

Response to Senator Klobuchar -

What other steps should Congress and the Department of Justice do to close loopholes?

Thank you for introducing legislation to protect victims of domestic abuse by closing the boyfriend loophole that allows certain convicted abusers and stalkers to obtain weapons. This legislation is necessary and needed.

I was pleased to hear the bipartisan support among the Judiciary Committee members for red flag legislation that allows family members and law enforcement to petition a court for the temporary restriction of access to firearms when an individual is a risk to themselves or others. Red flag laws are a critical intervention tool that could protect other families from harm, and I support legislation introduced last Congress by Senators Graham and Blumenthal to establish a federal red flag law.

Congress should do more to prevent the daily gun violence that is plaguing our communities. A foundation for preventing gun violence starts with strengthening the background check system to prevent prohibited purchasers from obtaining weapons. As I discussed at the hearing, our background check system should provide law enforcement with enough time to fully assess a person's background before a weapon is sold. Allowing gun dealers to proceed with a sale with missing or incomplete background check information is irresponsible and increases the risks to public safety.

I am pleased that the new Congress has made background checks a priority and I hope that members will consider this important legislation that can help save lives.

Response to Senator Leahy -

Barr testified that Congress must keep guns out of the hands of mentally ill individuals. Single most important thing. Do you agree? What other suggestions to reduce mass shootings and gun violence?

I agree with Mr. Barr that we must keep guns out of the wrong hands and prevent prohibited purchasers from obtaining a gun. Mr. Barr stated his support for red flag laws that allow a close family member or law enforcement to petition a court to temporarily restrict access to firearms when an individual is a risk to himself or others. Many members of the Committee also expressed support for red flag laws, which 13 states have enacted to protect their communities. I support legislation introduced last Congress by Senators Graham and Blumenthal to establish a federal red flag law.

Congress also has an obligation to strengthen the background check system so that we can address our nation's gun violence epidemic. To date, the background check system has stopped more than 3.5 million sales to prohibited purchasers. Despite the law's success, it was drafted before the internet became what it is today and has not kept pace with modern changes in society. Today, in over 30 states, a person with a dangerous history who is legally prohibited

from buying a gun can find a gun online advertised by an unlicensed seller and meet up in a parking lot to buy it, and there would be no law requiring a background check on the sale. Congress should close this loophole and update the background check law to meet our current times.

Finally, Congress should repeal the law that prevents victims of gun violence from seeking justice in court. The Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, known as PLCAA, provides the gun industry with broad protection for their negligent or irresponsible actions that cause death or injury. No other industry receives this level of protection and it is wrong to bar the courthouse door to gun violence survivors and victims.