



To: José Diaz-Balart, Savannah Guthrie, Lester Holt, Rachel Maddow, and Chuck Todd, NBC News

Re. Gun Violence and the Presidential Debates

With the first debate of the 2020 presidential cycle rapidly approaching, we are writing to urge you to prioritize the most important issue to many American voters — gun violence prevention. The 2018 midterm elections clearly demonstrated this, as voters ushered in a wave of gun violence prevention champions. Poll after poll shows that this issue is consistently top of mind for voters, and fear of school shootings was the number one issue driving turnout amongst young voters, who voted in record numbers during the last cycle. And the issue proved to be of top importance to candidates, as well - [a Reuters analysis](#) found that nearly 80 percent of newly elected Democrats in 2018 included gun safety in their campaign platforms, far beyond the proportion of Democratic Congressional candidates who did so just two years earlier.

Polling today clearly demonstrates that attention to the issue has not faded. A recent [CNN/Des Moines Register/Mediacom poll in Iowa](#) found that more than 60 percent of respondents considered restoring a ban on assault-style weapons to be a “must-have” position for their chosen candidate. A [CBS News/YouGov battleground tracker poll](#) found that gun policy was the third most important issue Democratic voters want to hear the candidates talk about, trailing only health care and jobs/economy, and that same poll found that 62 percent of Democrats “must hear” a candidates’ gun reform policies before voting for them. And [more and more candidates](#) have placed a priority on bold, detailed policy plans to combat gun violence.

With this in mind, we call on you, the moderators of next week’s debate, to ask strong, detailed questions on gun reform to the Democratic presidential candidates. With so many candidates - not to mention the American public - united on policies such as expanded background checks and extreme risk laws, these questions should go deeper on policy and plans.

Please consider the following questions:

- 1) Every day, on average, 100 people are shot and killed in the United States. If those trends continue, by the time your first 100 days in office are complete, more than 10,000

people across this country will have been killed by gun violence. What actions would you take to address gun violence in the first 100 days of your administration?

- 2) Mass shootings shock the American consciousness and dominate our headlines, while everyday gun violence rarely elevates to the national stage. What would you do to protect disproportionately impacted Americans, many of whom live in communities where they aren't safe to walk down the street? And what specific plans do you have to tackle everyday gun violence, in communities of color, the LGBTQ community, hate crimes, domestic violence, and those who die by suicide?
- 3) Leading causes of death in our country, including car crashes and kidney disease, are given substantial attention and funding from the federal government to study and address the causes of the disease and potential cures. Do you consider gun violence to be a public health epidemic on that same scale, and if so, how would you combat the crisis taking a public health approach?
- 4) In response to high-profile school shootings over the past few years, including but not limited to the February 14, 2018 shooting in Parkland, FL, there have been a range of proposed policy solutions to address the issue. In Florida, a recently passed bill would authorize arming school teachers in the classroom. Do you believe arming teachers is the correct solution, or do you see other policies as more effective at protecting our students?
- 5) There is broad national support for many proposed solutions to our gun violence epidemic, such as universal background checks, banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, and extreme risk laws, and we know the changes that should be enacted. With most Americans in agreement as to these solutions, why do you feel no progress has been made?

Thank you for your time and efforts, and we look forward to working with you throughout the election season.

Best,

Kris Brown, President
Brady