



# US FORUM CONNECTION

Volume 1/Issue 6

In this Issue  
Voice Your Opinion  
Gun Violence  
Postcards That Matter  
Philadelphia Forum Cancelled  
US Forum Facebook page

## US FORUM

Kathy Davis, Chair (OK)  
Kldavis52@gmail.com

Representatives  
Daphne Cagle, SW (CA)  
usforumswrep@gmail.com

Karen Walton, SE (SC)  
Kwserforum@gmail.com

Sally Nyhus, NW (MN)  
slnyhusdkg@gmail.com

Barbara Bostwick Quinn, NE (NY)  
Interim Editor  
barbarabquinn@rochester.rr.com

Website: [usforumdkg.org](http://usforumdkg.org)

## Promote Advocacy for DKG

Interested in Legislation?

Share your passion with  
fellow DKG members.  
Apply for the position of  
US Forum Connections  
Editor.

Contact Chair Kathy Davis  
at [kldavis52@gmail.com](mailto:kldavis52@gmail.com)  
for further information.



Feliphe Schiarolli@upsplash.com

## Covid-19 has reshaped our world

Home containment has moved the concentration away from sports heroes to the everyday heroes that support our communities. Changes necessary to prevent the spread of the disease have enabled us to focus on “local issues, number of hospital beds, adequate medical support, education, sustainable development, food insecurities, and nursing homes.

Now is the time to have legislature return to issues that affect the everyday American. More than ever, we as educators need to use a creative approach to instruction and assisting the children of America. We are on the precipice of changing the future. **We encourage our DKG sisters to move beyond the what was and focus on the what will be.** Our future is exciting as creativity and thinking outside the box will assist all in shaping not only legislation but our future.

Robert Glazer in his Forbes 4.1.20 Article, *Covid-19 Will permanently Change the Way Every Generation Lives Here's How*, wrote “With little warning, COVID-19 is changing everything about our lives – changes that are universal across generation. Although each generation will be affected differently, all will be forced to acclimate to a new normal. People of all ages will see their lives disrupted and experience new hardship. Perhaps this will compel us to put aside generational divisions and come together to navigate these new realities together.”

The US Forum Connection is dedicated to be a vehicle to inform members, initiate discussion and enable them to take action. We hope you will use the information here to assist you in navigating not only your future but the future for all of us.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/robertglazer/2020/04/01/covid-19-will-permanently-change-the-way-every-generation-lives-heres-how/#1db9106d493b>

***“Step out of the history that is holding you back. Step into the new story you are willing to create.” - Oprah Winfrey***

## Education Issues

### Ed secretary announces aid to create ‘student-centered’ funding systems

U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos has made \$3 million available to help districts create "weighted per-pupil funding" systems, part of an ESSA pilot available to districts for some time.

Andrew Ujifusa. "Betsy DeVos Announces Aid to Help Create 'Student-Centered' Funding Systems." *Education Week*. May 12, 2020

<http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2020/05/betsy-devos-funding-student-centered-systems-3-million.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59574054&U=252955&UUID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

### Schools brace for prolonged structural change

Schools that reopen in the fall are likely to look and feel different than the ones students abruptly left as schools closed to stop the spread of the coronavirus. Officials are considering how to stagger schedules to limit the number of students and staff in buildings at one time, while others are working to reimagine traditional schooling and shore up virtual teaching and learning capabilities.

Lauren Camera. "How School Will Change When Kids Return to Classrooms." *U.S. News & World Report*. May 8, 2020

<https://www.usnews.com/news/education-news/articles/2020-05-08/how-school-will-change-when-kids-return-to-classrooms>

### DeVos sets aside \$300 million of coronavirus aid for vouchers and virtual schools

Betsy DeVos set aside more than \$300 million of the billions in coronavirus aid to advance privatization of schools. Rep. Rosa DeLauro, chair of the HR subcommittee overseeing education appropriations, has written in opposition.

Matt Barnum. "DeVos to states: For extra relief money, create a virtual school or voucher-like program." *Chalkbeat*. April 27, 2020

<https://www.chalkbeat.org/2020/4/27/21239017/betsy-devos-coronavirus-states-grants-vouchers-virtual-schools>

"Rep. DeLauro Criticizes Betsy DeVos for Using Coronavirus Relief Funds to Promote Vouchers." *Diane Ravitch's blog*. April 27, 2020

<https://dianeravitch.net/2020/04/27/rep-delauro-criticizes-betsy-devos-for-using-coronavirus-relief-funds-to-promote-ouches/>

### How pandemic is devastating budgets and widening education inequities

The recession brought on by the pandemic is predicted to worsen inequalities in schools. Almost half of the nation's 13,000 school districts may be forced to make the deepest cuts to education spending in a generation—slashing programs and laying off hundreds of thousands of administrators, teachers and other staff—to fend off financial collapse. The districts most at risk share demographic profiles—student populations that are heavily black, Latino and low-income—and one crucial trait of their budgets: They get more than half their revenue from state aid.

