

interfaith coalition
against domestic & sexual violence

JWI.ORG

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June 9, 2016

Dear Members of Congress,

As clergy members, faith leaders, and national faith-based organizations representing a diverse range of religious traditions, we believe that every person has the right to live free from violence and we are committed to fostering safe homes and communities. Domestic violence, dating abuse, and stalking are extreme violations of the dignity and humanity of a person, and these crimes have no place in our faith traditions. Wherever we see these crimes occurring, we must speak out, and when there is an opportunity to act, we must act. The epidemic of domestic violence, dating abuse, and stalking has a lethal intersection with convicted criminals' access to firearms. As faith leaders and advocates, we urge you to cosponsor commonsense legislation to update our laws and prohibit violent abusers from purchasing or possessing guns.

The Zero Tolerance for Domestic Abusers Act (H.R. 3130) and the Protecting Domestic Violence and Stalking Victims Act (S.1520) would close loopholes that allow convicted abusers and stalkers to buy and own guns. Currently, individuals convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence who have not cohabited with their victim or who do not have a child with their victim, and individuals convicted of misdemeanor stalking, are not prohibited from purchasing or possessing guns. When convicted abusers and stalkers have guns, women's lives are at risk.

Domestic violence is an epidemic in the United States, with one in four women experiencing severe physical abuse by an intimate partner, and the presence of a gun in a violent relationship raises the risk of homicide for women by a shocking five hundred percent. There is also a strong connection between stalking and future violence: one study found that seventy-six percent of women murdered by a current or former intimate partner experienced stalking in the year preceding the murder. Additionally, misdemeanor stalking convictions commonly arise out of domestic violence charges that are pled down; many stalking misdemeanants have already physically abused the victim.

Nearly half of all intimate partner homicides were committed by a dating partner, and stalking behavior is often used by an abuser to menace a victim after she leaves the relationship. Under current federal law, these convicted abusers can legally purchase and possess deadly firearms, which are all too often used to threaten, injure, and kill victims.

As nearly five hundred members of the faith community, we urge you to cosponsor the Zero Tolerance for Domestic Abusers Act (H.R. 3130) or the Protecting Domestic Violence and Stalking Victims Act (S.1520). In closing loopholes, this commonsense legislation would save lives and make our communities safer places for victims and survivors to worship, heal, and thrive. As people of faith, we affirm the right of every person to live free from violence, and we ask that you act now to protect that sacred right.

Sincerely,

Interfaith Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

The Interfaith Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence is a partnership of 36 national faith organizations working together to advocate for federal legislation and public policies that protect all people from domestic and sexual violence, with particular focus on women and youth. As a national coalition representing millions of congregants and constituents from diverse faith communities, our moral, religious and ethical commitments guide our work in ending violence against women.

ADDITIONAL SIGNATORIES:

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United Methodist Church
Little Rock

Rev. Jay Clark
Pulaski Heights United
Methodist Church
Little Rock

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Rabbi Randall Konigsburg
Temple Beth-El of
Birmingham
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Rev. Raymonda Speller
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United
Church of Christ
Montgomery

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Temple Chai
Phoenix

Pastor Don Benton
Scottsdale United
Methodist Church
Scottsdale

Rev. Frank Bergen
St. Matthew's Church
Tucson

The Rev. Eric Ledermann
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Church
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Cantor Paul Buch
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Cantor Kay Greenwald
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Los Altos Hills

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Cantor Leigh Korn
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Cantor David Reinwald
Temple Beth Shalom
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Northridge

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Shalom
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Cantor Natalie Young
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Aliso Viejo

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Cantor Emerita Aviva K.
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Santa Monica

Rabbi Menachem Creditor
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Shalom
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Rabbi Debbie Israel
Congregation Emeth
Morgan Hill

Rabbi Steven Reuben
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Sister Kathleen Bryant
Religious Sisters of
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Culver City

