



Duckworth, Durbin Call for Senate Hearings on Gun Violence Prevention Legislation

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– U.S. Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Dick Durbin (D-IL) joined U.S. Senator Chris Murphy (D-CT) and 34 of their colleagues in calling on U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Lindsey Graham (R-SC) to quickly hold a hearing on legislation to expand federal background checks to all firearm sales. The Senators asked Graham to hold a hearing on the [Background Check Expansion Act](#)– which Duckworth and Durbin helped reintroduce earlier this year – and is similar to legislation that passed the U.S. House of Representatives last week.

“We know that universal background checks save lives, and we know that 97% of Americans support them. We noted with interest your statement in the press that you intended to have the Committee work on ‘red flag’ legislation and potentially also background checks, both actions we would strongly support,” the Senators wrote. **“We respectfully request that you hold a hearing on this critical legislation as soon as possible.”**

Under current federal law, unlicensed or private sellers are not required to conduct a background check prior to transferring a firearm. Research indicates that as many as a quarter of all gun sales in the United States may occur without a background check as a result.

In addition to Duckworth and Durbin, the letter was also signed by U.S. Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Tom Carper (D-DE), Bob Casey (D-PA), Chris Coons (D-DE), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Maggie Hasan (D-NH), Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Edward Markey (D-MA), Bob Menendez

(D-NJ), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Patty Murray (D-WA), Jack Reed (D-RI), Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Tina Smith (D-MN), Tom Udall (D-NM), Mark Warner (D-VA), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Ron Wyden (D-OR), and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD).

The text of the letter is available below:

Dear Chairman Graham:

Last week, in a huge bipartisan vote, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 8, the Bipartisan Background Checks Act, by a vote of 240-190.

A similar bill, S. 42, the Background Check Expansion Act, is currently pending in the Judiciary Committee. Statistics demonstrate that universal background checks save lives, and polls show that 97% of Americans support the implementation of these checks. We noted with interest your statements that you intended to have the Committee work on ‘red flag’ legislation and potentially also background checks, both actions we strongly support.

As cosponsors of S. 42, we respectfully request that you hold a hearing on this critical legislation as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration.