December 7, 2016

Senator President pro Tempore Kevin de León
State Capitol, Room 205
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon
State Capitol, Room 219
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: California’s New Attorney General and Our State’s Gun Safety Laws

Dear Senator de León and Speaker Rendon:

We are a statewide coalition of groups working to prevent gun deaths and injuries in California. Since the early 1990s, we have helped pass more than sixty firearm safety laws in our state. These laws have been remarkably successful. From the peak California and U.S. gun death rates of 1993 through 2014, the firearm death rate in California declined by 58 percent while the rate in the rest of the U.S. declined by just 27 percent. (See the attached “California: Strong Gun Laws Save Lives.”)

You and other California legislators, past and present, have been crucial to this success through your courageous authorship and support for many important life-saving firearms regulations. This is a legacy worth defending.

Soon you will be considering the nomination of a new Attorney General who will be responsible for enforcing the crucial firearm regulations that you and the California voters have made possible. Governor Brown’s selection, Congressman Xavier Becerra, will need to vigorously defend these state laws against potential legal challenges, including those that may be brought by Congress and a Trump administration. He may also need to collaborate with Attorneys General in other states.
If, for example, there is an attempt to pass a federal concealed carry reciprocity bill – forcing states to recognize concealed carry permits from other states – the right of states to determine their own public safety policies would be significantly threatened. The next California Attorney General may need to join other state Attorneys General to defend the concealed carry permit granting procedures of the states.

We ask that these important duties be considered and emphasized during the confirmation process. It is essential that our next Attorney General vigorously enforce California’s firearm laws and employ every legitimate means to defend them.

As shown by the recent passage of Proposition 63, a large majority of Californians support strong gun safety measures. California voters expect implementation, enforcement and defense of the laws of our sovereign state.

Thank you for considering this request and for your exemplary work to reduce gun violence.

Sincerely,

Bill Durston, MD
President
Americans Against Gun Violence

Peggy McCrum
President
California Chapters of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence

Toni Wellen, Chair
Chair
Coalition Against Gun Violence, A Santa Barbara County Coalition
Josh Horwitz  
Executive Director  
Coalition to Stop Gun Violence

Friends Committee on Legislation of California

Juliet A. Leftwich  
Legal Director  
Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence

Mary Leigh Blek  
President  
Orange County Citizens for the Prevention of Gun Violence

Eileen Soffer  
Executive Director  
Rabbis Against Gun Violence

Bill Durston, MD  
President  
Sacramento Chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility
Adrienne Lamar Snider  
Executive Director  
Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles

Christine Laehle, MPH  
Chair  
Violence Prevention Coalition of Orange County

Margot Bennett  
Executive Director  
Women Against Gun Violence

Anne Marks  
Executive Director  
Youth ALIVE!