Sister Patricia McGowan
Sisters of Social Service
Encino

Sister Diane Smith
Sisters of St. Joseph of
Carondelet
Porter Ranch

The Rev. Deacon Marcia
Tyriver
St. Patrick's Episcopal
Church
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The Rev. Elizabeth
Monnot
All Saints Episcopal
Church
Sacramento

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Congregation B'nai Butte
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United Church of Christ
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UCC
Denver

Rev. Stephan Papa
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Westport

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Rabbi Marcus Burstein
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Ridgefield

Rabbi Liz Rolle
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Rabbi Jonah Dov Pesner
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All Souls Memorial
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Temple Emanu-El
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Ruma

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Galbreath
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Presence Sacred Heart
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Avilla

Sister Marge Wissman
Sister of St. Francis
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Sisters of Charity of
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Leavenworth

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Rabbi Howard Cohen
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Wrentham

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Rabbi Erica Asch
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Church
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Prince of Peace
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Preble St. Dunstan's
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Episcopal Church of St. John
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St. Paul's Church
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Cape Elizabeth

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The Rev. David Robinson
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Islamic Society of the
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Silver Spring

Imam Hassan Amin
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Clear Spring

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Rockville

Rabbi Gerald Serotta
Chevy Chase

Rabbi Charles Arian
Kehilat Shalom
Montgomery Village

Rabbi Jacob Blumenthal
Shaare Torah
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Rabbi Jack Luxemburg
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Rockville

Rabbi Jonatha Maltzman
Rockville

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Grace United Methodist
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Detroit Hope
Detroit

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Rabbi Kim Blumenthal
Beth Israel Ann Arbor

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Sisters, Home Visitors
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Rabbi Dusty Klass
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The Rev. Frederic
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Mahwah

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Rockaway

Rev. Susan Trigger
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Rabbi Donna Kirshbaum
New York

Rabbi Lori Koffman
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Rabbi Stephanie Kolin
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Rabbi Ari Lorge
New York

Rabbi Michele Medwin
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Nursing at Shul
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(USA)
Rochester

Sister Catherine Artal
C.I.J.
Rockville Center

Sister Carol De Angelo
Sisters of Charity of New
York
Bronx

Sister Margaret Sikora
Franciscan Sisters of the
Atonement
Garrison

The Rev. Dr. Derrick
Harkins
Union Theological
Seminary
New York

OHIO

Cantor Lauren Bandman
American Conference of
Cantors
Columbus

Cantor Sheila Singer
Shaker Heights

Cantor Alane Katzew
Cedar Village
Mason

Fr. Bob Wenz, Retired
Cleveland

Rabbi Sandford Kopnick
Wyoming

Rabbi Robert Nosanchuk
Anshe Chesed Fairmount
Temple
Beachwood

Rabbi Sigma Coran
Rockdale Temple
Cincinnati

Rabbi Irvin M. Wise
Adath Israel Congregation
Cincinnati

Rev. Dr. Beverly Bingle
Holy Spirit Catholic
Community
Toledo

Rev. Dr. Michael Castle
Harmony Creek Church
Kettering

Rev. Robin LaBolt
Sycamore United Church
of Christ
Sycamore

Rev. Michelle Torigia
Clergy, United Church of
Christ
Cincinnati

Rev. Denny Whiteside
First Christian Church
Delaware

Rev. Roger Osgood
Heights Christian Church
Shaker Heights

Rev. Chad Delaney
Mantua Center Christian
Church
Hiram

Rev. Beverly Jenkins,
Retired
Harmony Creek Church
Kettering

Sister Sandra Sherman
Ursuline Sisters
Toledo

Sister Phyllis Kemper
Ursulines of Brown
County
Cincinnati

Sr. Geraldine Nowak
Sisters of St. Francis
Sylvania

OKLAHOMA

Rev. Todd Freeman
College Hill Presbyterian
Tulsa

Rev. Raymond Knapp
Parish Church of St.
Jerome
Tulsa

OREGON

Bishop Bavi Rivera
Episcopal Diocese of
Eastern Oregon
Cove

Cantor Ida Rae Cahana
Congregation Beth Israel
Portland

Rev. Cecil Prescod
Ainsworth United Church of
Christ
Portland

Rev. Dr. Deborah
Patterson
Smyrna United Church of
Christ
Canby

Rev. Rebecca Strader
Christ's Church Methodist
and Presbyterian United
Falls City United
Methodist Church
Monmouth

