



## **SABA North America's Statement on Mass Shooting in Allen, Texas**

**May 16, 2023**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

SABA North America condemns the latest mass shooting in Allen, Texas on May 6. This included the killing of Aishwarya Thatikonda (a young Telegu engineer who was only 28 years old); three Korean Americans, including Cho Kyu Song, Kang Shin Young and their son, leaving only their six-year old son to survive this attack; the killing of Daniela and Sofia Mendoza (sisters who were in elementary school); Elio Cumana-Rivas (a 32 year old man who had recently immigrated to the United States to help support his family in Venezuela); and Christian LaCour (a security guard that saved others' lives during this attack).

We are outraged by the pervasive use of gun violence in America. According to the Gun Violence Archives, there have been 208 mass shootings in America since the beginning of the year, and only 130 days in the year thus far. <sup>1</sup> This includes the killing of 96 children under the age of 12, and the killing of 536 teenagers (ages 12-17) to date in America in 2023. According to a study done by the Centers for Disease and Control, guns are the leading cause of death in the United States for children and teenagers, surpassing car accidents in 2020.<sup>2</sup>

Two days after the shooting in the Allen, Texas mall, the Texas House moved a bill out of committee (House Bill 2744) that would raise the minimum age to purchase certain firearms, from 18 years old to 21 years old. We encourage the full Texas legislature to pass this bill this session, and ask that the U.S. Congress enact sensible gun safety measures to help prevent senseless violence in this country. While this might not have still saved the lives of those lost in Allen, Texas, it is a common sense measure that brings us one step closer to preventing future tragedies. We remember and pray for the victims of these horrendous crimes. From coast to coast, all throughout the United States, we are seeing an increase of gun violence. This is a public health emergency and requires a public health response. Last year, Congress took the first step with a bipartisan gun safety

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<sup>1</sup> See "Gun Violence Archive 2023" available at <https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/> (last accessed May 10, 2023).

<sup>2</sup> See "Children and teens are more likely to die by guns than anything else" Choi, Annette [CNN.com](https://www.cnn.com/2023/03/29/health/us-children-gun-deaths-dg/index.html) available at <https://www.cnn.com/2023/03/29/health/us-children-gun-deaths-dg/index.html> (last accessed May 10, 2023).

bill in the Safer Communities Act that SABA North America supported. We urge Congress to continue to support sensible public health options that will protect American lives and prevent the tragedies we are seeing unfold every day.