

First Church

First United Methodist Church of Seattle

December 16, 2012

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

Our church is shocked and deeply saddened by the December 14, 2012 shootings of twenty-seven innocent children and staff members at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. We know that you share our deep sorrow and concern.

We are writing today to urge you to pursue immediate legislation to reduce gun violence in America. Our denomination, the second-largest Protestant denomination in the United States, has spoken powerfully and forcefully on behalf of gun control:

"Violence and, more particularly, violence to children and youth is a primary concern for United Methodists. We recognize and deplore violence which kills and injures children and youth. In the name of Christ, who came so that persons might know abundant life, we call upon the church to affirm its faith through vigorous efforts to curb and eliminate gun violence.....A significant total reduction in the numbers of guns in our communities is our goal in ministry. We serve and our society's children go to school amidst passionately violent segments of current youth culture. No appeals to individual autonomy are sufficient to justify our church's ignorance of this threat. The need to prevent the incidence of firearm-related injury and death is an issue of increasing concern and a priority U.S. public health issue. The United Methodist Church is among those religious communions calling for social policies and personal lifestyles that bring an end to senseless gun violence..... We call upon [all] governments ... to establish national bans on ownership by the general public of handguns, assault weapons, [and] automatic weapon conversion kits...." (Book of Resolutions, 2012, The United Methodist Church)

Please act immediately to eliminate future tragedies like this. Our national paralysis about gun violence has led to a proliferation of weapons of death, and this proliferation has cost far too many lives. It is time for a considered and

comprehensive solution to this problem, including an immediate nationwide ban on assault weapons and meaningful restrictions on the quantity of guns in our society. We also recognize that a solution to the problem of gun violence must include an increase in the availability of free and effective mental health counseling.

We are deeply concerned both about a country in which gun deaths occur at astronomical levels, and about a country that seems unable or unwilling to find an acceptable solution. We will support your commitment to reduce and eliminate this problem, and we pray that your immediate action will help spare the lives of future innocent victims like the children and staff at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Thank you for your attention in this important matter.

Cordially yours,

Signature	Address
Signature	Address
Signature	Address
Signature	Address
Signature	Address
Signature	Address
Signature	Address
Signature	Address
Signature	Address
Signature	Address
Signature	Address
Signature	Address
Signature	Address
Signature	Address

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address