



JESUIT® SCHOOLS NETWORK

February 21, 2018

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
Speaker, House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
House Minority Leader
H-204 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Pelosi, and Minority Leader Schumer:

The Jesuit Schools Network is seventy-nine Jesuit middle and secondary schools in the United States and five in Canada. Our schools are grieving once again because of the violence that has shattered Marjory Stoneham Douglas High School in Parkland.

We offer our prayers and support to the families of those who were killed and we stand with the students, parents, faculty, and staff who remain, burdened now with the loss of classmates and peers senselessly murdered. The deaths of innocent children and their teachers are the hardest to bear in this terrible trend of violence. We stand with so many voices against the proliferation of guns in our country.

Please remember the statement from the Catholic Bishops of the United States "A Mercy and Peacebuilding Approach to Gun Violence" in 2016 when they called on all people of good will to urge Congress to "require universal background checks for all gun purchases; limit civilian access to high-capacity weapons and ammunition magazines, make gun trafficking a federal crime, and improve access to mental health care for those who may be prone to violence."

With the Catholic Bishops, with the school community in Parkland, and with all those who have suffered needlessly because of gun violence in schools across the United States, we declare our support for legislation that would ban the sale of assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines, and require a background check for gun sales.

Columbine, Virginia Tech, Newtown, Parkland – and others. They are the names of our shame as a Nation. We cannot risk another young life because of our inaction. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

William Muller, S.J.
Executive Director