

MESSAGE GUIDE: WE DESERVE
SAFETY FROM GUN VIOLENCE



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Moving the needle on popular issues is tough. Even though a majority of Iowans and Americans support measures to increase gun safety, certain legislators continue to stand on the sidelines while innocent Americans needlessly die.

We know President Biden’s signing of expanded background checks for buyers under 21 and funds to help with state intervention is a good step forward. But we also know we can do more. So, how do we keep pushing for universal background checks and bans on semi-automatic weapons? **By acknowledging our worth.**

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MESSAGE GUIDANCE

Start with a shared values statement.

Name the problem and define the opposition to our shared value. ***Don't repeat the opposition, even to negate. Speak proactively to reframe the issue.***

Frame the opposition as a "hurdle" we can overcome, rather than a "barrier" that stops us.

Make voters the protagonists and focus on values.

Provide tangible outcomes, and end with a call to action.

Emotion and **repetition** are powerful tools to use for every message. They help our allies remember the talking points and stay on message, allowing us to speak as a united front and frame the discussion.

SAMPLE MESSAGE: COMMON SENSE

<p>No matter which part of Iowa we come from, most of us, including gun owners, support common-sense gun laws.</p> <p>Common-sense gun laws protect all of us. They reduce crime and the risks police face. That's why gun owners, including police, support laws that reduce gun violence and improve safety. Yet, Senator Chuck Grassley has spent decades in Congress opposing changes that will save lives.</p> <p>It's time Congress act on gun safety laws in America and pass President Biden's common-sense plan to do so.</p>	<p>Shared Value</p> <p>Define the opposition, Tie to current events</p> <p>Call to action, outcomes we can achieve</p>
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SAMPLE MESSAGE: WORTHY

<p>Every Iowan knows the lives lost to gun violence are worthy of leaders who will act.</p> <p>Tragedies like those outside East High in Des Moines, in Ames, IA and Uvalde, TX forced American families to grieve loved ones far too soon. From Columbine and Sandy Hook to Ames and Uvalde, Sen. Grassley hasn't flinched, as if these lives don't matter.</p> <p>We cannot let the dreams and voices of these lost lives die too. It's time to pass President Biden's plans to prevent further tragedy.</p>	<p>Shared Value</p> <p>Define the opposition, Tie to current events</p> <p>Call to action, outcomes we can achieve</p>
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SAMPLE LTE

Please use our guidance to frame your personal story and unique passion on this issue.

While Congress and the President recently made progress on gun safety legislation, I believe it is not enough. I know that Sen. Ernst could have closed the boyfriend loophole before two young women were shot in Ames, Iowa, but she didn't.

We have been losing our children to protect the rights of gun owners for far too long. We know that plenty of gun owners and law enforcement support common sense gun laws. But a very loud minority continues to block gun safety laws. Sadly, they have the ear of our senior Senator Chuck Grassley. From Columbine and Sandy Hook to Ames and Uvalde, Grassley hasn't flinched. As if these lives don't matter.

His 'no' vote against the latest gun safety measure is unbearable. The lives we have lost and his constituents deserve better. We're worthy of legislators who will act on this issue. Senator Grassley has let us down.

KEY RESEARCH TAKEAWAYS

We know from testing experience that when an issue is already popular, it's hard to move the needle even further. This was the case in our gun safety message tests. A majority of Iowans support universal background checks and most of our research did not increase support.

However, one message did break through. Talking about the lives we have lost and what we owe them - action on gun reform - did move the needle. Our baseline of support for universal background checks was already at 79% among our respondents and **our “worthy” message encouraged Iowans to support them by another 6 points.**

While our other messages did not move opinions in our test, we know that ‘common sense gun reform’ is a common refrain and in our test it did not do any harm to use this messaging with Iowans.