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Working to Reduce Gun Violence Since 1993

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House Passes Legislation to Improve Gun Background Check Database

ADVOCATES HERALD CONGRESSWOMAN CAROLYN MCCARTHY'S LEADERSHIP IN THE WORK FOR SENSIBLE GUN LAWS

(New York, NY) New Yorkers Against Gun Violence praises Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy for her work in helping keep guns out of prohibited hands. Through her leadership, the House of Representatives today passed a bill that will encourage states to add missing records to the National Instant Check System (NICS). The NICS system is a list of persons barred under current law from owning or purchasing a gun. The list includes: felons; those with orders of protection against them; and those who have been adjudicated mentally ill or those committed to a mental institution. Many states, including New York have not been providing all needed records on these individuals. Today's legislation will help ensure these records are updated as necessary.

Jackie Kuhls, NYAGV Executive Director said, "We are grateful to the leadership exhibited by Congresswoman McCarthy. She has worked hard for many years to bring sensible gun laws to our nation, and today's passage of the NICS improvement Act sets our country on the right course. "

The Virginia Tech massacre, the worst mass shooting in US history exposed the appalling shortcomings of our gun background check system. Congresswoman McCarthy has long urged her colleagues to address these problems that have allowed many prohibited persons to legally obtain a firearm.

Barbara Hohlt, NYAGV Board Member said, "The very least we can do as a nation is to ensure that we do not allow a person known to authorities as having the potential to commit a violent act, to legally purchase a gun."

It is important to note that while today's action was vitally needed, Congress still has work to do. 40% of gun buyers do not go through a background check due to various loopholes. Congress must close the gun show loophole.

In addition, tens of thousands of guns are sold in the illegal market every year. To address the illegal gun problem, law enforcement needs access to all the latest data and technology. We need to eliminate the Tiahrt restrictions on access to crime gun trace data so that law enforcement can go after illegal guns and gun traffickers.

Thursday, June 14th, ads will run in two newspapers: the Syracuse Post-Standard and the Kingston Daily Freeman urging Representatives Walsh and Hinchey to repeal the Tiahrt restrictions and give law enforcement the crime gun information they need. These two representatives are members of the committee that will decide on the fate of the restrictions.

Kuhls added, "Today's vote shows that Congress is willing to take sensible steps to save lives. We urge them to continue in this direction to bring down our sad national toll of 30,000 gun deaths per year."

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