

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 10, 2007

The Honorable Dennis Kucinich
Chairman
Subcommittee on Domestic Policy,
Committee on Oversight
and Government Reform
2445 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for taking the initiative to examine the failures of the National Instant Check System (NICS) which recently allowed an individual to obtain two firearms despite his adjudicated status as mentally ill resulting in the tragic loss of 32 lives. We join with you in expressing our deepest sorrow and sympathy for the victims and their families. We hope that our combined efforts will protect other families from experiencing any similar tragedy in the future.

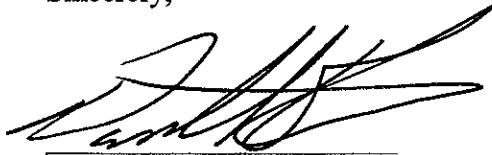
Though we share your view that there are serious implementation failures and inconsistencies in the state by state operation of NICS which must be examined and addressed if appropriate by the Congress, we are concerned about the tone which the majority has set for the May 11, 2007 Hearing of the Domestic Policy Subcommittee titled "Loopholes and Deficiencies in State and Federal Gun Purchase and Possession Laws." The tragedy at Virginia Tech, which is the ostensible impetus for this hearing, was clearly enabled by the failure to adequately implement the system envisaged by federal law which would prevent mentally ill individuals from obtaining firearms. This would suggest to us that rather than opening a debate on the individual right to keep and bear arms guaranteed by the Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, that it would have instead been more productive to have limited the scope of this hearing to the oversight of the operation and implementation of NICS.

By inviting 6 named witnesses, only one of whom may be qualified to address the failures of the NICS system, it seems clear that the majority intends to proceed with an agenda which does not focus on the very failures which impelled this hearing but one designed to reinforce the known views of the majority in general with regard to placing restrictions on the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding Americans.

By not conducting oversight into the essential failure of the system that gave rise to this tragedy, and instead choosing to engage in a debate about further limiting the rights of American citizens it may be reasonably inferred therefore that the majority intends to conduct this hearing without the intention to address the stated purpose for the hearing. It may also be reasonably inferred that the majority has no intention whatsoever of a considered debate on the subject of gun-rights, and further intends to silence entirely the view of Second Amendment supporters by denying them the ability to present even a single witness which may lend support to that view.

As your committee continues to open the debate on the Second Amendment, we urge you to avoid the appearance of, and in fact intolerance of, points of view in opposition to those of the majority. It is, after all, our charge to examine all reasonable points of view in order that we might all have access to the necessary information to make an informed and considered decision on the important questions before us.

Sincerely,



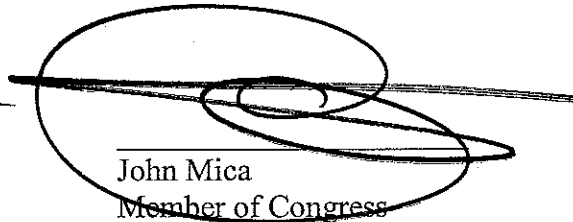
Darrell Issa
Member of Congress



Chris Cannon
Member of Congress



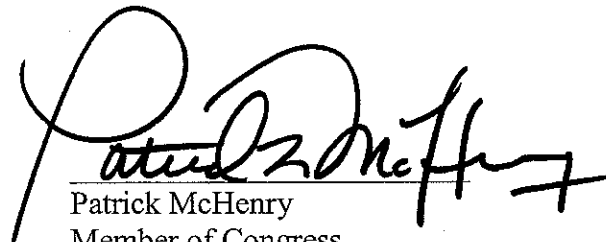
Dan Burton
Member of Congress



John Mica
Member of Congress



Mark Souder
Member of Congress



Patrick McHenry
Member of Congress