

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 15, 2021

The Honorable Miguel Cardona
Secretary
The U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Cardona,

We write to urge you to take commonsense action to help prevent the gun violence we see unfolding in our schools. Recently, four students were shot to death at Oxford High School in Michigan, and another seven people were injured—including one educator. This shooting, like far too many others, was perpetrated with a firearm from the home, underlining the imperative that all gun owners – especially those around children – securely store their firearms. To prevent future tragedies, your Department should take bold action to raise awareness about secure gun storage by informing parents and school districts of its importance.

The shooting in Michigan comes amidst an historic surge in gun violence on school grounds. Between August 1 and October 31 this year, there have been 89 instances of gunfire on school grounds, killing 15 and wounding 63—the highest number of incidents and people shot in a three-month period since data began being collected in 2013.¹ While the federal government has taken some steps to address these horrifying incidents, we have ignored a critical intervention to address the common element in the overwhelming number of these tragedies: easy access to guns in the home. The incident at Oxford High School adds to the overwhelming evidence that shows access to guns in the home is a critical intervention point. For example, the Department of Homeland Security’s National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) studied targeted school violence from 2008 through 2017 and found that 76 percent of school shooters used a firearm they took from a parent or close relative’s home.² In nearly half of these shootings, the firearm was easily accessible or was not stored securely.

The Biden administration supports bold action to address gun violence, and we need that leadership again to keep our schools safe. Keeping guns away from kids should be neither partisan nor controversial. An estimated 54 percent of gun owners do not lock all of their guns securely, and at least 5.4 million children in 2021 live in a home with at least one unlocked and loaded firearm—up from 4.6 million in 2015.³ We have seen many school districts take action to provide information on secure storage to their families, but far too many have not. We urge you to direct the Department of Education to develop a strategy to encourage school districts to send parents secure firearm storage information and raise awareness about the importance of secure

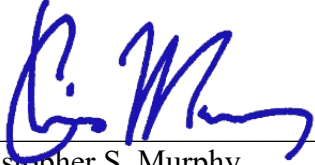
¹ Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, Gunfire on School Grounds in the United States, <https://everytownresearch.org/maps/gunfire-on-school-grounds/>.

² National Threat Assessment Center, “Protecting America’s Schools: A US Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence” (US Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security, 2019), <https://bit.ly/2U7vnwa>

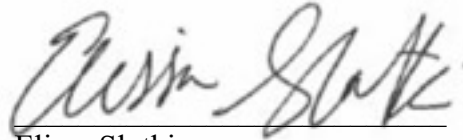
³ Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, Preventable Tragedies, August 30, 2021, <https://everytownresearch.org/report/notanaccident/>.

storage in keeping schools safe. Your Department can take action to give parents information about effective secure storage methods and provide guidance to schools about best practices on the methods to reach parents. These commonsense solutions cannot wait.

Sincerely,



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



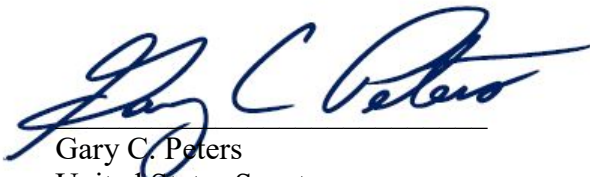
Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



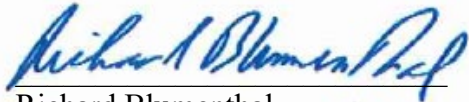
Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



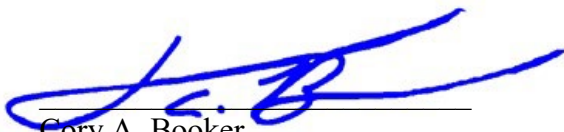
Jim Cooper
Member of Congress



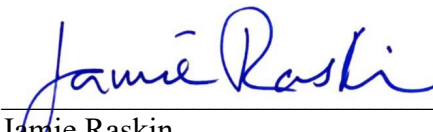
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



