

March 13, 2026

Minnesota Senate Building  
95 University Avenue West  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Members of the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee,

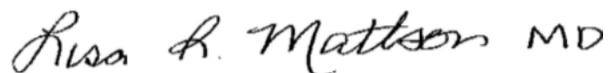
On behalf of the undersigned medical organizations, representing thousands of physicians across the state, we respectfully urge you to support legislation to ban assault weapons and high-capacity magazines in Minnesota.

The leading cause of death for children in the United States is not cancer, car crashes, or overdose – it is firearms. According to a report published by the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health in 2024, firearm deaths among those aged 1 to 17 have increased by 106 percent since 2013 and have been the leading cause of death among this group since 2020. Episodes of school shootings have risen sharply in recent years, too. These episodes, including the tragedy at Annunciation Church and School, leave children and families devastated, and leave a lasting impact on survivors and other school-aged children. Increased exposure to gun violence adversely impacts the psychological and mental well-being of children and teens and negatively affects their educational performance and social development.

According to the latest finalized data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2022, 48,204 died from gunshots in the U.S. – the second highest total ever recorded. More people suffer nonfatal firearm-related injuries than die, but those who survive often experience long-term traumatic impacts. These include problems with memory, thinking, emotions, paralysis, other physical disabilities, and chronic mental health problems including post-traumatic stress disorder.

There's no other way to say it – death and injury by firearm is a public health crisis. In 2022, firearm injuries ranked among the five leading causes of death for people ages 1-44 in the U.S. Physicians and other healthcare professionals witness firsthand the devastating impact of firearm violence on individuals, families, and communities. As physicians, we respectfully call on the state's lawmakers to enact evidence-based firearm policies to save lives and protect the well-being of all Minnesotans, but especially those who are most vulnerable – children and adolescents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa R. Mattson MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lisa Mattson, MD  
President, Minnesota Medical Association



Katie Smentek, MD, FAAP  
President, Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics



Jamie Conniff, MD, MPH  
President, Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians



Tseganesh Selameab, MD, FACP  
Governor, American College of Physicians, Minnesota Chapter



Erin Stevens, MD  
Legislative Chair, ACOG-MN



Lonnie Widmer, MD  
President, Minnesota Psychiatric Society



Israel Sokeye, MD  
President, Minnesota Society of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry