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*Guns-  
POTUS  
statements*

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON  
DEPARTURE STATEMENT ON GUN VOTE IN CONGRESS  
THE WHITE HOUSE  
May 13, 1999**

On Monday, we brought parents and students, religious leaders and educators, and representatives of the entertainment and gun industries to the White House to lay the groundwork for a national campaign to prevent youth violence. We agreed that this is no time to point fingers and pass the buck. This is a time to show courage and shoulder responsibility.

Parents must take greater responsibility for their children's actions and get more involved in their children's lives. The entertainment industry must do its part. Even now, in the aftermath of Littleton, there are still some in the entertainment industry who throw up their hands and say that there's nothing they can do. But they are wrong. Every writer, director, producer must take responsibility for the content and power of what he or she produces. Let me say again, whatever else you do, don't market violence to children.

Perhaps the most courageous statement at our summit came from representatives of the gun industry. They vowed to be part of the solution -- to work with us to pass sensible measures to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children.

One of the important measures we agreed on was legislation to require background checks at gun shows. Over the past five years, the Brady Law has stopped more than a quarter million felons, fugitives, and stalkers from buying handguns. But there's a loophole in this law. Tens of thousands of guns are sold every year at gun shows without any background check at all.

Last night, a narrow majority in the Senate voted to preserve this dangerous gun show loophole. For the life of me, I just can't figure out how they could pass up this chance to save lives. I ask the Congress to reconsider its decision. There's simply no excuse for letting criminals arm themselves at gun shows.

Today, the Senate will continue debate on common-sense gun measures that gunmakers and sportsmen and ordinary citizens would welcome. The American people are watching this debate. They care deeply about the result.

As we all saw on Monday, the gun industry is ready to make progress. The country is ready to make progress. The Congress must do its part too. We can't expect parents, young people, and the media to take responsibility if we in government aren't willing to do the same.

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