

## The Resources for Victims of Gun Violence Act

*Sponsored by U.S. Senator Bob Casey and Rep. Dwight Evans*

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Each day in the United States, more than 100 individuals are killed with guns, totaling nearly 40,000 deaths annually. According to a recent national poll, an estimated 10,000,000 individuals in the United States have been shot and injured in their lifetimes. Because of this staggering and alarming rate of gun violence, America is becoming a nation of gun violence survivors who have immense physical and mental trauma. Unfortunately, their struggles often go unnoticed.

Gun violence—whether suicide, homicide, mass shootings, unintentional shootings, domestic violence, hate crime or youth violence—has a devastating impact not just on survivors, but on the families, friends, classmates and coworkers of individuals who have been wounded or killed. All of these individuals are victims of gun violence who may face challenges and have unique needs as a result of the tragedy they have experienced. Furthermore, gun violence disproportionately affects communities of color, particularly racially segregated neighborhoods with high rates of poverty, with Black Americans representing the majority of gun homicide victims.

There are many programs and benefits at the federal, state and local levels that may help victims address medical, legal, financial and other needs. Yet these opportunities can be difficult to find and navigate, as victims noted in a 2018 *Philadelphia Inquirer* feature titled [Shot and Forgotten](#). The Resources for Victims of Gun Violence Act seeks to address these challenges by establishing an interagency Advisory Council to gather and disseminate resources and information for victims of gun violence.

### **Summary:**

The Resources for Victims of Gun Violence Act would establish an Advisory Council to help victims of gun violence—including survivors and the families, classmates and coworkers of individuals affected by gun violence—learn about and access the resources, programs and benefits that could help them meet a wide range of personal needs.

- The interagency Advisory Council would be composed of federal representatives from HHS, DOJ, the Department of Education, HUD, the VA, the Social Security Administration and other agencies, as well as victims of gun violence and victim assistance professionals like medical professionals and social workers.
- The Advisory Council would be required to assess the needs of victims of gun violence (including medical, legal, financial, educational, workplace, housing, transportation, assistive technology and accessibility needs), as well as gather and disseminate information about the resources, programs and benefits that could help victims meet their needs.
- In addition to disseminating information to the public, the Advisory Council would be required to submit to Congress a report on these resources and identify any gaps in policy that the government could address.

The Resources for Victims of Gun Violence Act is supported by: *Everytown for Gun Safety; Brady; United Against Gun Violence; March for Our Lives; Ceasefire PA; Coalition to Stop Gun Violence; National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV); Newtown Action Alliance; Junior Newtown Action Alliance; States United to Prevent Gun Violence; Survivors Empowered; Squirrel Hill Stands Against Gun Violence*