

June 9, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

As our nation continues to grieve for the lives of those lost during the recent school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, it is our responsibility, as elected officials and leaders in our communities, to reduce the likelihood that such a tragedy will happen again.

On May 24, 2022, an armed intruder entered Robb Elementary School and murdered over twenty people, including 19 students age 11 or under and two educators, and injured countless others. Although details are still being released, it is clear that existing safety and security measures both in our schools and in our society failed to keep these children and adults safe.

As Chair and Vice Chair of the National Governors Association, we are writing to advise you of the establishment of a bipartisan working group that will study and make recommendations designed to stop mass shootings and provide families confidence in the safety of their communities, and in particular, their schools. Our goal is to present recommendations that consider the various factors contributing to gun violence, which is the leading cause of death for American children and adolescents as of 2020 according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Each state and district in our country is unique, with different backgrounds and identities, and the working group's recommendations will take these factors into account. While Congress certainly has a role to play in combating this national emergency, this working group of six to ten governors will identify solutions that give state and local leaders tools to promote effective measures in their respective communities.

Schools should be among the safest places for our children and educators, and there should be no doubt that they will return home at the end of the day. Approximately \$1.7 billion in federal funds are currently available for potential school safety measures, including funding for children's mental health and physical safety. It is our hope that the task force can provide suggestions to keep our schools and communities safe in a manner that is consistent with the demands of the American people, who overwhelmingly support gun safety measures. We can all agree that there are commonsense ways to prevent these tragic events, and we must work together to do everything in our collective power to protect our communities and our most vulnerable citizens – our children.

This working group will review all relevant public safety measures to ensure that our communities are safe and that children and educators can learn and teach in an environment that is conducive to learning.



Thank you for your attention in this matter. May we continue to pray for the families of those affected and work towards building a safer, more peaceful future for all Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Asa Hutchinson".

Governor Asa Hutchinson
State of Arkansas

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Phil Murphy".

Governor Phil Murphy
State of New Jersey