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American Academy of Nursing Calls for National Commission on Mass Shootings

Washington, D.C. (February 16, 2018) — Today, the American Academy of Nursing urges Congressional leadership to launch a bipartisan National Commission on Mass Shootings within the next thirty days.

“The time to act is now. Thoughts and prayers for victims and families are simply not enough. We need the will of Congressional leadership to lead,” said Karen Cox, PhD, RN, FAAN, President of the American Academy of Nursing and Executive Vice President/COO, Children's Mercy Kansas City. “We need common sense gun laws.”

The American Academy of Nursing recommends the National Commission on Mass Shootings should be charged with identifying strategies for:

1. Creating a universal system for background checks designed to highlight an applicant's history of dangerousness and require that all purchasers of firearms complete a background check.
2. Strengthening laws so that high-risk individuals, including those with emergency, temporary, or permanent protective or restraining orders or those with convictions for family violence, domestic violence and/or stalking are prohibited from purchasing firearms.
3. Banning the future sale, importation, manufacture, or transfer of assault weapons, incorporating a more carefully crafted definition of the term “semiautomatic assault weapon” to reduce the risk that the law can be evaded.
4. Ensuring that health care professionals are unencumbered and fully permitted to fulfill their role in preventing firearm injuries by health screening, patient counseling, and referral to mental health services for those with high risk danger behaviors.
5. Focusing federal restrictions of gun purchase for persons on the dangerousness of the individual and fully funding federal incentives for states to provide information about dangerous histories to the National Instant Check System for gun buyers.
6. Supporting enriched training of health care professionals to assume a greater role in preventing firearm injuries by health screening.
7. Researching the causes of and solutions to firearm violence.

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About the American Academy of Nursing

The American Academy of Nursing (www.AANnet.org) serves the public and the nursing profession by advancing health policy and practice through the generation, synthesis, and dissemination of nursing knowledge. The Academy's more than 2,400 fellows are nursing's most accomplished leaders in education, management, practice, and research. They have been recognized for their extraordinary contributions to nursing and healthcare.

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