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Press Release

The Tragic, Preventable Death of Deputy Natalie Corona

Sacramento California, January 14, 2019: Americans Against Gun Violence extends heartfelt sympathy to the family, friends, and colleagues of Davis California Police Officer Natalie Corona who was shot and killed in the line of duty on January 10, 2019. Deputy Corona was investigating a traffic accident when a man on a bicycle approached her from behind and shot and killed her with a semi-automatic handgun.¹ Deputy Corona was 22 years old at the time of her death and had just begun working as a police officer with the Davis Police Department in December of 2018. She had first started volunteering with the department, though, when she graduated from high school, intent on following in the footsteps of her father who is a retired police officer.²

The alleged gunman, 48 year old Kevin Limbaugh, later shot and killed himself. Limbaugh had no reported history of mental illness, but he had been recently convicted of a violent misdemeanor after punching a coworker in the face, and after his death, investigators found a letter lying on his bed indicating that he was suffering from the paranoid delusion that the Davis Police Department had been “hitting” him with “ultrasonic waves.”³

While Americans Against Gun Violence joins many others in mourning the death of Deputy Corona, we believe that expressions of sympathy are inadequate responses to her death. We also disagree with those who would claim that her death was not preventable.

Deputy Corona is the second California police officer to be shot and killed in less than two weeks. Corporal Ronil Singh of the Newman, California Police Department was shot and killed with a handgun by a driver he had pulled over for suspected drunk driving on December 27, 2018.⁴ Nationwide, 52 U.S. law enforcement officers were fatally shot in 2018.⁵ The fatal shooting of police officers by civilians occurs rarely in the other high income democratic countries of the world.⁶ The rates of mental illness in these other countries are comparable to the rate in the United States,⁷ and the overall rates of violent assaults in most of these countries are higher than in the United States.⁸ The difference between other high

income democratic countries of the world and the United States is that all other high income democratic countries have far more stringent gun control laws and far lower rates of civilian gun ownership.⁹ In particular, civilian ownership of handguns is either completely banned or strictly regulated in the other high income democratic countries of the world.¹⁰

Americans Against Gun Violence calls for the urgent adoption of stringent gun control laws in the United States comparable to the laws that have long been in effect in every other high income democratic country of the world – countries in which not only are officer involved shootings rare, but mass shootings are rare or non-existent, and the average rate of gun homicide is 25 times lower than in our own country. Such laws include stringent restrictions, if not complete bans, on civilian ownership of handguns and all automatic and semi-automatic rifles. Until we adopt such laws, we shouldn't be satisfied with mourning the victims of gun violence. Rather, we should ask ourselves why we don't take the obvious steps necessary to prevent these killings from occurring in the first place.

¹ Hannah Darden, Benjy Egel, and Sam Stanton, "Gunned down on Her Beat: Officer Natalie Corona Mourned as Suspect Found Dead in Davis Home," *The Sacramento Bee*, January 10, 2019, <https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/crime/article224275110.html>.

² Molly Sullivan and Ryan Sabalow, "Natalie Corona, Killed in Davis CA, Was Proud Police Officer | The Sacramento Bee," *Sacramento Bee*, January 11, 2019, <https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/crime/article224291345.html>.

³ Sam Stanton et al., "Gunman Who Killed Davis Officer Natalie Corona Was Ordered to Surrender AR-15 Rifle," *The Sacramento Bee*, January 12, 2019, <https://www.sacbee.com/latest-news/article224372145.html>.

⁴ Mireya Villareal, 2018, and 6:37 Pm, "Manhunt for Suspected Cop Killer in California," December 28, 2018, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ronil-singh-police-officer-killed-newman-california-manhunt-today-2018-12-26/>.

⁵ Kate Smith, "9/11-Related Cancers Killed 15 Police Officers in 2018," *CBS News*, December 28, 2018, 11, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/911-related-cancers-killed-15-police-officers-in-2018/>.

⁶ "The Officers Killed on Duty," September 19, 2012, sec. England, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-19634164>; Jacques Marcoux and Katie Nicholson, "4 Decades of Canadian Police Homicides by the Numbers | CBC News," *CBC News*, August 11, 2018, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/4-decades-of-canadian-police-homicides-by-the-numbers-1.4781581>.

⁷ L. Andrade et al., "Cross-National Comparisons of the Prevalences and Correlates of Mental Disorders.," *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 78 (2000): 413–425.

⁸ "Assault Rate in OECD Countries: 2013 or Latest Year Available, % of Adults Assaulted in the Past 12 Months," OECD, accessed September 18, 2016, <https://figure.nz/chart/yd9BelUz6xKnvNpW>.

⁹ Max Fisher and Josh Keller, "What Explains U.S. Mass Shootings? International Comparisons Suggest an Answer," *The New York Times*, November 7, 2017, sec. Americas, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/07/world/americas/mass-shootings-us-international.html>.

¹⁰ "Gun Law and Policy: Firearms and Armed Violence, Country by Country," *GunPolicy.org*, accessed December 3, 2017, <http://www.gunpolicy.org/>.