

STATEMENT BY BALTIMORE COUNTY POLICE CHIEF JIM JOHNSON, CHAIR OF THE NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERSHIP TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE, ON THE SHOOTINGS AT THE NAVY YARD



Members of the National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence express our deepest sorrow and condolences to the families who lost loved ones in the tragic shooting at the Navy Yard in Washington, DC. We mourn the 12 people whose lives were needlessly cut short by a disturbed gunman, and wish all those injured in this heinous attack a swift recovery.



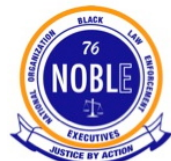
We commend the heroic actions of the law enforcement officers from all agencies who worked together as a team, saving lives while risking their own as they entered the facility to confront an active shooter. One of those officers survived being shot but a security officer (a retired state trooper) was shot and killed as he, too, served to protect others. Our nation owes a great debt of gratitude to them, to the other first responders, and to the medical professionals who worked tirelessly to care for all those physically injured and emotionally traumatized.



Gun violence is taking a severe toll on the people of our nation, day in and day out, including law enforcement officers, who are too often the targets of armed perpetrators. We, as a nation, have a responsibility to do all we can to prevent future incidents and the needless loss of life.



A comprehensive approach is needed to prevent dangerous individuals from acquiring guns. As a public safety imperative, law enforcement has been urging the adoption of a federal policy requiring background checks for all firearm purchasers, along with measures to ensure that all records, including mental health disqualifiers, are submitted to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS).



While a background check reportedly did not prevent the Navy Yard suspect from purchasing a firearm, other dangerous individuals are currently able to evade a check by going online or to a gun show, for example, where no questions are asked. It is alarming that a disqualified purchaser -- with a worse record of offenses than the suspect's -- can purchase guns without any check because checks are required only if the purchase takes place through a federally licensed firearms dealer.



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As those on the front lines, law enforcement urges policymakers to prioritize the problem of gun violence that claims more than one life every hour. We, as a nation, must no longer tolerate this needless carnage.

Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA)
Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association (HAPCOA)
International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA)
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