Daarel Burnette II. "Devastated Budgets and Widening Inequities: How the Coronavirus Collapse Will Impact Schools." *Education Week*. May 8, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/05/09/devastated-budgets-and-widening-inequities-how-the.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news1&M=59571612&U=252955&UUID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

### Pandemic upends school meal service

The closure of schools led school nutrition professionals nationwide to reimagine traditional meal service. They adopted grab-and-go and meal-delivery programs and made adjustments to ensure the safety of students and staff.

Candice Norwood. "With schools shuttered, districts struggle to feed students and communities." *Public Broadcasting System*. April 27, 2020

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/with-schools-shuttered-districts-struggle-to-feed-students-and-communities>

## Issues concerning Women and Children

### Opinion: Gun Violence A Covid 19 Risk

Concerns about gun violence have been brought to the forefront during Covid-19. With food access, healthcare access, lost wages, increased anxiety about public and personal property, we need to pursue legislation to protect Americans.

**4.5 million homes have access to loaded and unlocked guns.** In many areas, handgun safety courses are cancelled and requirements are waived for permits, Ammo.com reports that it had an increase of 68% in sales in February and March 2020.



**Statistics show that 40,000 people annually are victims of gun violence** with 133,000 being shot and ending up in the Emergency Wards. A disproportionate number of people of color and ten times as many African Americans, gun violence is the leading cause of death. Statistics show that it is the number one cause of death for Black men ages 15-34.

**Hate Crimes and Xenophobic attitudes during Covid-19 have shot up.** The FBI estimates 8,500 hate crimes a year, with the report that Covid-19 began in China, Chinese xenophobia has skyrocketed.

<http://amnestusa.org/covid19-and-gun-violence>.

## **Gun Violence Legislation compiled by Daphne Cagle, SW Rep. and Barbara Bostwick-Quinn, NE Rep.**

### **Background**

“Gun violence is a multifaceted challenge that demands a holistic set of solutions to stop the cycles of daily gun violence in disadvantaged communities of color. In addition to limiting easy access to firearms by high-risk people, Congress should (1) address the underlying social and economic inequalities that fuel gun violence and (2) adequately fund community-based violence prevention efforts which build authentic relationships with communities and support community-based organizations.” *The coalition to Stop Gun Violence www.csgv.org*

### **Key talking points**

- There are more than 393 million guns in circulation in the United States — approximately 120.5 guns for every 100 people.
- In 2016, 4,648 young people ages 10-24 were victims of homicide- an average of 13 each day.
- Among children, the majority (89%) of unintentional shooting deaths occur in the home. Most of these deaths occur when children are playing with a loaded gun in their parent’s absence.
- In 2015, 2,824 children (age 0 to 19 years) died by gunshot and an additional 13,723 were injured.
- Suicide rates are much higher in states with higher rates of gun ownership, even after controlling for differences among states for poverty, urbanization, unemployment, mental illness, and alcohol or drug abuse.
- States implementing universal background checks and mandatory waiting periods prior to the purchase of a firearm show lower rates of suicides than states without this legislation
- In an April 2018 [review of mass shootings in the U.S.](#), 99 mass shootings have occurred since 1982, from which approximately 76 semi-automatic handguns and 89 assault weapons and weapons with high magazine capacity were recovered.

Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia Research Institute Center for Injury and Research Prevention  
<https://injury.research.chop.edu/violence-prevention-initiative/types-violence-involving-youth/gun-violence/gun-violence-facts-and#.XkrGNC2ZO2x>

### **Current Federal Legislation**

**H.R.435** — 116th Congress (2019-2020) **National Gun Violence Research Act, Sponsor:** Rep. Johnson, Eddie Bernice (D-TX-30) **Cosponsors:** (58) This bill amends various provisions of law and sets forth new provisions to promote gun violence research. Among other things, the bill does the following: removes limitations on the use of firearms tracing data by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; permits funds made available to the Department of Health and Human Services to be used for gun violence research; establishes the National Gun Violence Research Program to promote gun violence research; and authorizes various competitive grants to support research into the nature, causes, consequences, and prevention of gun violence. **Latest Action:** Introduced 01/10/2019, on 02/12/2019 Referred to the Subcommittee on Research and Technology.

