



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION  
*For science. For action. For health.*

February 8, 2023

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker McCarthy and Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals that champions the health of all people and communities, I write in strong support of H.R. 715, the Bipartisan Background Checks Act. We strongly support this common sense legislation that would expand the current firearm background check system to cover all commercial firearm sales.

Gun violence is one of the leading preventable causes of death in the nation. In 2021, 47,286 individuals died as a result of gun violence and many more suffered nonfatal gun injuries. After years of delay, it is time for Congress to act and take a comprehensive public health approach to addressing this growing crisis. Our nation has waited far too long to take on this devastating problem in our communities and we can wait no longer.

Current law, which only requires background checks for guns purchased from federally licensed dealers, is inadequate and contains significant gaps that provide easy access to weapons for felons, domestic abusers, the seriously mentally ill and others prohibited from owning firearms. We strongly support this legislation which would close these senseless loopholes by requiring the same background check for all commercial gun sales including those at gun shows, on the internet and through classified ads.

Congress must act on this common sense legislation to protect everyone in our nation from the threat of gun violence. We stand ready to work with you and your colleagues to pass this and other critical legislation to reduce gun violence in the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Georges C. Benjamin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Georges" and last name "Benjamin" clearly legible.

Georges C. Benjamin, MD  
Executive Director