

George McGaughey, GVD president, met with Representative Kirkpatrick and her staff on July 20, 2022 to present the Green Valley Democrats' petition on gun violence--*Congress Must Take Action to End Gun Violence*. Gun related violence is sweeping the nation in record numbers in our neighborhoods, schools, churches, shopping centers and more.

George shared personal experiences with gun violence in Colorado and losing a good friend in El Paso, Texas.

Representative Kirkpatrick shared three areas she continues to address: education, safety and Red Flag Laws.

Education:

They both grew up in rural areas where guns were a necessity, but treated with respect. Children are being exposed to guns at a young age. The NRA needs to teach gun safety, not more guns as an answer.

Safety:

Keeping guns out of children's hands with lock boxes and separating guns and ammo should be priorities. High-powered magazines and military assault weapons should only be utilized by our law officers and servicemen and women, not for hunting or target practice. The new law would focus on adding after-school programs for older youth, and add training of school-based mental health staff. Providing resources to improve school safety and helping identify situations before they become destructive are a priority.

Red Flag Laws:

The Representative has worked as a prosecutor, confronting domestic violence cases. She was pleased that with the new laws, guns could be removed from dangerous parties prior to harmful acts.

Unfortunately, Congress is taking only small steps to end the country's gun violence. They are up against a powerful gun lobby. Groups like "Moms Demand Action" and other good resources help stem the tide of dangerous gun outcomes.

Representative Kirkpatrick declared that we need to work in bipartisan ways to bring gun safety to our communities. The next step is to see that Congress funds the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act in the next budget reconciliation. High points of this bill are now at our Headquarters for your review.

Thanks to all (over 300) who signed our petition and to Representative Kirkpatrick who has voted our voice in Congress over the years.