

Issue: Gun Violence Legislation

Legislator: Gov. Tom Wolf

Date: March 10, 2016

Content: Remarks by Governor Wolf on Mass Shooting in Wilkinsburg

TRANSCRIPT: I want to express my sincere sadness over last night's senseless violence in Wilkinsburg. My thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of the victims of this terrible tragedy. Before I arrived, I received a briefing on last night's shooting from county officials including County Executive Fitzgerald.

And I want to commend local law enforcement for their swift response and assure you that the State Police is monitoring the situation, talking with local law enforcement and they stand ready to help if asked. We do not know all of the details of last night's tragedy, but what we do know is that urban communities like Wilkinsburg, and other towns and cities across Pennsylvania like Pittsburgh, York, where I live, and Philadelphia where just two nights ago there were 6 people killed, know all too well the horrific nature of gun violence in their neighborhoods. In Wilkinsburg, 40 percent of people live in poverty, and right here in the Pittsburgh area, there are 4 of the most impoverished school districts in the commonwealth.

Gun violence is tied to poverty, and we have to find ways to address the root causes of poverty in communities across Pennsylvania including Wilkinsburg. I am also working to restore the detrimental funding cuts to mental health programs that directly impact counties and municipalities across Pennsylvania, but we need to do more in Harrisburg to support mental health services.

We also must make sure that guns do not end up in the hands of criminals. We must take steps toward improving background check laws, and prevent criminals from gaining access to firearms. Mass shootings happen too often in this country and urban gun violence plagues communities across the country and right here in Pennsylvania and we have to find a solution.

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