



October 19, 2015

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
H-305 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services and Education  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Members Lowey and DeLauro:

On behalf of the [National Violence Prevention Network](#), I thank you for taking a stand in support of federal funding for research related to gun violence. In an environment where scant private dollars are available to help us better understand the circumstances that lead to gun violence, the federal government must assume a leadership role in facilitating the type of research that will inform the design and implementation of programs aimed at preventing the indiscriminate gun violence that has scarred communities across the country.

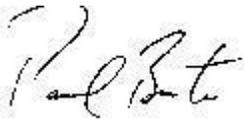
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS) is the only federal program that builds the evidence-base required to inform violent death prevention programs. One of the hallmarks of the NVDRS program is that it makes better use of data that are already being collected by health, law enforcement, and social service agencies. The NVDRS program, in fact, does not require the collection of any new data. Instead it links together information that, when kept in separate compartments, is much less valuable as a tool to characterize and monitor violent deaths. With a clearer picture of why violent deaths occur, law enforcement, public health officials and others can work together more effectively to identify those at risk and target effective preventive services.

Prohibiting the use of federal dollars to collect data related to firearms would largely gut the NVDRS program as the majority of violent deaths involve the use of a firearm. Such data is instrumental in pointing lawmakers toward the enactment of policies that are grounded in scientific evidence providing the greatest return on federal investments. Already, several states have successfully addressed gun violence within their borders by relying on NVDRS to target their gun violence prevention programs. In New Jersey, NVDRS has been used to stymie a rise in "gang-related" gun violence and the program has fostered collaboration between public health and law enforcement officials.

The federal government must lead in the support of programs that aim to inform the prevention of gun violence by building the scientific evidence base required to inform successful prevention strategies. NVDRS allows states to tailor their approach to gun violence while maximizing the impact of their gun violence prevention dollars.

We applaud your efforts to end the twenty-year prohibition on federal funding to support research related to gun violence and stand ready to work with you to ensure our federal agencies have the resources they need to inform gun violence prevention efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Bonta". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Paul Bonta  
Chair