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February 1, 2016

Dear Sen. Thurmond, Rep. McCoy & Gov. Haley:

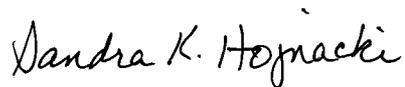
In the wake of the cowardly nonparticipation of my local parish yesterday in Stand-Up Sunday, this is my letter imploring you to support legislation to strengthen background checks for anyone purchasing a gun from anyone.

I do not own a gun. I fear being shot by a gun enthusiast far more than I fear being the victim of a crime. As a citizen, I am ashamed of our American gun culture. Our friends, neighbors, children must die so that paranoid white people (I'm white) can "defend" themselves against what? So that street gangs can arm up? So that home-grown terrorists and our mentally deranged can commit mayhem? Police officers can be vulnerable? Really? Please ask Senator Lee Bright, about whom Brian Hicks once said, "who isn't," if he favors allowing anyone to carry a concealed gun into the chambers of the state capitol building and the offices where you work. I think I know his answer, but I'd like him to explain.

It is my fervent prayer that those of us, the vast majority of citizens even in South Carolina, with "Gun Sense" will start voting on this single issue as consistently as the few NRA members turn out for their deadly agenda. The Trump, Cruz, and Sanders campaigns serve notice that many of us are fed up with legislatures not doing their jobs for us normal citizens. While there may be many "low-information voters" who can be energized with fear-mongering and hate speech that divide us, please don't underestimate those of us who see through the doubletalk of "enforce the laws we have" and "don't hire more agents for background checks because we want no new taxes and small government."

I am grateful every day for our Pulitzer prize-winning newspaper that sheds intelligent light on controversial issues from domestic violence to school choice, and now gun violence with in-depth reporting. Please read this series so that you have important information as you proceed in this session.

Yours truly,



Sandra K. Hojnacki