'It's easier to get a gun than baby formula.' Athletes, celebs boil over latest mass shooting

By Stacy M. Brown NNPA Newswire National Correspondent @StacyBrownMedia

Nineteen children lost their lives at what was supposed to be one of the safest places in the world: school.

The May 24 massacre at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, marked the seconddeadliest shooting incident on a K-12 campus in America since 2012 when 26 students and teachers were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary in Connecticut.

The latest breach of America's once safe and sacred institutions, where two teachers were also killed, has numerous politicians from both sides of the aisle sending their "heartfelt" condolences to victims' families.

But it has struck a nerve with entertainers, athletes, and concerned citizens, all of whom expressed grief and outrage on social media and in interviews.

"It's been enough. We've been at 'enough' for centuries," actress Gabrielle Union tweeted following the May 24 massacre.

"It's sad the world that we live in," Golden State Warriors Guard Damion Lee told reporters after Game 4 of the NBA's Western Conference Finals. "Guns shouldn't be as easily accessible. Like, it's easier to get a gun than baby formula right now. That's unbelievable in this country that we live in."

An angry Warriors head coach Steve Kerr railed at reporters that "basketball questions don't matter."

"The 50 senators who refuse to vote on HR-8 [matter]," Kerr said, referring to a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives that would strengthen background checks for those seeking to purchase a weapon.

"They won't vote on it because they want to hold onto their own power. Fifty senators in Washington are going to hold us hostage. It's pathetic."

Authorities have yet to release the victims' names, but family members have identified some.

Ten-year-old Xavier Lopez counted among the dead.

His mother told the Washington Post that Xavier "was funny, never serious." "That smile, I will never forget. It would always cheer anyone up," Felicha Martinez said.

She said her son, an honor student, couldn't wait to go to middle school.

On Facebook, Angel Garza, whose 10-year-old daughter Amerie Jo Garza lost her life in the massacre, frantically asked for help locating his daughter before the grim reality hit.

"I don't ask for much or hardly even post on here, but please, it's been 7 hours, and I still haven't heard anything on my love," Garza posted. "Please help me find my daughter." Authorities identified the shooter as Salvador Ramos, who allegedly shot his grandmother in the stomach before the attack at the school. Officials said police shot and killed Ramos, 18, at the scene. By Stacy M. Brown NNPA Newswire Na @StacyBrownMedia Two months ago, cations Commission

Despite the bloodshed caused by Russia's invasion of his country, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky expressed his sorry over the Texas massacre.

"I would like to express my condolences to all of the relatives and family members of the children who were killed in an awful shooting in Texas," Zelensky said in a video message.

Uvalde-born actor Matthew McConaughey called gun violence an epidemic.

"Once again, we have tragically proven that we are failing to be responsible for the rights our freedoms grant us," the actor said. "The true call to action now is for every American to take a longer and deeper look in the mirror and ask ourselves, 'What is it that we truly value? How do we repair the problem? What small sacrifices can we individually take today to preserve a healthier and safer nation, state, and neighborhood tomorrow?' We cannot exhale once again, make excuses, and accept these tragic realities as the status quo," McConaughey stated.

Later, the actor said Americans need to rearrange their values on social media.

"Find common ground above this devastating American reality that has tragically become our children's issue," he wrote on Instagram.

"This is an epidemic we can control, and whichever side of the aisle we may stand on, we all know we can do better. We must do better. Action must be taken so that no parent has to experience what the parents in Uvalde and the others before them have endured. To those who dropped their loved ones off at school not knowing that today was goodbye, no words can comprehend or heal your loss, but if prayers can provide comfort, we will keep them coming."

Publicist and media brand strategist Nikki Curry added on Twitter that "the question still remains: what are we doing?" "Why does this keep happening? My heart aches for these families," Curry wrote. "Make it stop. Please."

Leadership Conference pushes FCC to eliminate digital discrimination

NNPA Newswire National Correspondent @StacyBrownMedia

Two months ago, the Federal Communications Commission announced it had opened a proceeding on how to prevent and eliminate digital discrimination to ensure that everyone has equal access to broadband internet access service.

When the agency issued the notice, commissioners called it the beginning of a process to establish a shared understanding of the harms experienced by historically excluded and marginalized communities to make meaningful policy reforms and systems improvements.

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and its Media and Telecommunications Task Force have responded with a 12-page letter outlining what the agency could do to help prevent and eliminate digital discrimination.

