

## **Gun violence is the true national emergency**

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During the State of the Union address, President Donald Trump spoke repeatedly about a national emergency at our southern border. He spoke about a number of homicides by undocumented immigrants. My heart goes out to all the families affected. These criminals should be deported or prosecuted through our criminal justice system.

While these crimes are horrendous and should be addressed, research from the Cato Institute among others shows that illegal immigrants are less likely to commit violent crimes than native-born Americans. John Kelly, President Trump's former chief of staff, has stated, "The vast majority of the people that move illegally into the United States are not bad people. They're not criminals."

What President Trump ignored completely in his speech was any mention of the following:

- The victims of the Parkland, Fla., shooting and the other 172 mass shootings from 2009-2017, perpetrated primarily by young, white males.
- The 22,000 American lives lost every year by firearm suicide, making the U.S. gun suicide rate eight times higher than that of other high-income countries.
- The nearly 1,700 children and teens who die every year by gun homicide, contributing to the fact that firearms are now the second-leading cause of death for American children and teens and the first-leading cause of death for African-American children and teens.
- The 52 American women who are shot to death by an intimate partner in an average month.

This is the true national emergency, and President Trump offers no solution.