

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
290 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

October 8, 2020

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Chairman Graham, and Ranking Member Feinstein,

As organizations working to strengthen public safety laws across the country, we are coming together to urge you against rushing through the nomination of Amy Coney Barrett to the United States Supreme Court in the midst of an ongoing national election.

The Supreme Court already includes four justices who have publicly indicated an eagerness to expand the meaning of the Second Amendment in a way that is at odds with over two hundred years of American jurisprudence and long traditions of gun regulations, contradicts the meaning and purpose of the Second Amendment, and could significantly undermine gun safety laws enacted by democratically-elected legislatures across the country. This unsupported interpretation of the Constitution is not only at odds with the Framers' vision, but with the overwhelming majority of American people who want elected officials to enact evidence-based gun safety laws to address the gun violence public health crisis. Therefore, we fear that rushing this nomination would force a dangerous "guns everywhere" agenda on the country — an agenda that your constituents have repeatedly rejected at the ballot box.

A Court that adopts an extreme and unbounded view of the Second Amendment puts nearly every gun safety law at risk, including laws requiring background checks on all gun sales, common sense restrictions on open carry at peaceful protests or polling locations, and countless other measures designed to ensure guns are possessed responsibly and not used to intimidate, harm, and divide us. Confronting the gun violence in American cities that has been exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic requires a comprehensive approach, including funding community-based violence intervention programs and enacting evidence-based gun safety laws that stem the flow of illegal guns into our communities. By further deregulating the gun industry and removing safety checks on firearm sales, thousands more Americans would lose their lives to gun violence, with Black and Brown communities closest to the every-day tragedy of gun violence experiencing the greatest losses. This unsupported reading of the Second Amendment could also give license, if not authority, for the armed extremist groups causing such unrest and bloodshed on our streets today.

A Supreme Court that adopts an expansive view of the Second Amendment could strike down laws that have proven critical in reducing the horrors of cyclical retaliatory gun violence and of mass shootings. Anti-gun

trafficking laws, gun dealer regulations, the federal limits on interstate sales of handguns, and restrictions on sales of handguns to minors would all be at risk under a more expansive interpretation of the Second Amendment. State laws restricting assault weapons and high-capacity magazines would also be in jeopardy. The results would make mass shootings deadlier and place survivors of everyday gun violence in even greater danger.

This kind of extreme and expansive reading of the Second Amendment could undermine the very foundations of our background check system by eliminating laws designed to prevent the dangerous and irresponsible use of guns. Gutting existing protections against domestic abusers obtaining firearms would put millions of American women in danger. Eliminating secure storage laws would leave children at risk of accessing unlocked guns found in the home and allow individuals at risk of harming themselves or others to access lethal means. Even while facing these devastating consequences, the Court could further expand the right of armed self-defense to the point where guns are everywhere and people are less safe than ever before.

Simply put: pushing through a nominee who may support the adoption of a radically dangerous interpretation of the Second Amendment would undermine the will and safety, health, and well-being of all American people, including the constituents you represent.

We urge you to honor Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's "most fervent wish" to be replaced by the new President with a thorough confirmation process that pays tribute to her enduring contribution to the Supreme Court and the lives of all Americans.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

Battle Born Progress

Brady

The Campaign to Keep Guns Off Campus

CeaseFirePA

Chi-Town GVP Summit

Coalition to Stop Gun Violence

Connecticut Against Gun Violence

Community Justice Action Fund

Delaware Coalition Against Gun Violence

Everytown for Gun Safety

Gays Against Guns

Giffords: Courage to Fight Gun Violence

Gun Violence Prevention Action Committee IL

Gun Violence Prevention PAC IL

Guns Down America

GunSense New Hampshire

GunSense Vermont

Hoosiers Concerned About Gun Violence

Maine Gun Safety Coalition

March For Our Lives

Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

National Council of Jewish Women

Nebraskans Against Gun Violence

New Yorkers Against Gun Violence

Newtown Action Alliance

North Carolinians Against Gun Violence

Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence

States United to Prevent Gun Violence

Stop Handgun Violence

Team ENOUGH

Union of Reform Judaism

Woman's National Democratic Club (WNDC)

Youth Over Guns

cc: Members of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary