

Automatic Gun Fire Prevention Act Statement

Let me thank Sen. Feinstein for her years and years of leadership effort on gun safety legislation. And thanks Sen. Blumenthal who learned a very, very painful lesson at Sandy Hook about the need for gun safety.

What happened in Las Vegas is a national tragedy, but it is one that we continue to repeat, as Sen. Feinstein listed off.

In fact, there are more mass shootings in this country than there are days in the year—events that become so frequent that we become numb to them.

But here is the point about Las Vegas: in a nine-minute period – nine minutes – a very sick individual was able to wound and kill well over 500 people. In nine minutes. And if it weren't for the bravery of individuals at that concert who risked their own lives saving others, and excellent police work, that number could have been much, much higher.

And the reason he was able to accomplish so much destruction, so much killing and wounding, in such a short period of time, was because he used a simple device to convert his semi-automatic rifles into fully automatic rifles.

In 1986, Congress, for very obvious reasons, banned the sale of automatic weapons, weapons which are designed to kill large numbers of people in a very short period of time. That's what those weapons are designed to do.

We agreed as a nation many decades ago to ban fully automatic weapons. Unfortunately, these so-called “bump stocks” provide an effective workaround to convert a legal weapon into an illegal weapon. In other words, if we want to enforce and honor the law passed in 1986, it is imperative that we pass Sen. Feinstein’s legislation.

Common sense suggests that we have got to do everything possible to prevent the conversion of semi-automatic rifles into automatic rifles. If not, the 1986 law means nothing.

While it is too late for the victims in Las Vegas, and the victims in Newtown, and the victims in Charleston, and the other terrible shootings that we have seen, it is not too late to prevent the next set of innocent Americans from becoming victims.

Now is the time to save lives in this country. Now is the time to pass this legislation.