

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
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Winston-Salem, North Carolina

President
BRIAN L. HOH, MD
Gainesville, Florida

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
United States Senate
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Subject: S. 281, the Gun Violence Prevention Research Act

Dear Senator Markey:

On behalf of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS), Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS), AANS/CNS Joint Section on Neurotrauma and Critical Care and AANS/CNS Joint Section on Pediatric Neurological Surgery, representing more than 4,000 practicing neurosurgeons in the United States, we write to support your legislation, S. 281, the Gun Violence Prevention Research Act.

As you are aware, your bill would authorize \$50 million in funding each fiscal year for the next five years for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to study gun violence. Firearm-related injuries are a significant public health problem that, according to the CDC, led to 39,566 fatalities in 2019. While Congress recently approved funds to conduct research on firearm injury and mortality prevention in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116-260), legislation must be passed to ensure that additional funding is allocated.

Organized neurosurgery believes this research will ultimately provide the necessary data to help determine strategies for preventing tragic injuries and death from firearms, as unintentional injury was the number one cause of death in 2019 for all Americans aged one to 44. The development of common sense and evidence-based solutions to combat gun violence and firearms accidents in this country — which may have increased since the COVID-19 pandemic — will help prevent thousands of deaths every year.

Beyond the human toll from firearm injuries and death, according to the House Joint Economic Committee in 2019, it is estimated that gun violence costs the U.S. \$229 billion a year. This enormous burden on the economy represents employer costs, police and criminal justice responses, and, most importantly, health care expenses.

On behalf of the AANS and the CNS, we thank you for your continued work to ensure funding for gun violence research and prevention. We look forward to working with you to pass this legislation, so please let us know if there is any further assistance we can provide.

Sincerely,



John A. Wilson, MD, President
American Association of Neurological Surgeons



Brian L. Hoh, MD, President
Congress of Neurological Surgeons



David Okonkwo, MD, PhD, Chair
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