

Governor Rick Snyder
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, Michigan 48909

January 9, 2015

Dear Governor Snyder,

As women who are advocates for the safety and security of women and families, we have grave concerns over SB 789, a bill recently passed by the Michigan legislature that would allow your state to issue gun carry permits to domestic abusers. Domestic violence and access to firearms are a lethal combination, and this policy undermines the safety of American women. We urge you to veto this bill.

Gun violence against women is an American epidemic. One in 4 women experiences domestic abuse in her lifetime and 1 in 6 women experiences stalking. Meanwhile, the mere presence of a gun in a domestic violence situation increases the risk a woman will die by five times.¹ American women are 11 times more likely to die by a gun than women in other similarly developed countries.² Between 2001 and 2012 alone, 6,410 women were murdered throughout the country by an intimate partner with a gun.³ In Michigan, from 2003 to 2012, 53.5 percent of female domestic violence homicide victims were killed with guns.⁴

SB 789 would weaken current protections for victims of domestic abuse and stalking in Michigan- actually allowing some individuals subject to domestic violence and stalking protection orders to obtain a concealed pistol license, when under current law, they would be prohibited. For over 20 years, federal protections have been in place through the Violence Against Women Act that recognize the importance of keeping guns out of the hands of those who perpetrate domestic violence. Federal law, however, must be complemented by state laws, policies and procedures to provide complete protection to victims of abuse. If SB 789 were to be enacted, some women in Michigan would be left in danger, as the protections they have relied on would be removed. In addition, the concealed weapons permits would be valid in 39 other states through reciprocity agreements.⁵

Allowing dangerous domestic abusers and stalkers to obtain firearms needlessly puts the lives of women and their families at risk. We respectfully request that you veto SB 789.

Sincerely,

Former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords
Co-Founder
Americans for Responsible Solutions

Carol Robles-Roman
President and CEO
Legal Momentum

Deborah D. Tucker
Executive Director
National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence

Katie Ray-Jones
President and CEO
National Domestic Violence Hotline

¹ J. C. Campbell, D; Webster, J; Koziol-McLain, C. R; et al. 2003. Risk Factors For Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results From A Multi-Site Case Control Study. *American Journal of Public Health*. 93(7)

² Mayors Against Illegal Guns, "Gun Laws and Violence Against Women" (2013), available at http://libcloud.s3.amazonaws.com/9/e9/e/1726/1/Gun_Laws_and_Violence_Against_Women.pdf.

³ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Supplemental Homicide Data* (U.S. Department of Justice, 2001–2012); U.S. Department of Defense, *U.S. Casualty Status Fatalities* (2014), available at <http://www.defense.gov/news/casualty.pdf>.

⁴ Fact Sheet: Michigan Domestic Violence and Guns. October 2014. Available at: <http://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/CAP-DV-MI.pdf>.

⁵ State of Michigan. Concealed Carry Weapons Reciprocity. Available at: http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-58056_22672-60639--,00.html.

Kiersten Stewart
Director of Public Policy and Advocacy
Futures Without Violence

Lisalyn Jacobs
Vice President for Government Relations
Legal Momentum

Lori Weinstein
CEO/Executive Director
Jewish Women International

Margot Bennett
Executive Director
Women Against Gun Violence

Neera Tanden
President
Center for American Progress

Ruth Glenn
Executive Director
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Winnie Stachelberg
Executive Vice President, External Affairs
Center for American Progress

Michigan State Leaders:

Barbara Niess-May, MPA, MSW
Executive Director
SafeHouse Center

Jenny Kinne
President
National Organization for Women (NOW)
Grand Rapids Chapter

Valentina Djelaj
Coordinator
Connect to Protect-Detroit Coalition

Lanae Erickson Hatalsky
Director of Social Policy & Politics
Third Way

Lori Haas
Virginia State Director
The Educational Fund to Stop Gun Violence

Mai Fernandez
Executive Director
National Center for Victims of Crime

Michelle M. Garcia
Director, Stalking Resource Center
National Center for Victims of Crime

Robyn Thomas
Executive Director
Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence

Sue Hornik
Executive Director
States United to Prevent Gun Violence

Beth L. Morrison
President/CEO
HAVEN

Penny Wulff
Board Member
Turning Point, Inc.