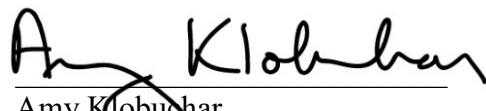
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



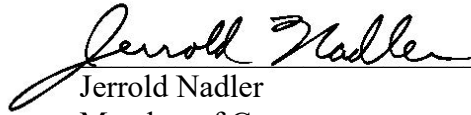
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



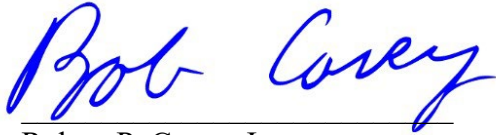
Jake Auchincloss
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Edward J. Markey
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Jerrold Nadler
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Robert P. Casey, Jr.
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Brenda L. Lawrence
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Mazie K. Hirono
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Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



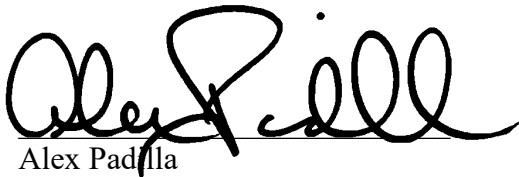
Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



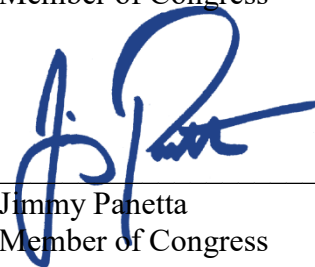
Sheldon Whitehouse
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Haley Stevens
Member of Congress



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Jimmy Panetta
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Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



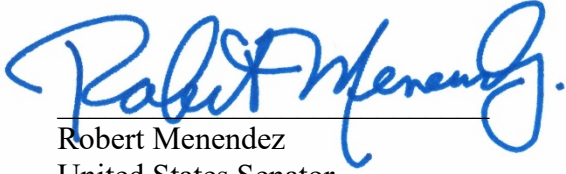
Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



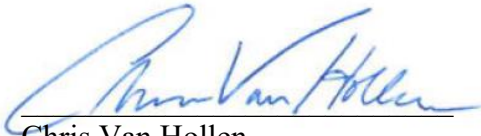
David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



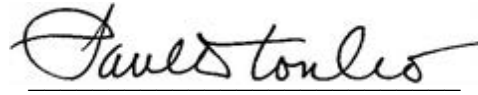
Robert Menendez
United States Senator



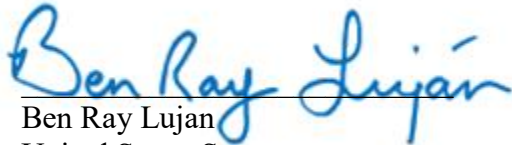
Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress



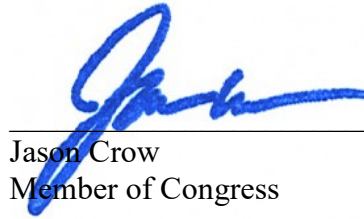
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Jason Crow
Member of Congress



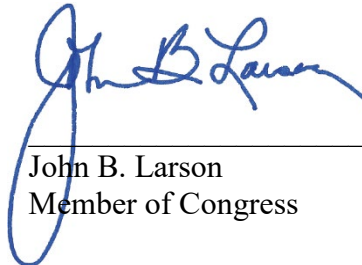
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator




Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



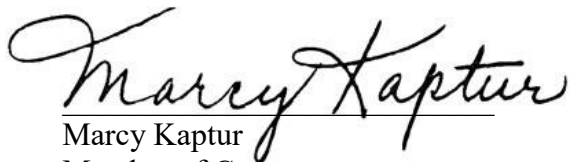
John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



Marcy Kaptur
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Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



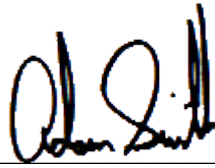
Dean Phillips
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Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



