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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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October 12, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I write regarding the shooting in Las Vegas, Nevada on October 1, 2017 and ask the House take up legislation as soon as possible to ban the manufacture, sale, transfer, and possession of bump stocks and other devices which accelerate the rate of fire of semi-automatic weapons.

The events of Las Vegas made us all pause with sorrow for the loss of life, with empathy for those that witnessed this tragedy firsthand, and questions about how we can prevent such violence from occurring once again. These are feelings too familiar to our constituents and I have been searching for answers to these questions since the Aurora Theater shooting in my district in 2012 and the Sandy Hook shooting later that year.

In March 2013, I learned of these bump stock devices and wrote a letter to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) urging they "rescind approval of gun products which allow for certain semiautomatic assault rifles to function as fully automatic when equipped with permanent 'bump fire' accessories." I believe these conversions should already be banned by the National Firearms Act of 1934. Rifles with these bump stocks I believe, meet the definition of a machine gun. Unfortunately the ATF disagreed, and responded by stating "ATF does not have the authority to restrict [bump stocks] lawful possession, use or transfer."

I agree the "smartest, quickest fix" would have been for the ATF to act to ban these deadly devices. However, the ATF made clear to me in 2013 they do not have that authority under current law. Mr. Speaker, these devices are dangerous, have killed and maimed too many people, and are designed to circumvent existing law banning machine guns. It's time the House of Representatives take up legislation to ban bump stocks and other similar devices to keep our constituents safe.

Sincerely,

Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress

Enclosures