



On March 22, 2021 a gunman opened fire on employees and customers in a grocery store in Boulder, Colorado. The tragedy that unfolded claimed the lives of ten individuals and left a traumatic mark on countless community members.

To support and protect the local employees at the Table Mesa King Soopers and in honor of all other communities affected by gun violence, Congressman Joe Neguse introduced a package of bills to prevent mass shootings, promote healing, expand worker safety, and increase access to mental health and trauma resources.

**The Help for Healing Communities Act** will promote resilience and equity in communities that have recently faced an active shooter or event of targeted violence through the implementation of evidence-based, violence prevention, and community engagement programs, as well as linkages to trauma-informed behavioral health services.

Specifically, this Act creates a new grant program in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to provide funding for mental health services for survivors.

**The STOP Violence Act** will provide federal funding for preventative security measures at active shooter sites and public assembly facilities. This bill expands the Department of Justice's anti-terrorism and emergency funding program to include the location of active shooter events.

**The Safe Workplaces Act** will direct the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to conduct a study on threats of violence, including gun violence, in the workplace. The NIOSH study would be used to guide the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in creating a rule on best practices for employers to protect employees from threats of violence.

**Prioritizing Resources for Victims of Firearm Violence Act** to designate as a fifth priority category programs that provide assistance and mental health services to victims of firearm violence and families of victims of homicide through the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). Ensuring states allocate at least 10% of VOCA funding to these programs, to guarantee funding for victims and communities in need.



### **ENDORSERS INCLUDE:**

United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW), Community Justice Action Fund, Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence, Violence Policy Center, Niskanen Center, Teamsters, Alliance for Suicide Prevention of Larimer County, Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council, SEIU, Colorado Education Association, National Education Association

### **COSPONSORS:**

Representatives Veronica Escobar, Lucy McBath, Ted Deutch, Nikema Williams, André Carson, David Cicilline

### **QUOTES OF SUPPORT:**

**Michael Dougherty, District Attorney, Boulder County:** “Here in Colorado and across the nation, there have been far too many mass killings. We need more action at the federal level – for the victims, survivors and our communities. These bills are a significant, positive step to reduce acts of mass violence, protect workers, and keep people safe. Mass killings can have a terrible impact on the survivors who have to live with it every day, especially for those who have to return to the place where it happened. For the survivors of gun violence, this bill will provide funding for essential mental health services. This bill will allow them to receive the help and support that they need. I appreciate and strongly support Representative Neguse’s continued leadership on this important issue.”

**Frank DeAngelis, Former Columbine Superintendent:** “April 20, 1999, a day in which my life changed forever; a day in which the lives of the members of our society changed forever. It is 23 years later, and the violence continues. As I stated on numerous occasions ‘It is a Marathon and not a Sprint.’ The bills proposed by Congressman Joe Neguse address the needs of communities following the tragic events. Funding to communities to implement preventative measures to combat terrorism and mass violence is paramount in keeping our communities safe. We have learned in Colorado that no institution is exempt from the horrific events occurring in their communities. I can assure you that you are not going to wake up some morning and everything is going to be back to normal. Providing help for healing communities is not only important in the aftermath of the event but also help needs to be provided for years following.”

**Amie Baca-Oehlert, High School Counselor and President of the Colorado Education Association:** “We live in an era where our country is known worldwide more for its gun violence than it is for safe and equitable treatment for all. That’s why we’re grateful to



violence in the workplace and mental, social and emotional support goes a long way to helping workers feel safe in their work environments. We know that for schools in particular, gun violence is not only harmful to the educators who serve students, but of course to the students as well and this is why we are even more emphatic that our schools must be a safe place for all and free from gun violence.”

**Congresswoman Veronica Escobar (D-TX):** “Gun violence is an epidemic, and victims and survivors deserve more than thoughts and prayers. My home of El Paso, Texas continues to recover from the August 3rd, 2019 domestic terror attack shooting, when a 21-year-old gunman murdered members of my community. In addition to the mental and emotional trauma we still carry from that day, survivors of the shooting are shouldering the financial consequences of ongoing surgeries, medical care, and recovery over two years later. Sadly, El Paso is just one example of many. Amending the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) to include priority assistance funding for the families of victims of homicide and firearm violence is an important, common-sense step toward facilitating healing, assisting recovery, and addressing the incredible harms done by gun violence.”

**Congresswoman Lucy McBath (D-GA):** “It is on the anniversary of these tragedies that the heartbreak can resurface. It is the reminder every parent dreads, a reminder that as mothers and fathers, we’ve had to bury our babies. It is a reminder to friends and families of the fear and desperation of that day. And it is a reminder to the children who survived these shootings, who now live with the trauma that only stepping over a friend painted in blood could ever bring. We must do more to stop this pain and save the lives of our children. And we must help the survivors, all of them, from the angst and agony that comes with losing a loved one.”