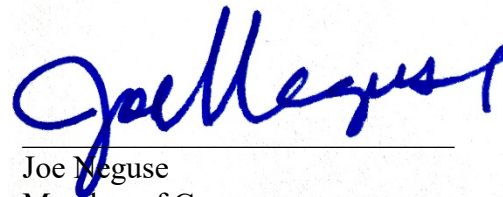
Lucy McBath
Member of Congress



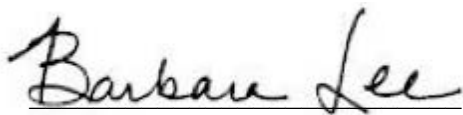
Adam Smith
Member of Congress



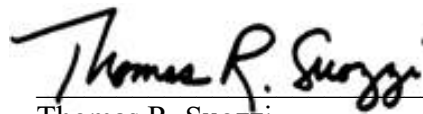
Robin Kelly
Member of Congress



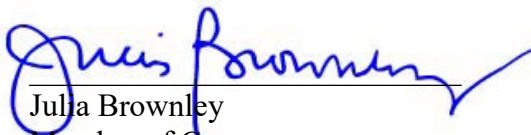
Joe Neguse
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Barbara Lee
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Thomas R. Suozzi
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Julia Brownley
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Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



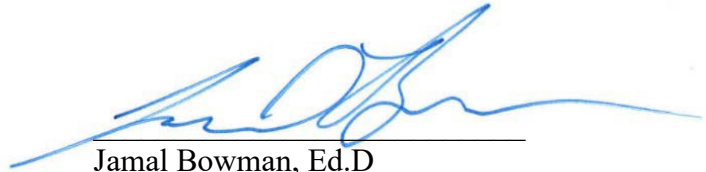
Mark Takano
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Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



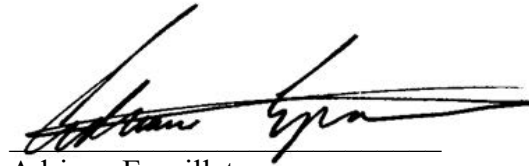
Donald Norcross
Member of Congress



Jamal Bowman, Ed.D
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



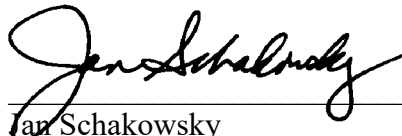
Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



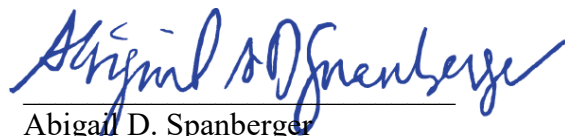
Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



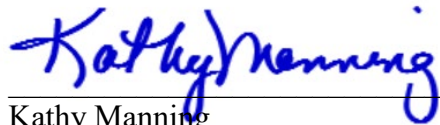
Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



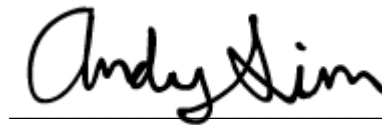
Jan Schakowsky
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Abigail D. Spanberger
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Kathy Manning
Member of Congress



Andy Kim
Member of Congress



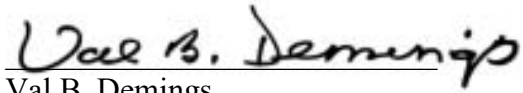
Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



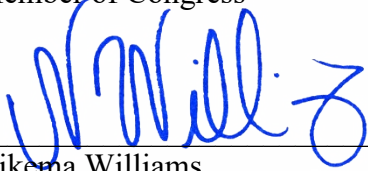
Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



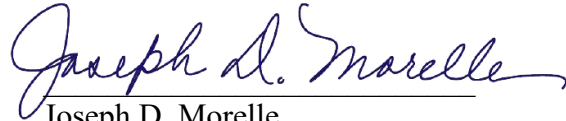
Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



Val B. Demings
Member of Congress



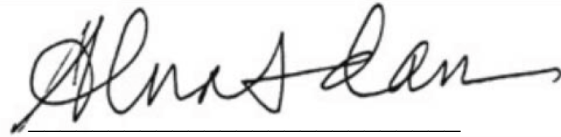
Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