PENNSYLVANIA

Cantor Michele Gray-Schaffer
B'nai Abraham
Butler

Cantor Jamie Marx
Temple Sholom
Broomall

Rabbi Meryl Crean
Wyndmoor

Rabbi Richard Hirsh
Wynnewood

Rabbi Valerie Joseph
Philadelphia

Rabbi Beth Kalisch
Beth David Reform
Congregation
Gladwyne

Rabbi Audrey Korotkin
Temple Beth Israel
Altoona

Rabbi Alan LaPayover
Reconstructionist Rabbinical
College
Philadelphia

Rabbi Robert Leib
Huntingdon Valley

Rabbi Rayzel Raphael
Temple Israel of Lehigh
Melrose Park

Rabbi Reena Spicehandler
Philadelphia

Rabbi Shawn Zevit
Mishkan Shalom
Philadelphia

Rev. Marian Shearer
Reading

Rev. Charlotte Whiting
Salem United Church of
Christ of Rohrerstown
Lancaster

Rev. Dr. Janet Edwards
Community House
Presbyterian Church
Pittsburgh

Sister Dolores Chepiga
Sisters of St. Joseph
New Freedom

Sister Colleen Dauerbach
Sisters of St. Joseph
Philadelphia

Sister Patricia Lowery,
MD
Medical Mission Sisters
Philadelphia

Sister Rita Lynch
Mission Helpers of the
Sacred Heart
North East

Sister Margaret Mary
McLaughlin
Sisters of St. Joseph
Philadelphia

Sister Marie Notwick
Sister of St. Joseph
Flourtown

Sister Jeanette Bussen
Sisters of St. Joseph
Baden

Sister Ann Marie Slavin
Sisters of St. Francis of
Philadelphia
Aston

Rabbi Linda Potemken
Congregation Beth Israel of
Media
Media

SOUTH CAROLINA

The Rev. Dr. Joanne Sizoo
Grace Presbyterian Church
Fort Mill

TENNESSEE

Deaconess Claire Lovelace
Munsey Memorial United
Methodist Church
Jonesborough

Rabbi Cantor John Kaplan
B'nai Israel
Jackson

Rev. Brandon Gilvin
First Christian Church
Chattanooga

Rev. Dr. David Butler,
Retired
United Methodist Church
Hermitage

Rev. Sharon Temple
Brookmeade Congregational
UCC
Nashville

TEXAS

Rev. Glenda Hardin
St. Stephen's Episcopal
Church
Liberty

Brother Gerard Sullivan,
ISM
Marianist
San Antonio

Cantor Devorah Avery
Temple Shalom
Dallas

Cantor Julie Berlin
San Antonio

Cantor Renee Waghalter
Houston

Rabbi Cantor Marie
Betcher
Cedar Park Police
Chaplain
Cedar Park

Rev. Jan Orr-Harter
Presbyterian Peace
Fellowship
Aledo

Rev. Charlotte Vaughan
Coyle
Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
Paris

VIRGINIA

Cantor Jason Kaufman
Beth El Hebrew
Congregation
Alexandria

Rabbi Gary Creditor
Rabbi Emeritus, Temple
Beth-El
Richmond

Rabbi Steven Rein
Alexandria
Rev. Tracy Howe
Wispelwey
Westminster Presbyterian
Church
Charlottesville

