



Rep. Maloney Highlights Staggering Cost of Gun Violence in Hearing, Report

September 18, 2019

WASHINGTON—Congresswoman **Carolyn B. Maloney** (NY-12), Vice Chair of the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee, called on members of the Senate to find “the courage to act” to address the nation’s gun violence epidemic. She spoke at a [JEC hearing today](#), which came shortly after the Committee published a [state-by-state analysis](#) of gun violence that found the crisis imposes more than \$200 billion in total annual costs on the country, which is about 1.4 percent of GDP.

[Click here](#) to access the Vice Chair’s prepared statement and witness testimony. Here are key excerpts from the hearing:

“There is no way to estimate ‘cost of a human’ life. The loss is incalculable,” **Congresswoman Maloney** said in [her opening statement](#). “But there is also economic cost – a lost breadwinner’s income, astronomical medical costs, costs to employers, schools, police, hospitals and the criminal justice system.”

“In the United States, there are more guns in civilian hands than any other country in the world,” she said. “An American is nearly seven times more likely than someone in Canada to die by a gun, eight times more likely than someone in France, almost twenty times more likely than a person in Germany and almost forty times more likely than someone in the UK, Australia or New Zealand.”

The Congresswoman noted the JEC report finds rural states have the highest costs of gun violence as a percent of GDP, and states with high rates of gun ownership have the highest rates of gun suicide. “In contrast, my state of New York, which has stricter gun laws including an assault weapons ban, has one of the three lowest costs of gun violence as a share of its economy, along with Hawaii and Massachusetts.”

“Let us honor the victims of gun violence and their families by working to prevent more victims,” Rep. Maloney said. “Let us – like other countries in the developed world – turn tragedy into bold action. **And may all Members of Congress, especially those in the Senate, find the courage to act.**”

“The potential return on a nationwide investment in stopping gun violence would be huge in both lives and taxpayer dollars,” according to Democratic witness **Adam Skaggs**, chief counsel and policy director of the Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence.

“Data compiled by Giffords Law Center has made clear for years that states with stronger gun laws have lower rates of gun deaths and spend less on gun violence than states with weaker laws,” Mr. Skaggs said [in his opening remarks](#). “But our federal laws remain porous and ineffective and gun violence continues to be a tremendous public health and safety crisis that costs hundreds of billions of dollars each year.”

“We should all be free to live without the fear of being shot,” according to **Tina Meins**, whose father was killed in the San Bernardino, California shooting in 2015. “No one law can stop all gun violence, but there’s so much more we must do to keep our families safe. The House of Representatives has already passed bipartisan legislation to require background checks on all gun sales and is considering a strong Red Flag law. Now, the Senate must act on background checks and pass a strong Red Flag bill.”

“Across the country, survivors of gunshot wounds experience difficulties ranging from psychological trauma, loss of work, and steep medical costs,” she said [in her opening remarks](#). “Even after the immediate hospital costs, survivors of gunshot wounds face a lifetime of medical care costs including readmission to the hospital and nursing care...One study put the cumulative lifetime costs of treating gunshot wounds incurred in a single year in this country at \$2.3 billion.”

Press contact

Randy Woods

Randy_Woods@jec.senate.gov

(202) 224-2599