



**children's
defense fund**
Leave No Child Behind®

Statement from CDF President & CEO on Uvalde Mass Shooting

This week, 19 children and two teachers in Texas lost their lives at the hands of another 18-year-old boy who should never have had access to firearms. For years—as guns became the leading cause of death for children and youth—CDF advocates and volunteers have pleaded with elected officials to “Protect Children, Not Guns.” Over the last two weeks, our teams in New York and Texas, and those preparing to serve thousands of scholars in CDF Freedom Schools® classrooms across the country this summer, have been rocked by the massacres in Buffalo and Uvalde. As a native Texan who lost a brother in a mass murder thirty years ago, I weep in grief and anger at the resistance of some and impotence of others to keep children and families safe.

In our collective moral outrage, the Children’s Defense Fund and our supporters call for the following actions:

- First, the United States Senate should ACT NOW to finally appoint a permanent director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, a post which has lacked steady, secure leadership since 2015.
- Second, Majority Leader Charles Schumer should schedule a Senate vote on the Bipartisan Background Checks Act to expand federal background checks and close loopholes in gun sales. While we have a sense of how this vote will turnout, it is important to get every United States senator on the record for accountability in this tragic moment and election year.
- Finally, we invite all who love children and find comfort in faith to pray earnestly for families impacted by these tragedies and for ourselves. In our prayers, let us consider what it may mean to take seriously the words shared in Jewish and Christian traditions that we should “beat [our] swords into plowshares” and “spears into pruning hooks.”