



**Office of
Representative Hannah E. Kane
Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jessica Beliveau, 617-722-2430, Jessica.Beliveau@mahouse.gov

March 2, 2018

**Rep. Kane joins Mass. House and Senate Republicans calling on
Congress to pass bill reauthorizing National Criminal Instant
Background Check System**

BOSTON – Members of the Massachusetts House and Senate Republican Caucuses are calling on Congress to reauthorize the National Criminal Instant Background Check System (NICS) as a critical first step towards addressing gun violence.

In a letter sent to U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Massachusetts Republican legislators urged Congressional leaders to schedule one of three pending bills – H.R. 4477, H.R. 4434 and S.2135, known collectively as the “Fix NICS Act of 2017” – “for immediate consideration by the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate.”

“Recent school shootings, including the one that took place on February 14 at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, have underscored the need to review our country’s laws to determine what steps can be taken to enhance public safety,” legislators wrote. “The three bills referenced above each represent a proactive approach to addressing gun violence by strengthening federal background checks.”

The letter was authored by House Minority Bradley H. Jones, Jr. (R-North Reading) and Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester), and was signed by 35 of their legislative colleagues, including State Representative Hannah Kane, R-Shrewsbury.

The “Fix NICS” bills would amend the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act by requiring federal agencies and departments to provide the NICS with information on individuals who would be prohibited from receiving or possessing a firearm, and to certify the information’s accuracy. The bills also call for the U.S. Department of Justice to develop an implementation plan, with benchmarks, designed to maximize states’ participation and compliance in submitting mental health and criminal history records to the NICS.

“Requiring local, state and federal agencies to submit key information to a national database in a timely fashion will provide law enforcement with an important tool to help identify individuals with a criminal background, a history of domestic violence, or other extenuating factors that would disqualify them from purchasing a firearm. Actively sharing information on a real-time basis is critical to preventing individuals who are determined to do harm from being able to access weapons like the ones used in the Parkland shootings,” legislators wrote.

While acknowledging that “this is a multi-faceted issue and more needs to be done,” legislators noted that the “Fix NICS” bills “represent a common-sense approach that virtually everyone agrees with on both sides of the aisle,” and therefore should be scheduled for an immediate vote.

“Although there are a number of additional proposals that have merit and are deserving of further discussion and action, we should not let the consideration of those initiatives that may be viewed as more controversial delay the passage of legislation at this time,” legislators wrote. “We firmly believe Congress should focus its immediate attention on strengthening our national background check system and moving forward with a vote on one of the three underlying bills referenced above so these changes can be implemented without any further delay.”

A signed copy of the joint caucus letter to House Speaker Ryan and Senate Majority Leader McConnell is attached.

###