

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

CRIME -
MILLION MOM
MEETING

May 8, 2000

MEETING WITH MILLION MOM MARCH ORGANIZERS

Date: May 8, 2000
Time: 9:30 a.m.
Location: Roosevelt Room
From: Mary Beth Cahill
Bruce Reed

I. PURPOSE

To meet with the organizers of the Million Mom March (MMM) and learn how they became involved in the drive for gun safety measures. You will be briefed on the status of rallies planned around the country, as well as MMM goals for the future. There will be 15 community activists in the meeting, many of whom have lost children, spouses or friends to gun violence.

Donna Dees-Thomases, the MMM founder, will be seated on your right. Jaquie Algee will be seated on your left. She is the MMM state coordinator for Georgia and lost her son to gun violence. You should also know that Veronica McQueen is one of the participants. Her six-year old daughter, Kayla Rolland, was killed in the recent shooting in Flint, Michigan, and you met with Ms. McQueen in the aftermath of that tragedy.

II. BACKGROUND

The Million Mom March is scheduled to take place on Mother's Day, May 14. The March was conceived by Donna Dees-Thomases last summer in response to the shooting at a daycare center in Los Angeles. Its goal is to push Congress and other political leaders to take common sense action to protect children from gun violence. The steering committee for the March includes the Bell Campaign, a victim-led grassroots organization committed to preventing gun death and injury; PAX, a youth organization working to end gun violence; Handgun Control; and the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence.

Momentum for the March has been building. There are now rallies scheduled in 62 communities, including Los Angeles, Denver, Atlanta and Chicago. Rosie O'Donnell will host the event in Washington, DC where approximately 150,000 to 200,000 people are expected to participate. The expectation for March has been that a million people across the country will march – not that there would be a million in any one city.

The Million Mom March has several key policy goals on its agenda for common sense gun safety measures. The group has been most vocal in their support for licensing and

registration of guns. While they are pleased with your overall position on guns, they had expressed some earlier disappointment that you did not propose registration along with your handgun licensing proposal in the State of the Union.

In addition to licensing and registration, the group supports greater regulation of the design and manufacture of guns and ammunition – either at the Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) or at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF). Among some of the specific design criteria they specifically support are: a ban on military-style assault weapons; a requirement that locking devices be integrated into the design of each gun; a requirement that domestically-made guns meet the standards for imported guns (effectively banning cheap, “junk guns”); and other safety measures that make it more difficult for children to fire weapons and for gun accidents to occur. You have supported many of these safety proposals through legislation and the Smith and Wesson agreement. Your Administration has been silent on granting greater regulatory authority to the ATF or CPSC, choosing to instead focus new legislative efforts on licensing while continuing to build support for the more viable issues before the Congress, such as gun shows and child safety locks.

The group also supports tighter controls over the distribution of guns, including: limiting handgun sales to one per month; closing the gun show loophole; greater investigation of gun dealers who are identified as large suppliers of crime guns; and more funding for the ATF to allow greater oversight of the gun industry. And finally, the Million Moms March has called for the gun industry to halt marketing to children and criminals. Your budget proposal, legislation proposals, and the Smith and Wesson agreement support these goals.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Pre-Brief

John Podesta
Mary Beth Cahill
Bruce Reed
Eric Liu
Joe Lockhart
Karen Tramontano

Participants

15 Million Mom March Participants
Attorney General Reno
John Podesta
Secretary Shalala
Mary Beth Cahill
Bruce Reed/Eric Liu
Karen Tramontano
Joe Lockhart

IV. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- John Podesta will open the meeting and begin remarks and discussion
- 15 minutes into the meeting, you will join the group.
- The participants will talk about their personal reasons for organizing the march, as well as provide you with an update on the status of the events around the country, their goals and expectations for after the march.

V. PRESS

Pool Spray during meeting

VI. ATTACHMENTS

- Participant Information

**Talking Points for Meeting with Million Mom March
May 8, 2000**

- Thank you for coming to the White House to meet with us this afternoon. We know that many of you have traveled from all across the country to join us and we are pleased that you could be here today.
- As you all know, the President is absolutely committed to this issue. Keeping our children safe from gun violence has been – and continues to be – one of President Clinton's highest priorities. We believe the President's record shows how deeply he cares about preventing gun violence. From the day he took office, President Clinton taken on the gun lobby and has fought for passage of common sense gun safety measures like the Brady Law and the assault weapons ban.
- These laws are having an important impact on public safety. We've stopped over half a million felons, fugitives and others from buying guns through the Brady Law, gun crime is down 35 percent since 1993, and the number of Americans killed with guns continues to decline.
- But I think we all know, we still lose far too many American lives to gun violence every year. Nearly 12 young people are killed every day and three times as many are injured by gunfire in our country. Many of you here at the table know the devastating impact of even one life taken too soon.
- We have watched far too many gun tragedies unfold in the weeks and months. The bottom line is we can and must do more to combat the problem of gun violence. That is why the President has laid out an ambitious proposal to license new handgun purchasers. And it is why he has been pressing the Congress for over ten months to pass common sense gun safety measures to close the gun show loophole, require child safety locks for guns, ban juveniles from owning assault weapons, and bar violent juveniles from owning guns as adults.
- The Congress could pass these measures without further delay – and save lives in the process. But instead of siding with the interests of the American people, the Congress has decided to put the interests of the gun lobby first and prevent any action on these reasonable proposals.
- States across the country are becoming impatient and they are moving on their own to enact common-sense safety legislation. And at the grassroots, people like you are making their voices heard too.
- That is why it is imperative that mothers across America send a message loud and clear to the Congress and elected officials everywhere that inaction is intolerable. That protecting our children matters. And that officials will be held accountable for what they do – or don't do – to help save our children from gun violence.
- We hear that you are making great progress in ensuring that the Million Mom March is a success. I think what would be useful is to get an update from you on the March and hear about how some of you came be involved.

