



Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State of Connecticut



Governor Martin O'Malley
State of Maryland



Governor Andrew M. Cuomo
State of New York

April 17, 2013

To Members of the United States Senate:

The Senate will today consider an amendment to the Safe Communities, Safe Schools Act of 2013 (S. 649) authored by Senators Manchin (D–WV) and Toomey (R–PA).

Their amendment, the Public Safety and Second Amendment Rights Protection Act, is a bipartisan proposal to enhance federal background checks on potential purchasers of firearms.

The majority of Americans support common-sense solutions to gun violence. Millions of them support proposals that go above and beyond the expanded background check legislation you are considering – as do we.

However, while this proposal falls short of the universal background checks that are truly needed to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous individuals, we believe the Senate must take this first step to address gun violence in our communities and honor the victims.

In our own states, we've enacted legislation since the mass shootings in Aurora and Newtown to combat gun violence and make our communities safer while respecting everyone's Second Amendment rights. But gun violence respects no borders, and our states' laws alone are insufficient to systemically address gun violence on a national basis. Without federal action, our citizens are only as safe as the state with the weakest gun laws.

We need the federal government to take the lead and enact reasonable laws to reduce gun violence by, at a minimum, ensuring that more gun purchasers pass a federal background check.

The American people are clear on this issue – more than 90% support background checks prior to gun purchases. They understand that if you can't pass a background check, you should not be able to buy a gun. We stand with them, and urge you to do the same.

We hope you will honor the memory of our fellow citizens who have lost their lives to gun violence by supporting the Manchin-Toomey amendment to expand and strengthen background checks for gun purchases. However, Congress must do more and we urge you also to ban high capacity magazines, increase penalties for gun trafficking and enhance support for State and local school safety initiatives.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Dannel P. Malloy in black ink.

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor, State of Connecticut

Handwritten signature of Martin O'Malley in black ink.

Martin O'Malley
Governor, State of Maryland

Handwritten signature of Andrew M. Cuomo in black ink.

Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor, State of New York