



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONTACT:
Laura Wareck – 978-660-9587
John Rosenthal – 617-733-3559

**JOINT STATEMENT OF STOP HANDGUN VIOLENCE and THE MASSACHUSETTS
COALITION TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE**

**Final Version of Gun Bill Ensures that Massachusetts Will Remain a National Leader on Gun
Violence Prevention**

BOSTON, MA- Stop Handgun Violence and The Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence are pleased with the gun violence prevention bill that emerged from the Senate and House Conference Committee last night. It meets many of the goals that the Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence and Stop Handgun Violence set out to accomplish. Key provisions of the bill bring the Commonwealth into compliance with the Federal NICS background check system, require background checks for private gun sales and give police chiefs greater discretion in issuing rifle and shotgun licenses. The bill also advances suicide awareness and prevention in the Commonwealth through a multifaceted approach and ensures collection of important data to inform future policymaking efforts.

“We commend the House and Senate for prioritizing this issue and for their hard work in crafting this important legislation,” said Janet Goldenberg, a Massachusetts Coalition leader. “We are still reviewing the details of the bill to ensure that it will be as effective as possible, but overall this as a very important step forward.”

“The most critical and contested provision of this bill gives police chiefs necessary discretion in issuing rifle and shotgun licenses, a provision which will save lives,” said John Rosenthal, founder of Stop Handgun Violence. “It makes sense that police chiefs should be able to deny known abusers and the dangerously mentally ill from getting a rifle or shotgun. This bill closes important loopholes in the current law and I applaud Speaker DeLeo and Senate President Murray for their courageous leadership and the Conferees for reaching a solid compromise. Taken as a whole, this bill will save lives and keep Massachusetts a national leader on gun violence prevention.”

Stop Handgun Violence is a non-profit organization committed to the prevention of gun violence through education, public awareness, effective law enforcement and common sense gun laws. The organization does not seek to restrict Constitutional rights, but advocates only for common sense legislation that will help save lives. For more information, go to www.stophandgunviolence.org.

The Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence was founded in 2013 after the tragic shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. As an umbrella organization, the Coalition brings together organizations and institutions across Massachusetts to end the epidemic of gun violence that plagues our communities – suburbs, rural areas and certainly urban areas - and takes the lives of so many of our citizens. For more information, go to www.MAPreventGunViolence.org