Final 05/08/00 8:20am
Heather Hurlburt

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
POINTS FOR POOL SPRAY AFTER
MEETING WITH MILLION MOM MARCH ORGANIZERS
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, DC
May 8, 2000**

- Attorney General Reno, my Chief of Staff, John Podesta, and I have just had an inspiring meeting with the organizers of the Million Mom March. I want to thank them for coming here -- those who have lost children or loved ones to guns, and those who haven't lost anyone, but understand that the death of a child is a loss for us all.
- They are here for a simple reason -- Americans want commonsense gun safety laws. People of different backgrounds are joining hands and saying enough -- it's time for sensible gun safety legislation that protects our kids. They're telling us that this is not about politics -- it's about the lives of our children. And they will be out marching on Mother's Day, May 14.
- This kind of grassroots movement is happening all across our nation. I've seen it in Colorado, where citizens are gathering signatures for a referendum to close the gun-show loophole. I've seen it in Maryland, where the state legislature last month passed our nation's first law requiring built-in safety locks for all new handguns. I've seen it in California, which banned junk guns and a new generation of assault weapons as well as limiting handgun sales. I've seen it in Massachusetts, which is now enforcing consumer product safety rules for guns.
- The Million Mom March will send a message of encouragement to everyone in those and other states who is struggling for sensible gun legislation. Millions of Americans believe that we can do more to keep guns away from children and criminals without constraining lawful gun owners across our nation. And this march will send a message to the gun lobby and its allies in Congress -- stop standing in the way of commonsense measures that will make all of us safer.
- The effort will not end when the last Mom leaves the National Mall. We still have a world of work to do to save the lives of the dozen kids who die in gun violence every single day. I urge Congress to seize this opportunity to take action on the gun safety bill that has been before it for more than 10 months. This Sunday I'll be what this group calls an "honorary Mom." And Sunday and everyday, I am proud to stand with these women who are coming to Washington from all walks of life to stand up for our children.

Million Mom March Meeting Participants

Jaquie Algee – Atlanta, GA

The Georgia State Coordinator for the Million Mom March, Ms. Algee lost a son to gun violence.

Mike Barnes – Washington, DC

Head of Handgun Control Inc., he is a former member of the US Congress from Maryland. He was also instrumental in starting Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and was an early Executive Director of MADD.

Mary Leigh Blek – Los Angeles, CA

Her son was shot in New York several years ago. Since this time she and her husband have been instrumental in handgun legislation in California via their own organization, Orange County Citizens for the Prevention of Gun Violence.

Donna Dees-Thomases – Northern New Jersey

Founder of the Million Mom March; she was mobilized into action by last summer's Woodland Hills Jewish Daycare Center shooting.

Carmalita Garcia-Konrad – Denver, CO

Along with Amy Sondicar from Colorado, she was mobilized to action by Columbine and is involved in state and local marches in Colorado.

Tina Jackson – Washington, DC

Ms. Jackson is the Washington, DC local organizer for the Million Mom March.

Tina Johnstone – New York, NY

She is the Northeast Regional Director for the Bell Campaign. Her husband was shot several years ago.

Andrew McGuire – San Francisco, CA

Executive Director of the Bell Campaign, Mr. McGuire serves on the Million Mom March Steering Committee; he has been an advocate for injury and violence prevention for the past 25 years.

Veronica McQueen – Mount Morris Township, MI

Ms. McQueen is the mother of first grader, Kayla who was shot at her desk at Buell Elementary by another six-year old child in March.

Catherine Murphy – Staten Island, NY

Her eleven-year old son Christopher was playing next door at the neighbor's house. The neighbor pulled out a gun to show it off, pulled the trigger and accidentally shot and killed Christopher.

Kimberly Rowland – Pleasanton, CA

She is a concerned mother from California who currently helps to coordinate the national and state Million Mom Marches.

Amy Sondicar – Denver, CO

Along with Carmalita Konrad from Colorado, she was mobilized to action by Columbine and is involved in state and local marches in Colorado.

Patricia Thomas – Burke, VA

Eighteen-year old son Jerome McBride was shot and killed by two of three teenagers who crashed a party that Jerome was attending. Jerome asked them to leave after they started making trouble, and they pulled Jerome out of the house and shot him in the back.

Suzanne Wilson – Bono, AR

Ms. Wilson's daughter Britthney Varners was killed in the Jonesboro Middle School shooting.

Steve Young – Chicago, IL

He is the lead for the Chicago Million Mom March. Mr. Young lost a son to gun violence.

Million Mom March Seating Chart

1. President
2. Jaquie Algee
3. Mary Leigh Blek
4. Suzanne Wilson
5. Kimberly Rowland
6. Carmalita Garcia-Konrad
7. Bruce Reed/Eric Liu
8. Karen Tramontano
9. Mike Barnes
10. Kevin Thurm
11. Veronica McQueen
12. John Podesta
13. Tina Johnstone
14. Janet Reno
15. Steve Young
16. Mary Beth Cahill
17. Joe Lockhart
18. Amy Sondicar
19. Andrew McGuire
20. Tina Jackson
21. Pat Thomas
22. Catherine Murphy
23. Donna Dees-Thomases