

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

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

April 4, 2013

Dear Senators:

Our organizations, which represent millions of Americans who actively support professional wildlife management and the advancement of our nation's hunting and recreational shooting heritage, are writing to express our sincere hope that your upcoming gun control debate will be constructive.

Like you, we were devastated by the recent tragedy in Connecticut, and we share your goal of ensuring that appropriate actions are taken to prevent similar acts of senseless violence in the future. We believe an opportunity exists to enact legislation that addresses the causative agents of this and similar tragic events. Specifically we support:

- National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) improvement measures that will effectively prevent access to firearms by those not legally qualified to possess them, without criminalizing private transfers;
- Vigorous enforcement of existing federal firearms laws;
- Efforts to improve security in our nation's schools;
- A comprehensive process to review, evaluate and recommend changes to our nation's treatment of the mentally ill before their actions result in these devastating consequences; and
- The development and implementation of a community based "family watch" program that helps families with concerns that an immediate family member who they believe has the potential to become a societal danger is afforded the assistance that they need to intervene before a tragedy occurs.

As much as we support this five point plan that responds to the causative agents that could have potentially avoided this tragedy, we oppose unnecessary restrictions of our ability to attain and possess legal firearms and that have no foundation in addressing the factors that led to this tragedy or like tragedies.

In addition, the signatories to this letter are proud of our hunting and recreational shooting heritage and the support that our activities contribute to our nation's conservation, economic and societal interests.

Specifically, shooting sports participants are the largest financial supporters of wildlife conservation throughout the United States, having contributed over \$5.4 billion to the

management of our nation's wildlife, recreational shooting and hunter education through Pittman-Robertson excise tax payments since 1991. This uniquely American System of Conservation Funding – a “user pays-public benefits” system - is heralded internationally as the most successful wildlife management program in the world.

Economically, the companies in the United States that manufacture, distribute and sell firearms, ammunition and hunting equipment employ as many as 98,752 people in the country and generate an additional 110,998 jobs in supplier and ancillary industries. In 2012 alone the firearms and ammunition industry was responsible for as much as \$31.84 billion in total economic activity in the United States. The significant contributions these companies are making to our nation's economic recovery should not be sacrificed to unnecessary and ineffective restrictions and bans, no matter how well-intended their proponents may be.

These lawful recreational activities provide untold hours of benefits to our nation's families and their friend and neighbors that should not be unnecessarily impinged upon.

For these reasons, the undersigned organizations respectfully request that you continue to work collectively, as the voice of sportsmen and recreational shooters in Congress, toward pragmatic bipartisan solutions in a manner that enhances wildlife conservation, benefits the economy and protects America's rich hunting and shooting heritage, while not impeding the Second Amendment rights of our members. Thank you for your ongoing service to our nation and future generations of sportsmen and women conservationists.

Sincerely,

Archery Trade Association  
Boone and Crockett Club  
Campfire Club of America  
Catch-A-Dream Foundation  
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation  
Conservation Force  
Dallas Safari Club  
Delta Waterfowl  
Masters of Foxhounds  
Mule Deer Foundation  
National Rifle Association  
National Shooting Sports Foundation  
National Trappers Association  
National Wild Turkey Federation  
North American Bear Foundation  
North American Grouse Partnership

Orion, The Hunter's Institute  
Pheasants Forever  
Pope & Young Club  
Quail Forever  
Quality Deer Management Association  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
Ruffed Grouse Society  
Safari Club International  
Texas Wildlife Association  
U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance  
Whitetails Unlimited  
Wild Sheep Foundation  
Wildlife Forever  
Wildlife Management Institute  
Wildlife Mississippi

CC: The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
The Honorable Chuck Grassley