U.S. Forum Connection June 2020

**S.184** — 116th Congress (2019-2020) **Gun Violence Prevention Research Act**, Sponsor: Sen. Markey, Edward J. [D-MA] **Cosponsors:** (42) This bill authorizes the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to conduct or support research on firearms safety or gun violence prevention. **Latest Action:** Senate Introduced 01/17/2019 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

**H.R.674** — 116th Congress (2019-2020) **Gun Violence Prevention Research Act of 2019**, Sponsor: Rep. Maloney, Carolyn B. (D-NY-12) **Cosponsors:** (98) This bill authorizes the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to conduct or support research on firearms safety or gun violence prevention. **Current Action:** Introduced 01/17/2019, on 01/25/2019 Referred to the Subcommittee on Health.

**H.R.971** — 116th Congress (2019-2020) **AVERT Future Gun Violence Act of 2019** Sponsor: Rep. Clark, Katherine M. (D-MA-5) **Cosponsors:** (2) This bill expands the categories of persons who are prohibited from receiving or possessing a firearm. This bill states it prohibits firearm sale or transfer to and receipt or possession by an individual who has been convicted in any court of a misdemeanor crime of animal cruelty. **Latest Action:** House - Introduced 02/05/2019, on 03/22/2019 Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security.

**H.R.3214** — 116th Congress (2019-2020) **Equal Access to Justice for Victims of Gun Violence Act**, Sponsor: Rep. Schiff, Adam B. (D-CA-28) **Cosponsors:** (37) This bill removes limitations on the civil liability of gun manufacturers and the disclosure of gun trace data in civil actions. Specifically, the bill repeals the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, which prohibits civil actions against a firearm or ammunition manufacturer, seller, importer, dealer, or trade association for damages resulting from the criminal or unlawful misuse of a firearm. Additionally, the bill states that firearms trace data maintained by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives is not immune from legal process. Such data is subject to discovery; is admissible as evidence; and may be used, relied on, or disclosed in a civil action or administrative proceeding. **Current Action:** 06/28/2019 Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security.

**S.1779** — 116th Congress (2019-2020) **Equal Access to Justice for Victims of Gun Violence Act**, Sponsor: Sen. Blumenthal, Richard (D-CT) **Cosponsors:** (14) **Committees:** Senate – Judiciary This bill removes limitations on the civil liability of gun manufacturers. Specifically, the bill repeals the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, which prohibits civil actions against a firearm or ammunition manufacturer, seller, importer, dealer, or trade association for damages resulting from the criminal or unlawful misuse of a firearm. **Current Action:** 06/11/2019 Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

*For more information on Gun Violence, contact Daphne Cagle, SW Rep at [usforumswrep@gmail.com](mailto:usforumswrep@gmail.com) or Barbara Bostwick-Quinn at [barbarabquinn@rochester.rr.com](mailto:barbarabquinn@rochester.rr.com).*

## Getting the Most from the US Forum Facebook Pages by Chair Kathy Davis

The US Forum proudly hosts two Facebook pages to meet our member's needs. The Official page: <https://www.facebook.com/DKG.US.Forum/> allows the Forum representatives a place to share pertinent information. Members can comment on those posts. Members can also make a post, but it is not seen on the main page. If the Steering Committee deems it appropriate, they will repost that info onto the main page.

The second page, The DKG US Forum Group page:

[https://www.facebook.com/groups/2269724846587657/?source\\_id=349823881770007](https://www.facebook.com/groups/2269724846587657/?source_id=349823881770007) is a group discussion page that allows members to post discussion questions concerning the Forum and Legislation. To keep up with the latest news, we recommend that you "like" both pages to receive updates when something new is posted.

**Opinion: Postcards that matter** Write your senators and congress members regarding promoting any of the bills listed. For every 5 continuants they hear from action is taken.



*Now that most of us are sequestered it might be that opportunity for you to pursue a legislative issue that you are concerned about. Connecting with your legislators during Covid-19 has generated new challenges. Email messages and connecting to the legislator's website messages have now taken priority. Contact to local offices and District offices for Congress often generates quicker responses. More than ever, your physical address and area code are factors in receiving responses from these offices. These offices will respond to phone calls and emails. Mailing postcards is still a way to address concerns but be aware that many are working remotely. Information regarding your legislators can be found at [congress.gov](http://congress.gov) and local county, city and town websites.*