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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

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May 25, 2016

The Honorable Dr. Francis S. Collins  
Director  
National Institutes of Health  
1 Center Drive  
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dear Dr. Collins:

I write today to request information regarding the support of the National Institutes of Health for scientific research into the causes and prevention of gun violence.

In the aftermath of the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, President Obama issued a memorandum in January 2013 directing scientific agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services to conduct or sponsor public health research into the causes of gun violence and the ways to prevent it.<sup>1</sup> In response, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) asked the Institute of Medicine to convene stakeholders to identify the most pressing research questions on gun violence.<sup>2</sup> The CDC also met with a number of executive branch agencies to discuss approaches for strengthening data to understand patterns and characteristic of firearm violence, address research questions, and determine opportunities to collaborate on current or future efforts.

To better understand the efforts of the National Institutes of Health related to gun violence release and the President's memorandum, please provide the following information:

1. Please describe the policy of the National Institutes of Health toward scientific research into the causes and prevention of gun violence.
2. Please describe the efforts the National Institutes of Health have taken or plans to take in response to the President's January 2013 memorandum regarding gun violence research.
3. From 1996 to the present, please describe notable examples of research conducted or funded by the National Institutes of Health related to gun violence. Please also

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<sup>1</sup> Presidential Memorandum – Engaging in Public Health Research on the Causes and Prevention of Gun Violence (Jan. 16, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> In March 2016, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine renamed the Institute of Medicine as the Health and Medicine Division.

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provide all instances when the National Institutes of Health included requests for gun violence research in its research proposal solicitation materials.

4. For each year from FY1996 to FY2015, what portion of the budget of the National Institutes of Health has been devoted to gun violence research?
5. From 1996 to the present, have the National Institutes of Health faced any obstacles, such as a lack of funding or interest from the research community, in conducting scientific research on gun violence?

Please respond to this letter by June 24, 2016. The Committee's minority staff is authorized to conduct this investigation under the authority of Senate Rule XXV and Senate Resolution 73 (114<sup>th</sup> Congress). If you or members of your staff have any questions about this request, please feel free to contact Roberto Berrios at (202) 224-2627. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

With best personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,



Tom Carper  
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chairman