

GOA GUN OWNERS OF AMERICA™

28 July 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable James E. Clyburn
Majority Whip
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steve J. Scalise
Minority Whip
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Hoyer, Majority Whip Clyburn, Minority Leader McCarthy, and Minority Whip Scalise:

Appropriations contained within H.R. 4502 and H.R. 4505 are at odds with the Bill of Rights. The House of Representatives has no business appropriating funds for programs that directly infringe on the right to keep and bear arms.

Gun licensing, so-called “red flag” gun confiscation orders (GCOs), and gun buybacks have nothing to do with “State and Local Justice Assistance” and have everything to do with undermining the Bill of Rights. Further, it appears this legislation goes out of its way to stigmatize mental illness. H.R. 4505 appropriates \$100,000,000 to bribe states to upgrade “mental health records” in the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) using the gun control laws known as the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 and the Fix NICS Act of 2018. In conjunction with the unabashed inclusion of the Schumer Amendment—which prohibits ATF from removing records from NICS even if individuals are adjudicated “not [...] likely to act in a manner dangerous to public safety”—this effort will certainly lead to more innocent Americans losing their gun rights.

Tragically, H.R. 4502 goes on to stigmatize mental illness as well, advocating for veteran disarmament using GCOs. If Congress truly intends to address the national tragedy of veteran suicide, then it must propose serious solutions which (1) identify veterans at risk for suicide, (2) reduce barriers to care, and (3) deliver necessary services in the pre-crisis phase of suicidal ideation. Lethal means safety recommendations also ought to be restricted to voluntary measures during the crisis intervention phase of suicidal ideation, where it is most properly suited. This is an important distinction, and one where the lines between objective public health policy and gun control advocacy have unfortunately been crossed in this appropriations package.

We are also gravely concerned to see \$50,000,000 earmarked for the Centers for Disease Control and National Institutes of Health, which is clearly intended to circumvent the longstanding Dickey Amendment. Taxpayer dollars must not be used to promote or advocate for gun control!

Gun Owners of America urges all Representatives who respect their constituents’ constitutional rights to vote against this legislation. With hopes for pro-gun amendments striking gun control from these bills dashed by the House Rules Committee, GOA will be scoring votes in favor of the final passage of H.R. 4502 and H.R. 4505 as anti-gun votes.

Yours in liberty,

Aidan Johnston
Director of Federal Affairs