

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY

GOVERNOR MURPHY ANNOUNCES MASSACHUSETTS, DELAWARE AND PUERTO RICO JOIN "STATES FOR GUN SAFETY" COALITION TO COMBAT THE GUN VIOLENCE EPIDEMIC

Multi-State Coalition Now Represents Over 35 Million Americans

Trenton - New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, Connecticut Governor Dan Malloy and Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo today announced Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker, Delaware Governor John Carney and Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rosselló are joining the "States for Gun Safety" coalition -- a multi-state partnership launched this month to combat the gun violence epidemic. With the addition of these new members, the coalition of states now represents over 35 million Americans and will take action to stop gun-related violence in the face of continued federal inaction.

Massachusetts, Delaware and Puerto Rico join a multi-state task force to trace and intercept illegal guns in the region. The new members will work in cooperation with other partner states to enhance intelligence gathering, information sharing, and response efforts related to gun violence. Participating states will leverage collective investigative resources in order to determine comprehensive, coordinated plans for gun violence responses.

Governor Murphy said, "The members of the States for Gun Safety Coalition are excited to have Governors Charlie Baker, John Carney and Ricardo Rosselló join us in this partnership. Together, we can take steps and enact measures to protect our residents and our communities. A collective of states can broaden the reach and impact of gun safety laws even if Congress or the President do not take action."

Governor Cuomo said, "It's time for the horrifying mass shootings that have plagued this country for far too long to spur real action and real policy changes. Our states collectively already have better gun safety laws than the federal government, and by working together to share information and bolster enforcement, we will keep guns out of the hands of dangerous individuals and better protect our communities. If the federal government refuses to act, we will work together to enact the important reforms families deserve, and I welcome these new states to our coalition."

Governor Malloy said, "The addition of Massachusetts, Delaware, and Puerto Rico to this multi-state coalition is an important step toward regional cooperation to prevent gun violence, and I applaud these governors for being a partner in this endeavor. The massacre in Parkland -- like the massacres in Las Vegas, Orlando, San Bernardino, Umpqua, Aurora, Sandy Hook, and countless others -- are a tragic reminder of the urgent need to tear down political barriers and work together to make our communities, schools, and public places safer. I am hopeful that this represents the beginning of a turning point and that more states will join our growing partnership. That said, while we can make a significant difference, we need real and substantive action from Congress if we are serious about ending this epidemic of gun violence. It shouldn't need saying, but the lives of children are far more important than any powerful special interest. It's time to act."

Governor Raimondo said, "Governors from both sides of the aisle are coming together to take action on gun violence. We cannot afford to wait another minute for Washington. Earlier today, I signed an executive order establishing a state wide red flag policy, and Rhode Island will continue to take proactive steps to combat gun violence. By working together across state lines, this coalition will save lives. I welcome MA, DE and PR to our coalition."

Governor Baker said, "Massachusetts is pleased to join the gun safety coalition to enhance the strong gun control measures already in place in the Commonwealth and our public safety officials will work collaboratively across state lines with coalition members to bolster efforts for stronger communication to keep our communities safe."

Governor Carney said, "Working together, states can take action that will directly confront the threat of gun violence, and reduce the toll it takes on our communities. This partnership will help us better share data across state borders, intercept the flow of illegal guns, and provide law enforcement with more tools to stop violence before it happens. Delaware is proud to join this partnership, and we look forward to getting to work."

Governor Rosselló said, "We need to bring attention to the fact that there is an undisputed relation between the lack of gun control regulations and recent acts of gun violence that has resulted in the loss of innocent lives and that has brought together a Nation demanding action now."

Massachusetts, Delaware and Puerto Rico will also now join partner states to share information about individuals who are prohibited from purchasing or possessing a firearm within each state. That information pathway enables law enforcement agencies to know if an individual has attempted to purchase or permit a weapon in a participating state. The agreement, in accordance with federal and state privacy protections, will provide state law enforcement agencies with details on the firearm purchase or permit denials for those who are disqualified. People may be disqualified from owning a firearm for several reasons, including an arrest warrant, order of protection, debilitating mental health condition, or criminal history.

The three new states will also join New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, and Rhode Island in directing their law enforcement intelligence centers to work cooperatively to trace the use of out-of-state guns in crimes and share information in order to intercept criminals transporting illegal guns across state borders.

Additionally, the partner states will also work together to designate an institute of higher education to join the Regional Gun Violence Research Consortium, a multi-disciplinary data-collection group tasked with producing recommendations for reducing gun violence. This groundbreaking consortium will fill the void left by the federal government's 1996 ban on the use of federal funds to study gun violence which has obstructed research efforts across the nation, including at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health.

Building on these efforts, the states will also work to push the federal government to adopt common-sense gun safety measures. In order to protect families and communities across the region, the group will call on the federal government to swiftly enact universal background checks, an assault weapons ban and a federal waiting period between the purchase and delivery of guns.

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