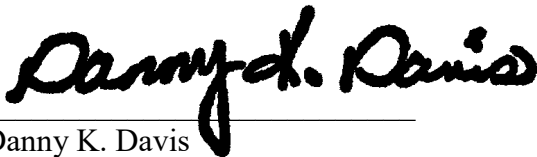
Joseph D. Morelle
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Sean Casten
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams, PhD.
Member of Congress



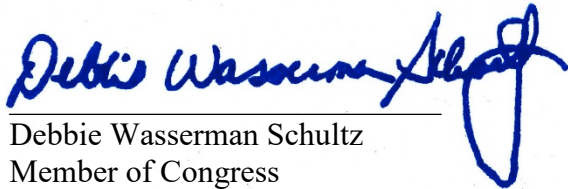
Danny K. Davis
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David E. Price
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Mikie Sherrill
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Debbie Wasserman Schultz
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Doris Matsui
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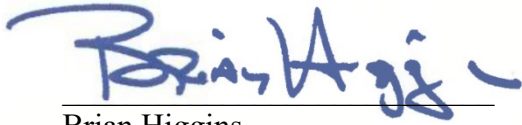
David Scott
Member of Congress



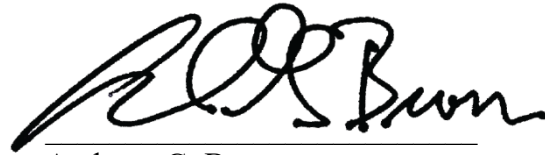
Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress




Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



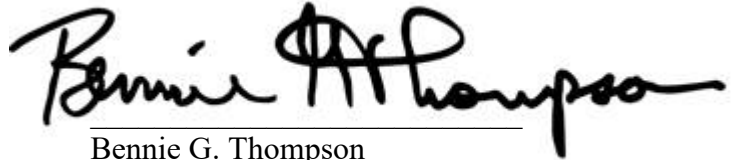
Brian Higgins
Member of Congress



Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress



J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress




Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



John Yarmuth
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



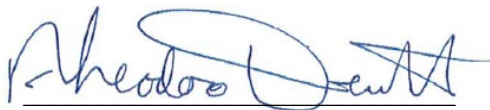
Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



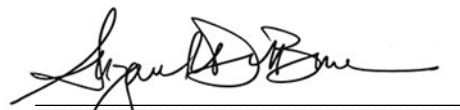
Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



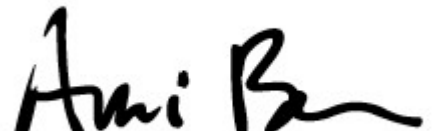
Theodore E. Deutch
Member of Congress



Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal
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Ami Bera, M.D.
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Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



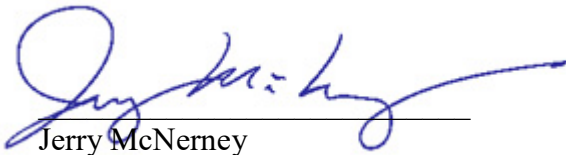
Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress

/s/ Steven Horsford

Steven Horsford
Member of Congress

/s/ Rashida Tlaib

Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress

/s/ Andy Levin

Andy Levin
Member of Congress

/s/ Debbie Dingell

Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

/s/ Albio Sires

Albio Sires
Member of Congress

/s/ Dina Titus

Dina Titus
Member of Congress

/s/ André Carson

André Carson
Member of Congress

/s/ Frank Pallone, Jr.

Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/ Bonnie Watson Coleman
Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress

/s/ Raja Krishnamoorthi
Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress

/s/ Jim Himes
Jim Himes
Member of Congress

/s/ A. Donald McEachin
A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress

/s/ Bradley S. Schneider
Bradley S. Schneider
Member of Congress

/s/ Ayanna Pressley
Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress

/s/ Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/ Sheila Jackson Lee
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

/s/ Josh Gottheimer
Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress

/s/ Grace F. Napolitano
Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress