

Erica F.

Dear [Salutation],

As a health care worker on the front lines of a pandemic, I've seen the toll that COVID-19 has had on Iowa families. I've spent months consoling patients and their loved ones as they face their worst days. As a mom, it's nearly impossible to shake the gut-wrenching fear that it could be my family next — especially when I know COVID-19 is not the only crisis facing Iowans. The possibility that I could get a call one day telling me that one of my sons has been taken by gun violence is all too real, because gun violence in Iowa is getting worse and worse.

As a veteran, my service taught me responsible gun ownership. As a gun owner and the wife of a hunter, I understand the importance of Iowa's sportsman heritage. I know we can prevent gun violence and honor Iowa's long tradition of responsible gun ownership at the same time.

Instead, our children have to learn how to hide from a school shooter. My son had to start practicing active shooter drills when he was only four, and I've never seen him so scared. Because of Iowa politicians like Ross Paustian who refuse to act, my son has to worry about the best way to stay alive during school instead of focusing on his learning.

Unfortunately, Ross Paustian sided with the gun lobby, which has spent thousands and thousands of dollars to elect politicians who block bills that would keep our children safe. While politicians play political games, gun violence in Iowa continues to rise. In fact, between 2009 and 2018, the rate of gun deaths in Iowa has increased at more than double the national rate.

When Iowa politicians were called back to Des Moines earlier this year to address the pandemic, I had hoped that frontline health care workers like me would finally get the resources we so desperately need.

But instead of action around the pandemic, legislative leaders used that time to weaken existing gun safety laws and pass legislation to allow guns in any public building in Iowa. I thought to myself, "Why are Republican legislators more worried about letting guns into my library than getting me a mask during a pandemic?"

Leaders in Des Moines are supposed to represent us. But when they don't support policies that keep our families safe, I can't support them. It's up to us to take action. So remember to return your ballot if you're voting by mail, or grab your mask and head to the polls to vote early in person now or on November 3rd.

Let's elect leaders who will support commonsense gun safety laws that reduce gun violence and keep our children and communities safe.

Sincerely,



Erica F.

Erica F. is a twice-deployed Army veteran, gun owner, and volunteer leader with Iowa Moms Demand Action.

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