



Tom Barrett
Mayor, City of Milwaukee

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Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett released the following statement regarding President Obama's executive actions on reducing gun violence and creating safer communities:

I attended President Obama's address on gun reform on Tuesday, January 5, in Washington DC. Anyone who watched the address certainly had the same reaction I did – I was struck by the raw emotion and immense power that the President displayed in addressing this issue.

This is clearly an issue that is very personal for the President, just as it was for virtually every person who was listening to the words he spoke. There were family members present who had lost individuals to violence, whether it was from homicides, suicides or accidental shootings. Law enforcement was also present, along with individuals who understand how devastating this issue is in the United State of America.

As President Obama stated, this is not a debate about the Second Amendment; we support and respect the Second Amendment. However, it is about creating safer communities across the country and how important it is at the national level, as well as at the state level, to put an emphasis on responsible gun ownership.

This is about making sure those individuals who have committed violent crimes, have domestic violence restraining orders or a history of mental health issues do not have access to guns. This is not about sportsmen or self-defense. This is about making sure that our urban, suburban and rural communities are safe.

Here in the City of Milwaukee, the Milwaukee Police Department took nearly 2,500 guns off local streets last year. Our police department is acting proactively and ensuring a decrease in gun violence within our community.

However, what we witness here in Milwaukee and other urban areas are the slow-motion mass murders that don't generate a lot of national headlines, but still result in the loss of life. What I am hoping comes out of this is action. I recognize there will be disagreements, but I believe President Obama has made clear that Congress can act on this issue.

Here in Southeastern Wisconsin, the majority of residents can recall the high profile Azana Spa shooting that occurred four years ago. That was a case where the judicial system worked,

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the prosecution system worked and a restraining order was issued. Radcliffe Haughton, who was the assailant in that case, knew that he could not go to a registered gun dealer to buy a gun. So instead, he went to the internet and arranged to purchase the gun that he used to kill his ex-wife and two other women on that Sunday morning.

This is not about preventing things in the past, it's about preventing things in the future.

The President made it clear that this is not going to end all gun violence in this nation. However, these actions will create a significant impact in addressing the issue of gun violence throughout our local neighborhoods.

President Obama's address was personal, raw and emotional, and that is because it has affected too many citizens. Together, we can provide justice to the families of gun violence victims and prevent future tragedies from occurring throughout the City of Milwaukee, the State of Wisconsin and the United States of America.

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