



The children and teachers that Uvalde, Texas is burying this week were denied the fundamental promise of our nation's Declaration of Independence: the right to enjoy their "unalienable Rights" to "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." When, in spite of unrelenting gun violence against Americans, our government fails to enact effective gun legislation, we are deprived of fundamental human rights.

Amnesty International has declared gun violence in the United States to be a human rights crisis and a violation of international law. "The right to live free from violence, discrimination and fear has been superseded by a sense of entitlement to own a practically unlimited array of deadly weapons, without sufficient regulations on their acquisition, possession and use. In the face of clear evidence of persistent firearm violence, high rates of gun ownership, and ease of access to firearms by individuals likely to misuse them, the USA is failing to meet its obligation to protect and promote human rights pursuant to international law." Amnesty International Report on US Gun Violence, September 12, 2018.

The Democratic Party of Benton County remains firm in its commitment to promote the enactment of gun-control legislation. We understand that the most effective way to accomplish this goal is to elect government officials who are not beholden to the gun lobby, and who place the life and safety of their constituents above financial or personal considerations. Democratic candidates running for office in Arkansas are running to represent us, not gun manufacturers.

In this effort, each and every one of us can play an important role. Register to vote. Make sure other members of your family who are qualified to do so also register to vote. Make sure to vote at every election – from school board, to City Council, to state and federal election. Help others get to the voting booth on election day. Write or call your representatives and let them know that you demand action on effective gun-safety laws. Volunteer to help Democratic candidates get elected.

Let's continue to make noise on this issue. Let's each of us be a voice for those whose voices were forever silenced on March 24, 2022.