

As we mourn the results of the shootings in El Paso, TX and Dayton, OH, we are also inspired to action

"It is hard to find the words anymore to describe the horror, the anger, the extreme sense of sadness and despair, about what happened to the beautiful community of El Paso. Hatred and white supremacy are crippling this country. Brown and black communities and immigrant communities are being targeted. Communities of color and our LGBTQ and native and indigenous brothers and sisters are living in fear. We deserve better." - Patricia Tototzintle, CEO of Casa de Esperanza

While violent racism is not new, the abhorrent incident in El Paso is indicative of the increased racial tensions and scapegoating of Latin@ people and Central and South Americans in particular. The use of words such as "illegal," "alien," "invasion," demean and dehumanize entire groups of people, particularly when spoken by those with power and influence. This hatred only spreads from there, touching communities of color, Muslims, Jews, LGBTQ, women, and the list goes on.

Violence is rooted in the belief that one person has the right to exert power and control over others, whether in interpersonal relationships or mass shootings like those that have rocked our communities from California to Connecticut, Texas to Ohio. We recognize that what occurred in El Paso is, among other things, a microcosm of the larger problem of oppression. We must make our relationships and communities safer by regulating the violent weapons that power so much of this violence – guns.

While we work on this common-sense solution, our coalition of community-based and domestic violence prevention organizations advocates of all kinds takes inspiration by the communities most affected. The people of El Paso, Dayton, Gilroy, and more are rising up, banding together, and demanding change. We must support and amplify their efforts, calling out damaging dynamics of power and control wherever we see them and working to make violence less common and less deadly.

Join us in turning your reaction to these events into action!

Ways you can help:

Contact your representatives!

You can find who represents you quickly and easily at [usa.gov](https://www.usa.gov)

Contact your Senators and tell them that you support an enhanced *Violence Against Women Act 2019 Reauthorization* that mirrors H.R. 1585, passed by the House with bipartisan support. This enhanced reauthorization calls for not allowing unmarried abusers in intimate relationships to own a gun if they've committed a violent act against their partner.

You can also tell your Senators that you support the Senate passing legislation that reflects H.R. 8, *Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2019*, already passed by the House.

Donate

Donate money to organizations that are helping victims and their families "on the ground." If you're unsure about the legitimacy of an organization's impact, check it out at [Charity Navigator](#). There are also several GoFundMe pages dedicated to helping victims' families.

For those in or near El Paso, TX, donate blood or in-kind

Follow Vitalant El Paso on [Facebook](#) to get updates about where blood drives are and how to get involved.

Check out [this Facebook page](#) for information on what people need and how to get it to them.

Give a tip in Dayton, OH

Police in Dayton are asking anyone who witnessed the shooting there to call its hotlines at 937-333-COPS(6217) to help with the investigation.

Post on social media

Let your representatives know how you feel by tagging them on social media, and follow the conversation with the hashtags [#ElPasoStrong](#), [#ElPasoFirme](#), and [#DoSomething](#)