

On behalf of the members of ILA 2.0 and our respective organizations, we are deeply saddened by the tragic mass shootings of the last few weeks. Rather than drive us apart, the racially motivated attack in Buffalo, NY reminded us that there is no place in this country for racial hatred or intolerance. And the murders last month of 20 children and two teachers at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, TX brought home the sad reality that access to deadly assault weapons will continue to result in mass tragedies until we take collective action on gun control. Our hearts go out to the families and the communities immediately touched by these tragedies, and we are all called to action.

As is well known in Chicago, gun violence continues to unfold on a daily basis, putting our Black and Latinx youth in particular in harm's way, with far too many losing their lives each year. Indeed, the leading cause of death for Chicagoans between the ages of 15 and 24 continues to be by homicide.

Accordingly, it is an unconscionable failure that as a nation, we have not resolved to pass common sense gun control legislation. The ILA 2.0 wholeheartedly supports a re-introduction on the ban on assault weapons, the dismantling of the PLCAA which gives immunity to the gun industry, and passage of the Background Check bill, H.R. 8, which is supported by nearly 90% of Americans.

Locally, to better protect our youth who are Chicago's future leaders, we urge our local governments and philanthropy to increase resources for mental health services so that no person who needs it goes without. A number of our organizations provide mental health services-- with language and cultural competence-- to both victims of crime and to potential perpetrators, and evidence overwhelmingly supports the value of reducing crime through trauma-informed services.

Lastly, it is imperative that local governments increase resources for youth programming, including year-round and overnight programs to keep our most vulnerable youth safe and off the streets. It is not enough to expand curfews and expect youth to find safety with fewer options; we must responsibly make options available to youth with their input.

The members of the ILA 2.0 are dedicated to making impactful change, and by supporting common sense gun control, greater access to mental health services and wholistic youth programming, we aim to make sure that all of those lost recently are remembered through collective action.

In solidarity,

June 6th, 2022

The Illinois Latino Agenda 2.0

The ILA 2.0 is a non-partisan coalition that stands in solidarity with all other disenfranchised communities and communities of color seeking equity, inclusion, and social justice. Visit <https://www.latinopolicyforum.org/issues/leadership/ila#> for more information. For inquiries or additional information, please contact Juan Carlos Linares, President and CEO at Association House of Chicago at jclinares@associationhouse.org, or Maria Pike, Board Member at Chicago Survivors at mariapike@hotmail.com.