

## **The Killing Must End: LCWR Calls for Action to Prevent Gun Violence**

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Our hearts and prayers go out to those parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, and uncles who lost their precious children and to all who have been touched by the massacre at Robb Elementary School.

Unfortunately, their heartbreak has become all too familiar to students, teachers, and parents across this country. The Washington Post reports that since the attack at Columbine High School in 1999, nearly 300,000 have been on campus during a school shooting. In 2020 firearm-related injuries surpassed automobile accidents as the leading cause of death among children and adolescents according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Where is the outrage? How many more children are we willing to sacrifice?

We mourn with the people of Uvalde even as we continue to grieve for those lost to gun violence in Laguna Park, Buffalo, Parkland, Las Vegas, Sutherland Springs, Orlando, San Bernardino, Charleston, Newtown, Columbine, and in countless other cities and towns across this nation. We mourn the senseless killing made easy by the proliferation of guns and the pervasive culture of violence which plague our communities.

While there is much to grieve, we know that mourning is not enough. Prayers and condolences, as important as they are, are not enough.

It is well past time that our elected officials stopped listening to the gun lobby and heeded the cries of the people of this nation. It is well past time that we enacted sensible gun violence prevention legislation.

The Leadership Conference of Women Religious calls on Congress to immediately take up legislation that:

- requires universal background checks and mandatory waiting periods for all gun purchases;
- bans civilian ownership of high-capacity weapons and magazines; and
- provides funding to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to conduct public health research on firearm violence prevention.

We pledge to stand with all who seek to put an end to the epidemic violence in our land and to follow the path of peace. Let us never doubt that the deep darkness of these days can be overcome by the radiant light of our lives and actions lived in love.