

May 2024

Dear Senator Baker,

As a Catholic, I value the dignity of every human life, and yet in the country that proclaims “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” for all, lives are taken tragically and needlessly through gun violence every day. The statistics from Everytown USA present a sobering reality. As of February 2023, communities across America suffered 200 firearm casualties daily with 120 resulting in firearm deaths.<sup>1</sup>

Suicides, homicides, and mass shootings shatter the peace and security of residential and rural communities in cities both large and small at a rate 26 times higher than other high-income nations.<sup>2</sup> Schools, Houses of Worship, and Grocery Stores seek to add layers of protection in places that once were considered safe and secure. More troubling, the leading cause of death for children and teens in the United States is now firearms.<sup>3</sup>

Although there is public support for gun violence legislation, in many states, including Pennsylvania, there seems to be no evidence among our legislative leaders to listen to the voices of their constituents on this issue and there seems to be no will to make the necessary changes happen.

Four Bills are currently waiting to be scheduled for a hearing in the Pennsylvania Senate by the Judiciary Committee: H.B. 1018 Extreme Risk Protection Orders and H.B. 714 Universal Background Checks. Neither of these two bills is an infringement on responsible gun ownership. In fact, any responsible gun owner would want to see some guardrails put into place that would protect the lives of innocents and loved ones. Also, H.B. 777 Ghost Gun Ban and H.B. 1629 Safe Storage are waiting for a vote. Recently a teen from Levittown murdered his family members with a ghost gun. Impossible to trace because it had no serial numbers, and there was no way to tell the origin of the gun. Almost weekly, we learn of an accidental death that occurred because a gun in the house was not safely stored. How many innocent lives do we have to lose before we choose to act? These laws make common sense.

I am asking you, Senator Baker, to reflect on your faith and how it calls us to cherish life. Senator, please schedule the hearing on these four Bills: H.B. 1018, H.B. 714, H.B. 777, and H.B. 1629. They will make a safer Pennsylvania for all.

Sincerely,

<sup>1</sup> Everytown Research & Policy, “Gun Violence in America,” Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, 13 February 2023, <https://everytownresearch.org/report/gun-violence-in-america/>.

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<sup>3</sup> “Statistics,” Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, Accessed 11 January 2024, <https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-violence-statistics/>.

Sisters,

Please sign each letter: one to Senator Baker and one to Senator Pittman. Send each one in the mail to:

Senator Lisa Baker  
Senate Box 203020  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3020  
Room: 173 Main Capitol

Senator Baker is the chair of the Judiciary Committee.

May 2024

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I am asking you, Senator Pittman, to reflect on the lives that have been lost while these Bills remain in limbo. Can you please do something to prevent the tragic loss of even more lives? Senator, please schedule the hearing on these four Bills: H.B. 1018, H.B. 714, H.B. 777, and H.B. 1629. They will make a safer Pennsylvania for all.

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Sisters,

Please sign each letter: one to Senator Baker and one to Senator Pittman. Send each one in the mail to:

Senator Joe Pittman  
Senate Box 203041  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3041  
Room: 350 Main Capitol

Senator Pittman is the Majority Leader. Some think he ranks above Lisa Baker.