



# Chinese American Service League

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Dear Friends,

In the first 186 days of this year, there have been 314 mass shootings, averaging more than one mass shooting daily. This time, at a 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade, a weapon of war was used to kill seven innocent people and injure dozens in suburban Highland Park, Illinois. Our hearts grieve for those lost and injured over the holiday weekend.

Sadly, it wasn't the only shooting that impacted our Chicagoland community. Two other shootings struck the heart of Chinatown. A shooting on Friday stemmed from what police say was an argument that escalated to all-too-familiar gun violence that struck two bystanders, ending the life of an innocent 24-year-old woman. Sunday morning, Chicago police confirmed another shooting that followed an argument.

These most recent tragedies are gruesome reminders that gun violence in our otherwise peaceful communities has reached crisis levels, and we must continue to push for change so our neighbors, friends, and family do not live in the shadow of gun violence. While federal gun safety legislation was signed last week to take steps toward a solution, the divide between legislation and reality continues to widen. Until we see more investment into communities to reduce stressors from a lack of basic needs, this problem will not quietly disappear. We need to see more mental health support, greater employment and workforce development opportunities, increased youth development and extracurricular programming – especially in communities grappling with rising rates of violence – and more strategic investments into the critical services that address basic needs.

We urge all those in our community and across the nation to raise their voice and stand up for positive change to bring consistent peace to our communities. We should not have to accept that these horrific acts of terror and rampant gun violence are simply a part of American life; in fact, we believe that this violence is the antithesis of American values.

CASL urges anyone impacted – directly or indirectly – by these most recent tragedies to reach out for help. Our Anti-Hate Action Center and Behavioral Health and Clinical Services staff are ready to listen, talk, and support you at no cost: [CASLService.org/Behavioral-Health](https://CASLService.org/Behavioral-Health).

We've said it before, and we'll say it every time: hate has no home in our country. We'll continue our efforts to work with all communities to eradicate hate in all forms and create a more equitable and safer future for all.

Yours in service,

Paul Luu, CASL CEO