

**REMARKS BY HUNTER RAWLINGS**  
**President, Association of American Universities**  
**PRESS CONFERENCE ON GUN VIOLENCE**  
**Organized by**  
**College Presidents for Gun Safety and Mayors against Illegal Guns**  
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I am Hunter Rawlings, president of the Association of American Universities, an association of leading public and private research universities. I want to commend all the speakers today for the strong stands they are taking on the critical issue of gun violence.

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, AAU issued a [Statement on Gun Violence](#) in America, written and signed by its Executive Committee on behalf of its 60 American member universities.

The statement was prompted by the tragic shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, and also by subsequent calls for more guns at schools and campuses around the nation to provide protection for students. The AAU does not believe that more guns on campus are the answer to student safety at our universities.

Instead, our statement urges the President and Congress to seek effective means of mitigating gun violence in American life by taking meaningful action in three domains: stronger laws to prevent gun violence, care of the mentally ill, and the culture of contemporary media.

The AAU has compiled and sent to Vice President Biden a list of researchers at our universities with special expertise in the causes of gun violence, constitutional issues relating to guns, mental health issues relating to mass violence, violence in the media, and other related matters. As leading research universities, AAU institutions bring a good deal of knowledge, experience and data to the national discussion now underway on reducing gun violence.

I am holding this morning a good example of this research: a just-published book entitled *Reducing Gun Violence in America. Informing Policy with Evidence and Analysis*. This volume contains the proceedings of a conference held at Johns Hopkins University exactly one month after the Newtown massacre. It represents the best and latest thinking of preeminent researchers on gun violence from the U.S. and around the world. Johns Hopkins' Center for Gun Policy and Research, which hosted the conference, conducts research from the perspective of public health, and the data it generates seem better suited to produce progress in our national debate than the tired slogans we are all used to hearing on the issue of gun violence.

It also seems clear to us that, while there is no panacea, no quick fix, for gun violence in America, we as a country need to begin to make real progress in reducing deaths and injuries from guns. The U.S. endures far more gun violence than other advanced societies, much of it on college campuses. We need to determine the reasons why, and the means of reducing such violence steadily and surely.

Joining me from AAU today is Sam Stanley, the President of Stony Brook University of the State University of New York. Sam not only heads a leading research university known for the quality and depth of its research, but is a physician who sees the issue of gun violence from the perspective of a public health expert. We would both be happy to answer your questions today.