

Governor Phil Murphy

# Governor Murphy Delivers Remarks Reaffirming Commitment to Comprehensive Gun Safety Reform in Wake of Uvalde School Shooting

05/25/2022

## Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

Eleven days ago, it was 10 innocent shoppers at a supermarket in Buffalo.

Yesterday, it was 19 beautiful schoolchildren and two educators in their classroom in Texas.

An *elementary* school. Second, third, and fourth graders.

Another day in America, another horrific act of gun violence enabled by the weak and feckless politicians kept in the holster of the gun lobby.

As a father and as a human being, my heart is broken for the families who are reeling from this incomprehensible tragedy.

But as an American, I am outraged and I am exhausted.

I am outraged that our nation remains the only one in which the senseless murder of innocent children and their teachers is even tolerated.

I am exhausted that we have another double-digit death toll and one side – one side – refuses to do anything.

I am honored to stand today with Senators and Assembly members, and community and educational leaders, who are ready to do something. New Jerseyans who believe – as I do, and as the vast majority of New Jerseyans do – that enough is enough.

That we don't have to watch as more and more innocent people – including schoolchildren – are gunned down. That we can end this senseless and relentless cycle.

For those of us standing here, we have had enough of thoughts and prayers. We have had enough of excuses and inaction. We've had enough of the deflections and enough of the delays.

Congress has failed to lead time and time and time again, so it's up to us to do the job others are too weak to do.

I introduced the comprehensive Gun Safety 3.0 package over a year ago and this moment demands that the Legislature finally take action.

These proposed laws are hardly revolutionary. They would mandate safe storage of guns. They would ensure that those seeking to buy a gun are actually trained in the safe handling of that gun.

They would give police tools to better track the paths of firearms used to commit crimes. They would prohibit the sale of weapons that can bring down helicopters.

They would allow us to hold the gun industry liable for the carnage it has enabled.

The legislators standing with me are ready to act. I am ready to sign them into law. We've been ready for more than a year now.

I call upon the Senate President and the Assembly Speaker to put these bills up for a vote, so the people of New Jersey can see where every legislator stands on these commonsense measures.

But let's not stop there. I ask the Legislature to immediately put up every bill seeking to unravel our gun laws, too. Let's make every legislator show whose side they have chosen to be on – the people of New Jersey's or the gun lobby's.

In the face of mass shooting after mass shooting throughout our nation, in the face of children being slaughtered to the point where the reports indicate these beautiful children were unrecognizable, I say let these folks come out from behind their press releases and their tweets and cast votes before the residents of this great state.

Let the people of New Jersey see who votes "yes" to legalizing hollow-point "cop killer" bullets, as Assembly Minority Leader John DiMaio wants.

Let the people of New Jersey see who votes "yes" to high-capacity ammunition magazines, as Senator Ed Durr wants.

Let the people of New Jersey see who votes "yes" to saying that churchgoers should be able to take their guns to services, as Senator Mike Doherty wants.

Let the people of New Jersey see who votes "yes" to allowing anyone – anyone – to carry a concealed gun, as Senator Durr and Assemblyman Ron Dancer want.

Let the people of New Jersey see who votes "yes" to repealing our red-flag law and letting those known to have made violent threats, including domestic abusers, unfettered access to as many guns as they want ... as Senator Durr wants.

Let's put every gun bill up, so the people of New Jersey can see, in no uncertain terms, who supports commonsense gun safety and who wants New Jersey's streets and communities to be flooded with guns.

Let's see who the gun lobby banks on with their blood money.

There is no lack of irony that those who would stop at nothing to strip a woman of her rights and autonomy and force her to give birth are doing nothing to prevent that child from being murdered in their school.

In four years, I am proud of the progress we've made to become one of the nation's leading states on gun safety. But I'm not satisfied – and those standing with me aren't satisfied – with being “one of.”

Let's send the message now. Let's act before our nation gets lulled back into its slumber – as it was already beginning to do after the murders in Buffalo.

The scripture is clear – James, Chapter 2, Verse 17 – “Faith without works is dead.”

Thoughts and prayers are worthless. Action is the only thing of value.

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