

Sir/Madam Chair,

My name is Megan Daman, and I am the mother of two Annunciation Catholic School students. On August 27, my children and others were under rapid gunfire for two and a half minutes—120 bullets shattered stained glass, ricocheted off pews, and tore into flesh. Fear, death, and destruction followed.

All of this was preventable.

Children describe how the “bullets rained down”. The on-going grief, confusion, disruption, and trauma is our reality.

All of this was preventable.

Yesterday, I attended the memorial and celebration of life for Harper Moyski, 10. We committed to carry Harper’s light forward. Last Sunday I attended the funeral of Fletcher Merkel, 8. We committed to keeping Fletcher’s exuberant energy going.

All of this was preventable.

I stand in full support of Senator Mohamad’s proposal to ban assault weapons. My family is a hunting family —this is not about hunting weapons. This is about assault weapons which have no place in civilian life.

I am a nurse, specializing in health promotion and disease prevention for both populations and systems and I see gun violence as a public health crisis. Every day in the U.S. more than 200 people are killed or injured by firearms.

All of this is preventable.

I urge you to support Senator Mohamed’s proposal, and to encourage your colleagues in the senate to vote in its’ favor when the time comes. We can follow the lead of the 11 states that already banned assault weapons and high-capacity magazines (CA, CT, DE, HI, IL, MD, MA, NJ, NY, RI, WA). These states demonstrate dramatic reduction in injuries and deaths after assault weapon bans. Assault weapons cause six times the fatality rates than other firearms in mass shootings.

We can look to other nations for evidence, for example Australia, where mass shootings have been eradicated since their ban of assault weapons.

Researcher Lundberg and colleagues’ statistically analyzed mass shootings before and after the federal assault weapon ban and demonstrate an unsurprisingly yet unrefusable fact: banning assault weapons prevents death and injury.

The research is clear: banning assault weapons prevents deaths. No single policy will solve all gun violence, but this step will save lives and protect our children. This ban would have prevented those 120 bullets from raining down on the people assembled at Annunciation Church.

Together, we can prevent gun deaths in Minnesota and provide us all a future filled with hope.

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