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The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing regarding this week's hearing, "Addressing the Public Health Emergency of Gun Violence." The AMA agrees that gun violence in the United States is a public health crisis, with firearms accounting for almost 40,000 deaths annually, including suicides, homicides, and unintentional shootings. As such, there is a critical need for comprehensive, multi-faceted public health solutions. A key element of an enhanced public health response to preventing gun violence is improved surveillance and epidemiological research studying the causes of gun violence, the risk factors associated with gun violence, and interventions that might work. Accordingly, as you consider how the subcommittee can address gun violence, the AMA believes a specific funding allocation for federal research, including for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is a necessary first step to reversing the course on this crisis.

The lack of federally supported research on the epidemiology of gun violence severely limits the ability of our communities to implement effective interventions that would help stem the tide of gun violence. Public health is focused on preventing disease and injury in communities and populations on a larger scale and promoting public safety. Addressing the high number of gun-related homicides, suicides, and injuries—many of which are preventable—is as much a public health issue as is addressing tobacco use, underage drinking, alcohol and substance use disorders, vaccinations, safety belt use, and helmet use for bicyclists and motorcyclists. And, determining the root causes—through federally-funded research—of any public health problem is critical to developing solutions. Therefore, the AMA urges you to support specific funding, in the amount of \$50 million, for the CDC to conduct epidemiological research on gun violence as part of the Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations process. The AMA stands ready to work with you and your colleagues in Congress in reversing the gun violence crisis.

Sincerely,

James L. Madara, MD