

# An Assault on Love

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Every day [297](#) Americans are shot. Every day [89](#) Americans die from gun violence. In an average year, around [17,000](#) American children are shot and nearly [7,000](#) of them die.

All my adult life I have worked and campaigned to ensure everyone can love whomever they choose. I consider being able to love whomever you want to be a most sacred human right and I will do all I can to make sure love is allowed to flourish. For the last 30 years I have helped in my own way to lead the campaign here at home, and around the world, for LGBTQ rights - so we all can be allowed to love, marry, participate in our society openly and be who we are. All the while embracing and celebrating the diversity which makes our country stronger.

The LGBTQ community has achieved so much, and while there is still so much yet to do, the LGBTQ community must not let our fellow Americans be left without the same justice and love we are striving so hard to secure for ourselves.

The horrifying facts on gun violence remind us how we have to do more to stand up for love. Our work must include ending gun violence. Preventing guns and other military weaponry getting into the hands of people who hate should be a priority. We cannot always see what is in a person's heart but those who hate enough to kill innocent people can be deterred.

While we can and should remain committed to the 2nd Amendment, the right to own guns does not mean Americans have to suffer under the yoke of such violence and death.

Owning a gun, being trained in gun use, and hunting with a gun are seen by many as fundamental rights and a part

of the building blocks of America. However, this does not mean individuals should be allowed to have military style assault weapons, armor piercing bullets, and magazines with more than five rounds. This type of weaponry should not be available outside of our military.

Americans with certain documented and recognized mental health issues, or someone convicted of violent offenses, should not be able to purchase a weapon. This should also include those suspected of, or under investigation for being a terrorist.

Common sense dictates some parts of our country should and must be gun free, including schools, universities, hospitals, public buildings, and other “safe-zones”.

We need to ensure scientists and researchers are allowed to examine the causes of gun violence and how best to prevent any future gun violence.

The vast majority of gun owners support these types of sensible proposals. After Orlando, Baton Rouge, Minnesota and Dallas still in the headlines most Americans know and feel the situation cannot go on as it is.

One in every three Americans know someone who has been shot, gun violence is the second-leading cause of death for young people, an average of over 35,000 Americans are killed due to gun violence every year.

As noted by [CNN](#): “According to the [Gun Violence Archive](#), which compiles data from shooting incidents, a “mass shooting” is any incident where four or more people are wounded or killed. By definition, we’ve seen 136 mass shootings in the first 164 days of this year.” In the first half of 2016 already, [21 police officers](#) have been shot and killed while on duty; to these tragedies we must now add the 5 officers killed in Dallas and three killed in Baton Rouge .

We all recognize the list of the worst mass killings: Orlando where nearly 50 young people enjoying music, dancing and life were killed; Sandy Hook - 27 killed including 20 children aged between 6 and 7 years old, as well as six adult staff members who were at school; Virginia Tech - 32 people including college students and professors were killed; 12 moviegoers were killed in Aurora, Colorado; Tucson, Arizona saw 6 people killed and a U.S. Congresswoman shot in the head.

These terrible incidents may be some of the worst examples, but every day, all over our country, communities and families suffer under gun violence

This great Republic will never fulfill its promise of equal protection under the law while our nation lives in constant fear of armed attacks. An end to gun violence is necessary for the security of our citizens, and vital to the survival of our democracy. America can never be truly be united so long as mass shootings continue with no action from Congress.

We must view gun violence in America as an impediment to the future and success of our country, and we must act now.

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