**Analysis: Modes of persuasion**

**An Important Message from Wayne LaPierre (2022)**

*June 14, 2022*

**Dear NRA Members,**

For over 150 years, the National Rifle Association of America (NRA) has been the nation’s leading voice in the call for responsible, law-abiding gun ownership and firearms education and training. With 5 million patriotic members, we promote Second Amendment freedom – and stand with you in opposition to the unlawful use of any firearm.

Our members, employees and supporters are parents, friends, and neighbors. We grieve with the people of Buffalo, New York, and Uvalde, Texas, and find it heart-wrenching that anyone is capable of the evil that fell upon these communities. We join our nation in the fight to confront this crime epidemic.

To be clear, we believe there are actions that should be taken, but they are neither easy nor convenient. The actions we promote include programs to protect our children and all other innocent victims of violent crimes. They do not encompass infringing upon the rights of the law-abiding to own firearms. We must do better than that.

The facts tell us the violence in our nation is not due to the age of law-abiding gun owners or their ability to lawfully access firearms. These heinous incidents are due to the acts of deranged, sick individuals. Any suggestion to the contrary is a disservice to those who have suffered the consequences of gun violence – or the promise we hold for a safer, more secure future. Here is what we stand for and how we support the call to service during these difficult times.

**Prioritize School Safety – with Dedicated Resources at the Federal Level**

The NRA calls for an immediate, federal program that funds safety measures at every school in America. Our schools must be safe and secure. There is no reason not to enact such legislation now – in the face of a national crisis that leaves our schools, and their children and teachers, vulnerable to acts of evil. We echo those who call for every school in America to be as safe as jewelry stores, banks, and sporting venues.

We know enhanced safety and security can help protect our children.

Just yesterday in Duncanville, Texas (outside of Dallas), a gunman arrived at a youth summer camp with the apparent intent of harming approximately 250 children inside a building. He fired a shot – leading camp counselors to immediately move kids to safe areas and begin locking doors. The shooter was denied entry into a locked classroom. Law enforcement personnel, who recently completed active shooter training, reportedly arrived within two minutes of receiving an urgent call for help. They fatally shot the gunman – and none of the students were harmed. We applaud the heroic, life-saving actions of the first responders and staff.

**Invest in Mental Health Services**

We call for an infusion of resources to address mental health – across all spectrums of our nation. We must not only have resources to support those in need, but actionable plans to identify and verify those who are threats to themselves and their communities. All too often, there are “warning signs” from the evil monsters who commit gun violence and murder. We see this time and time again.

Our current resources and infrastructure are not enough. According to one study, since 1955, our public mental health bed capacity has fallen by 96 percent from nearly 340 beds per 100,000 people to under 12 beds per 100,000 people. Our nation faces an acute shortage of psychiatric bed capacity. It is impossible to truly address the needs of those who may be a threat without active treatment and rehabilitation.

**Increase Funding & Support for Law Enforcement**

We join the nationwide call to provide law enforcement with increased resources and support, so they are able to protect us all. In the face of a crime epidemic, these brave men and women deserve advanced training, financial resources, equipment, and manpower to do their jobs. We support the countless NRA members who serve in law enforcement and the U.S. military who say that must end – now.

**Take a Firm Position on Gun Crime**

We must get tough on gun crime. We must arrest and prosecute criminals – bringing the full weight of our law enforcement community to confront the criminals who commit acts of gun violence. There can be no exceptions.

It informs policy choices to note a recent study that analyzed gun violence in our nation’s capital. That study estimated that 60 to 70 percent of all firearm violence is committed by approximately 500 individuals, whose “violence is predictable, and therefore it is preventable.” We must take immediate, direct action to confront these criminals, limit their access to firearms, and interfere with their ability to commit heinous acts of violence.

We have a roadmap to address today’s violent crime surge. During the last crime spike in the 1990s, policies were implemented to focus on arresting, prosecuting, and incarcerating the most violent offenders. Simply put, those policies worked. From 1993 to 2014, our national homicide rate fell by more than half.

Due to programs like Project Exile and Project Safe Neighborhoods, government resources can be focused on putting violent criminals behind bars. We should learn from the success of such programs and policies, and reaffirm our nation’s commitment to fighting violent crime at every level.

**Our Pledge**

As the NRA stands to protect the Second Amendment freedom of law-abiding Americans, it remains committed to working toward real and effective solutions to stop violence in our communities. We join millions of Americans in imploring all lawmakers to do the same: embark upon a courageous plan that protects schools, confronts the crime epidemic, and respects the freedoms of law-abiding citizens.

The echo chamber is full of “soundbite solutions” – ineffective measures that will allow crime to flourish, disarm law-abiding Americans, and allow our most vulnerable to remain unprotected.

We ask lawmakers to bridge the political fault line in the call to solve America’s crime epidemic. We challenge them to aim higher than the call for failed gun control policies defined by bans, restrictions, or initiatives that infringe upon the rights of law-abiding citizens.

Now is the time to take action for our children, citizens, and the collective vision we have for a safer, more secure America.

*Sincerely,*  
*Wayne*

An Important Message from Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president of the NRA <https://home.nra.org/statements/an-important-message-from-wayne-lapierre-evp-of-the-nra/>