FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Nation’s Mayors Call for Stronger Gun Laws in America

In Open Letter to the President and Congress, Mayors of the Nation’s Largest Cities and Leaders of The U. S. Conference of Mayors Urge Action Now

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) President Philadelphia Michael A. Nutter, New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, USCM Second Vice President Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson, several USCM Past Presidents – Charleston (SC) Mayor Joseph Riley, Boston Mayor Thomas Menino, and Akron (OH) Mayor Donald Plusquellic – and USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran yesterday sent an open letter to President Barack Obama and the U.S. Congress calling for stronger gun laws, a reversal of the culture of violence in this country, a commission to examine violence in the nation, and more adequate funding for the mental health system.

The letter is being sent in response to Friday’s tragic school shooting in Newtown, CT. The full text can be found at www.usmayors.org, but following are excerpts:

“Again and again and again, Americans are stunned by senseless acts of violence involving guns. Friday’s tragedy targeting young children in Newtown is incomprehensible. Too many times this year, mayors have expressed shock at a mass shooting. Even more frequently, many of us must cope with the gun violence that occurs on the streets of our cities. …

“The Conference has been calling for sensible gun laws to protect the public for more than 40 years. Mayors and police chiefs from cities of all sizes have worked together in this effort over the years.

“We urge you to take immediate action: the President to exercise his powers though Executive Order and Congress to introduce and pass legislation to make reasonable changes in our gun laws and regulations. Specifically we call on you to:

• Enact legislation to ban assault weapons and other high-capacity magazines being prepared by Senator Dianne Feinstein and others;
• Strengthen the national background check system and eliminate loopholes in it; and
• Strengthen the penalties for straw purchases of guns. …

“We believe that with this latest national tragedy and the high incidence of gun violence that continues to plague our streets, we have reached a tipping point. The nation’s mayors pledge to work with you to build a safer America for our children and all of our citizens.”

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The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,295 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. Like us on Facebook at facebook.com/usmayors, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/usmayors.