Rev. Kate Walker
Mt Vernon Unitarian
Church
Alexandria

Rev. Dr. M. Julius Hayes
Norfolk

Rev. Linda Harding
Strasburg

Rev. Marlon Haskell
Chicago Avenue Baptist
Church
Richmond

VERMONT

Rev. David Hamilton
All Saints Church
South Burlington

WASHINGTON

Rabbi Jason Levine
Temple Beth Am
Seattle

Rev. Dr. Marie M. Fortune
FaithTrust Institute
Seattle

Rev. Laura Shennum
Cascade Unitarian
Universalist Fellowship
East Wenatchee

Rev. Kathleen Bellefeuille-
Rice
Holy Wisdom Inclusive
Catholic Community
Olympia

Rev. Diane S. Whalen
Holy Wisdom Inclusive
Catholic Community
Olympia

Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz
University Congregational
United Church of Christ
Seattle

Rev. Kathianne Lewis
Center for Spiritual Living
Seattle

WISCONSIN

Cantor David Barash
Congregation Emanu-El
B'ne Jeshurun
Milwaukee

Rabbi Bonnie Margulis
Wisconsin Religious
Coalition for Reproductive
Choice
Madison

Rev. Jack Frohn
Oshkosh

Rev. Tom Williams
Peace UCC
Whitefish Bay

Rev. Sarah Kerkes
Our Savior's Lutheran
Church
Superior

Rev. Kimberly Stowel
Ripon

Sister Julie Tydrich
Franciscan Sisters of
Perpetual Adoration
Onalaska

Sister Barbara Anne Gluck
Sisters of St. Joseph of the
Third Order of St. Francis
(SSJ-TOSF)
Kimberly

Rev. Dana Schindler
Hyland Lakes Parish
Elcho

interfaith coalition

against domestic & sexual violence



Jewish Women International (JWI) is the leading Jewish organization working to end violence against women and girls. JWI's advocacy efforts focus on legislation that supports women and girls, ensures their economic security, and protects their right to live free from violence.

JWI is a steering committee member of NO MORE and the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence Against Women, and a principal leader of the Coalition to End Violence Against Women and Girls Globally. Our education programs promote financial literacy for women of all ages, teach teens and college students to understand and create healthy relationships, and build women's leadership in their careers and communities. JWI also supports abuse survivors with resources to help rebuild their lives, and builds children's libraries in domestic violence shelters nationwide.

JWI convenes the **Interfaith Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence**, a group of 36 national faith organizations united to advocate for policies that prevent domestic and sexual violence and support survivors. As a national coalition representing millions of congregants and constituents from diverse religious communities, our moral, religious and ethical commitments guide our work in ending violence against women.

Recognizing that domestic violence survivors often turn to their religious leaders and houses of worship for support, guidance and refuge during times of abuse, Jewish Women International convened an innovative interfaith coalition in 2007 to unite the collective energies and visions of faith communities and advance federal domestic violence legislation. Today, the coalition also advocates for legislation that addresses sexual violence, international violence against women, human trafficking, and other issues.

COALITION MEMBERS

American Jewish World Service • ASHA for Women • Association of Jewish Family and Children Agencies • Catholics for Family Peace • Episcopal Church • Episcopal Diocese of Maryland • FaithTrust Institute • General Board of Church and Society • Hadassah • Hindu American Seva Charities • IMA World Health/We Will Speak Out • Islamic Relief USA • Islamic Social Services Association • Islamic Society of North America • Jewish Community Relations Council • Jewish Council for Public Affairs • Jewish Women International • Karamah: Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights • Church Women United • Muslim Public Affairs Council • National Advocacy Center of The Sisters of the Good Shepherd • National Council of Jewish Women • Peaceful Families Project of United Muslim Relief • Presbyterian Church General Assembly Council • Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism • Religious Institute • Safe Havens Interfaith Partnership Against Domestic Violence • Tahirih Justice Center • Sikh Coalition • Sikh Family Center • U.S. Baha'i Office of Public Affairs • Unitarian Universalist Association • United Church of Christ • United Methodist Women