

June 22, 2016

Dear Member of the House and former colleagues:

There is nowhere I would rather be right now than with you - on the floor of the People's House, representing Southern Arizona, fighting for our country, and working to make our communities safer. But your action is the balm for my regret - and it is the inspiration for my continued commitment.

Fighting gun violence takes great courage. I've seen great courage when my life was on the line. I see great courage in many of you right now.

Americans are grappling with a gun violence crisis. It is a crisis that tears apart the lives of so many Americans and touches every community. It is both public and private. In our homes and on our streets. At work, at church, at the movies, at a dance club, at school and at school again, at a Congress on Your Corner. The victims are young and old - but always with so much life ahead of them. They are white and black, Latino and Asian, and Native American. They are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and straight. They are Christian and Muslim, Jewish and Sikh. They are veterans and government workers and union members. They are rich and poor. They die by murder, they die by suicide, and they die by negligence. Often, they don't die, but they carry the scars, and their lives change forever.

If gun violence affects all of us Americans, then the solution is not up to just some of us. We are all responsible for our safety today and for the country we pass on to our children tomorrow. It's what makes us a country. Where our country has already come together - behind the simple proposition that we ought to have laws that keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people - so must our Congress. And they should not waste another minute.

We must not accept the world that will be the product of inaction in Washington. We can do better. Some states have already made progress - they show us that when we put aside our incidental or momentary differences and stand shoulder to shoulder, we have enormous power.

It's been said that hope was forged of two powerful ingredients: anger at how things are, and the courage to change them. We will not be driven backwards to live in isolation from one another and in fear of violence. Thanks to you - and millions of Americans who share our values of pluralism, liberty, and responsibility - we will stand strong and work toward a safer nation for all of us.

Speaking is difficult for me. But I haven't been silenced. And neither should the American people. Their Representatives must vote to prevent gun violence.

Sincerely,

Gabrielle Giffords
Americans for Responsible Solutions
www.responsiblesolutions.org