



Enough is Enough: Illinois Needs New Gun Safety Laws

(July 7, 2022 - Chicago) On behalf of the members of Illinois Latino Agenda 2.0 and our respective organizations, we are once again grief-stricken and outraged by the gun violence epidemic shattering the lives of families and crippling our communities with fear.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the victims and survivors of the awful Fourth of July mass shooting in Highland Park.

Celebrating Independence Day is a welcomed tradition of time spent making memories with family enjoying music, cookouts, fireworks, parades, and other festivities. It is also a day of reflection to contemplate what freedom means to us as members of this beautiful quilt of blended cultures united by the American flag, embracing American values.

Now the images of young and old smiling faces lining the streets of Highland Park to cheer floats and marching bands that quickly turned to looks of horror and screams of terror are unfortunately part of July Fourth memories.

The downrush of gun violence that has become frighteningly commonplace in America continues to deny us freedom of assembly, freedom to enjoy and have productive lives in our society, and freedom to live.

This weekend in Chicago, where living in violence is sadly commonplace, eight people were killed and 68 wounded, a reduction of 18 dead and 92 shot in 2021. But the Summer has just started, and we are bracing for the number of victims to soar.

As Highland Park joins Buffalo, Uvalde, and other communities forever broken by mass shootings and national attention again focuses on our country's unique gun problem, we demand better.

We Demand a special legislative session in Springfield for lawmakers to immediately address:

- Ban assault weapons, high-capacity magazines.
- Create an assault weapons registry.
- Demand mandatory fingerprinting on FOID cards.

It is time to bring about policies to keep all our communities safe from gun violence. Once again, we have proved that guns and assault weapons in the wrong hands are lethal and have no geographical boundaries, and do not discriminate

While Congress tried to develop a landmark bipartisan bill addressing gun violence after 26 years, our concerns were barely met.

The killing of seven people and 37 wounded in Highland Park are sadly part of the prevalent gun violence culture in the U.S. We are disheartened to learn that among the victims are the grandfather and the boyfriend of health volunteers at the non-profit Mano a Mano.

After 2 1/2 years of Covid19, the isolation, violence, and gun violence have increased, and it is also cause for immediate action in our cities and state's mental health services.

ILA 2.0 is compelled to DEMAND better self-monitoring of platforms that, while enjoying their success, should fully embrace the responsibility that comes with their growth and how it affects vulnerable minds and people searching for a place and ideology to fit in. It can not only be about profits...it's about lives.

We once again 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 victims of crime and potential perpetrators. The evidence overwhelmingly supports the value of reducing crime through trauma-informed services.

The members of the ILA 2.0 are dedicated to making impactful change. By supporting common-sense gun measures, greater access to mental health services, and holistic youth programming, we aim to ensure that all recently lost are remembered through collective action.

In solidarity,

July 6th, 2022

The Illinois Latino Agenda 2.0

About the Illinois Latino Agenda 2.0

The ILA 2.0 is a non-partisan coalition that works to advance the Latino community's economic, political, and social prosperity. For more information on the coalition, please visit

<https://www.latinopolicyforum.org/issues/leadership/ila> or contact Jose Marco-Paredes at jmarco-paredes@latinopolicyforum.org