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



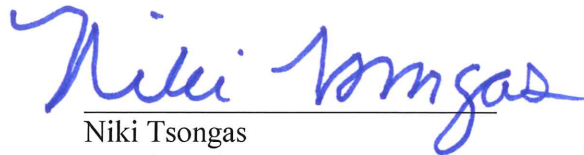
Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



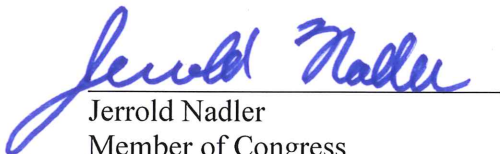
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



David E. Price
Member of Congress



Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress



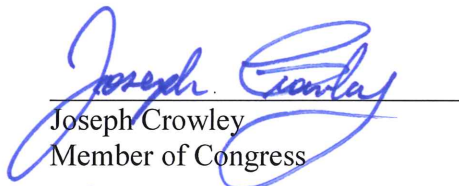
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



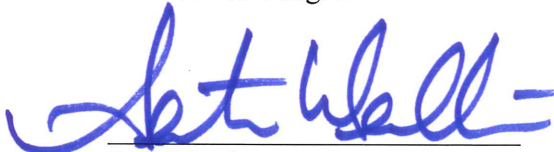
Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



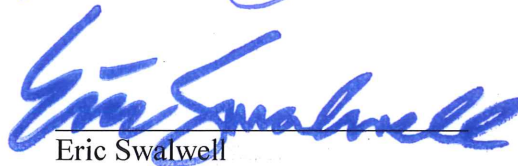
Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



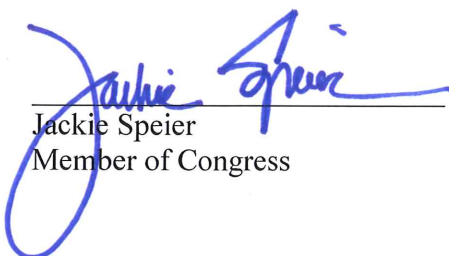
Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



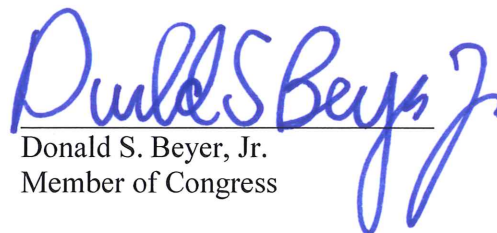
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



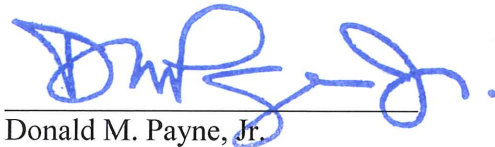
Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer, Jr.
Member of Congress



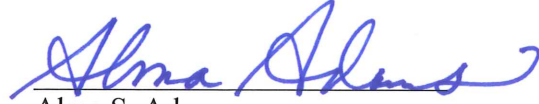
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



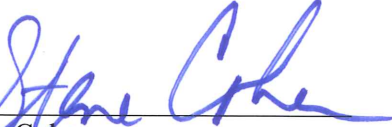
Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



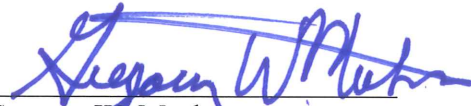
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress




Alma S. Adams
Member of Congress



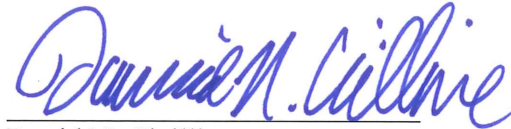
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



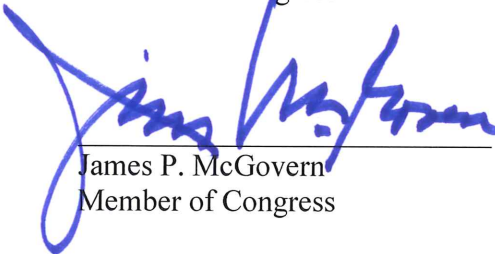
Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



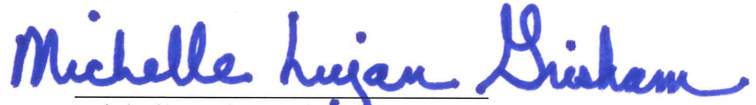
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



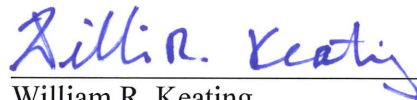
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



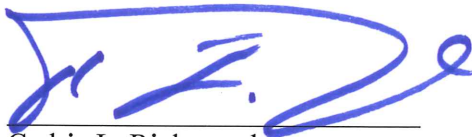
Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress



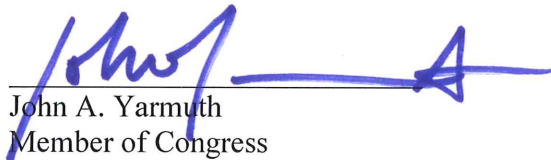
André Carson
Member of Congress



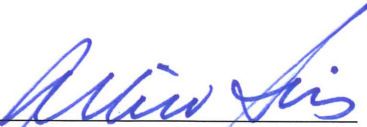
William R. Keating
Member of Congress



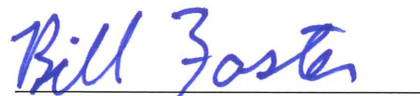
Cedric L. Richmond
Member of Congress



John A. Yarmuth
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress



Bill Foster
Member of Congress

Val B. Demings

Val Butler Demings
Member of Congress

Ed Perlmutter

Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress

Ruben J. Kihuen

Ruben J. Kihuen
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Nanette Diaz Barragan

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Josh Gottheimer

Josh Gottheimer
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John Garamendi

John Garamendi
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Darren Soto

Darren Soto
Member of Congress