

NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERSHIP TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE

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STATEMENT BY BALTIMORE COUNTY POLICE CHIEF JIM JOHNSON, CHAIR, NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERSHIP TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE, ON THE SHOOTING AT EMANUEL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH



Members of the National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence (the Partnership) express our deepest condolences to the families and survivors of the shooting on Wednesday at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. We grieve for the nine victims whose lives were senselessly cut short, and for their families and loved ones, and our hearts go out to the survivors who endured unthinkable trauma in a peaceful place of worship. Our thoughts are with the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church and Charleston communities whose sense of safety and equilibrium have no doubt been shaken in the wake of this despicable act.



Law enforcement officials have acted swiftly in apprehending the individual suspected of carrying out this horrific shooting that is being investigated as a hate crime. News reports indicate that the suspected gunman had a record of offenses, including a felony drug charge that would have prohibited his possession of firearms. While all the facts are not yet known, it is obvious that the individual who committed this heinous and hateful act should never have been permitted access to firearms.



Gun violence is an urgent problem that can no longer be ignored and must not be tolerated. While we cannot reverse the loss of lives taken from us in Charleston on Wednesday, we absolutely can change course as a nation and institute policies that block dangerous individuals from accessing firearms. It is evident that we must require background checks regardless of whether a firearm is acquired through a gun dealer or at another transaction point. It is time for common sense to prevail.



It is inconceivable and appalling that Americans cannot go to sacred places of worship, movie theaters, schools, shopping malls or other public places without

fearing for their safety. As public safety officials, we stand united with leaders of the faith community in demanding an end to gun violence. Action is long overdue.

Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA)
Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association (HAPCOA)
Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA)
National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives (NAWLEE)
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