"The lack of access to broadband internet service among communities of color, lowincome households, and rural communities means that many vulnerable households are disproportionately excluded from full participation in our society and, thus, raises a critical equity and civil rights concern," members of the task force wrote.

"Congress agrees, and in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Federal Communications Commission and the U.S. Department of Justice have been tasked with 'eliminating' digital discrimination."

The letter, addressed to FCC Chair Jessica Rosenworcel, highlights existing studies that document the disparate deployment and access to high-speed broadband internet for the Commission. It also emphasized the need for detailed public data used to track and identify discrimination and urges the Commission to adopt interpretations that maximize the anti-discrimination protections of the statute.

Further, the letter asked the Commission to increase its resources for analyzing and identifying digital discrimination, and specifically, to augment the capacity of the Enforcement Bureau, create an Office of Civil Rights, and suggest anti-discrimina-

tion legal schemes that may be valuable in interpreting the new law.

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FCC officials did not respond to a request for comment.

The task force includes the Communications Workers of America, National Action Network, National Consumer Law Center, National Hispanic Media Coalition, UnidosUS, and the United Church of Christ Media Justice Ministry.

Officials said the task force remains committed to "ensuring that all communities, especially the historically underserved, have access to affordable, reliable, high-quality advanced communications services."

The letter determined that "highspeed broadband has become an integral platform for education, employment, health care, economic development, civic participation, and communications with family and friends."

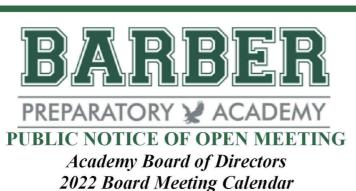
"The lack of access to broadband internet service among communities of color, low-income households, and rural communities means that many vulnerable households are disproportionately excluded from full participation in our society and, thus, raises a critical equity and civil rights concern," the group wrote.

Passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act left the FCC tasked with several directives to combat digital discrimination and redlining.

Earlier this year, Rosenworcel announced the formation of a cross-agency task force focused on preventing digital discrimination.

Rosenworcel said the task force would oversee the development of model policies and best practices states and local governments can adopt that ensure ISPs do not engage in digital discrimination. Further, the law dictated that those initiatives are completed by November 2023.

"The FCC should use the full panoply of its enforcement tools for the digital discrimination law," Leadership Conference Task Force members wrote. "The FCC may issue subpoenas, cease-and-desist letters, monetary forfeitures and enter into consent decrees."



INKSTER PREPARATORY ACADEMY PUBLIC NOTICE OF OPEN MEETING Academy Board of Directors

2022 Board Meeting Calendar

Later, after confirming that Amerie Jo had died, Garza thanked everyone for their assistance in trying to locate her.

"My little love is now flying high with the angels above," Garza wrote. "Please don't take a second for granted. Hug your family. Tell them you love them. I love you, Amerie Jo. Watch over your baby brother for me."

Lydia Martinez Delgado told a local television station that her niece, fourth-grade teacher Eva Mireles, was among the dead.

"I'm furious that these shootings continue, these children are innocent, and rifles should not be easily available to all. This is ... my hometown, a small community of less than 20,000," Delgado told KSAT-TV.

"I never imagined this would happen to, especially to loved ones. All we can do is pray hard for our country, state, schools, and especially the families of all." Pursuant of Michigan Open Meetings Act, Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, being Sections 15.261 to 15.275 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

> TIME: 5:30 pm DATE: June 28th LOCATION: Barber Preparatory Academy 45 East Buena Vista Street Highland Park, MI 48203 Phone: (313) 957-3005 Website: BarberPrep.org

A copy of the meeting minutes are available for public inspection at the Academy within 8 business days for proposed minutes and 5 business days for approved minutes.

The Academy shall comply with subtitle A of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Public Law 101-336, 42 USC 12101 et seq or any successor law. Should you require specific accommodations please contact Pamela Farris at pfarris@accelschools.com prior to the meeting.

Pursuant of Michigan Open Meetings Act, Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, being Sections 15.261 to 15.275 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

> TIME: 6:00 pm DATE: June 22nd LOCATION: Inkster Preparatory Academy 27355 Woodsfield Street Inkster, MI 48141 Phone: (313) 278-3825 Website: InksterPrep.org

A copy of the meeting minutes are available for public inspection at the Academy within 8 business days for proposed minutes and 5 business days for approved minutes.

The Academy shall comply with subtitle A of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Public Law 101-336, 42 USC 12101 et seq or any successor law. Should you require specific accommodations please contact Pamela Farris at pfarris@accelschools.com prior to the meeting.