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**Civil Rights and Gun Reform Groups Host Rally to
Denounce Hate and Demand Action**

Washington, D.C. – On Tuesday, August 6, Voto Latino, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, MoveOn, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Service Employees International Union, Labor Council For Latin American Advancement, and American Federation of Teachers hosted a joint rally against white supremacy and gun violence with a coalition over a dozen national civil rights and gun violence prevention groups in front of the White House. The group, along with approximately 250 allies and protesters, demanded that Donald Trump cease his racist, violence-inducing attacks on the Latinos, immigrants and communities of color, and urged the Senate to pass H.R. 8, a Bipartisan Background Checks Act already passed by the House.

Voto Latino President & CEO Maria Teresa Kumar kicked off the rally, stating “This is America, this is our country. We are stronger together. When people are trying to figure out if our vote matters, and it’s clear and what happened in November was a dress rehearsal. We’ve created the most diverse Congress in history because we registered and came out and voted. It’s through our unity that not only are we stronger but we do not mess around. This President has made sure that every Latino in this country feels less safe. I grieve with my people.”

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights President and CEO Vanita Gupta stated, “When Trump and his enablers denigrate communities of color and religious minorities, they deputize white supremacists to commit horrific violence. Pure and simple. Words of hate beget acts of hate. Policies of violence beget acts of violence. None of this is normal. None of this is acceptable. We are here to say: Enough is enough.”

NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund President and Director-Counsel Sherrilyn Ifill added, “Although President Trump did not invent white supremacy, he has given it new life in America. Given that Attorney General Barr has yet to offer a plan to address the rise of white supremacist domestic terrorism, every person in this country should be deeply concerned. But, we have to remember that none of the ideals we hold high were realized without a fight. None of our core beliefs were realized without people coming together to demand justice, truth, and equality. LDF continues to represent those who risked their lives to fight for American democracy. And today we are in the fight of our lives for this democracy.”

Brady United President Kris Brown said, “There is a toxic combination of hate and easy access to guns in this country. President Trump has spewed anti-immigrant, racist language time and time again— there is no question that he has given validation to hate filled individuals and their racist ideologies just like we saw in El Paso. We must address this problem at its root. We need to fix the weak gun laws in America that allow this hate to become lethal, and ensure that solutions take into consideration how communities are differently situated and differently impacted by gun violence.”

Planned Parenthood Action Fund Acting President Alexis McGill Johnson stated, “Gun violence is a public health crisis, racism is a public health crisis, and white supremacy is a public health crisis. The most powerful man in this country uses his platform to demonize and dehumanize immigrants and people of color at every turn — opening the floodgates to hatred and violence. We cannot let the silence and inaction of those in Congress with the power to confront the President’s white supremacy and to reform our gun control laws and go unchecked. Planned Parenthood Action Fund joins people across the nation in demanding change. We stand in solidarity with our partners, our patients, the people of El Paso, TX, the people of Dayton, OH, and every community that has been forced into mourning over gun violence.”

Muslim Advocates Executive Director Farhana Khera said, "It's not a coincidence that the El Paso shooter, the Christchurch shooter and President Trump's Facebook ads all call Muslims and Latinos invaders. The president, his allies, right-wing media, law enforcement and tech companies like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Amazon are all complicit in the spread of violent, white nationalist rhetoric and this must stop before more lives are lost."

United We Dream Advocacy Director Sanaa Abrar added, "Our communities are paying the price for the government's inaction to end gun violence and address white supremacy. Immigrants, Black, Brown, Indigenous, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, queer, students and low-income communities everywhere are suffering the consequences. We cannot allow this to continue. No more thoughts and prayers - we need change now. Every member of Congress - whether Republican or Democrat - must commit to consider legislation that confronts the epidemic of gun violence."

Service Employees International Union Executive Vice President Valarie Long said, "This is a moment of moral crisis for this country--this legislation is just the beginning of tackling gun violence and white supremacist violence. We need to stand together and demand change. The fear and division that President Trump and his worst allies are spreading with their hateful talk and policies is fueling violence. Plain and simple. It stops here and it stops now. Not one more. SEIU members stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in El Paso, Gilroy and Dayton, and communities across the nation are suffering from the trauma these attacks cause."

American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten said, "We are a nation in distress, and we must come together to repair what has been broken. Ninety-seven percent of Americans support stronger background check laws. Year after year, the data tells us the same thing: Stronger gun safety laws lead to fewer gun violence deaths. We must stand up to this cruelty and defend our democracy by getting to know our neighbors and working toward a safer and more just society. It is time to name those who stand in the way of that safety. Their actions are complicit here, and their failure to move on gun safety measures is tacit acceptance of the danger Americans face from gun violence, and the terrorism of white supremacy that threatens the very ideals of this nation. This cannot be the new normal. We are better than this."

Bazon Center for Mental Health Law Director of Policy and Legal Advocacy Jennifer Mathis said, “We represent people with mental health disabilities all around the country. I am here to tell you, from a disability rights perspective, that it is time to move away from the usual efforts to deflect attention away from the real issues we face, from racism, bigotry and hatred, and away from real gun violence prevention, by falsely blaming people with mental health disabilities for all gun violence prevention. These shootings were not about mental illness. Hate is not a mental illness. Scapegoating and

demonizing people with psychiatric disabilities, not only distracts from serious efforts to address gun violence and hatred, it also inflicts serious harm on people with mental health disabilities.”

Human Rights Campaign Director of Strategic Initiatives Ben Needham said, "The mass shootings and gun violence we saw this past weekend in Dayton, Ohio and El Paso, Texas have a direct correlation to the hate and hate speech we hear every day from white supremacy. Donald Trump's racist attacks on Latinx folks, immigrants, and communities of color invite violence and only empowers those who wish to do our communities harm. We now need this White House, Mitch McConnell, and the U.S. Senate to address this epidemic of violence with passing HR 8 and signing it into law along with other common sense gun reform or stand aside for new lawmakers who can."

Rabbi Jack Moline, Interfaith Alliance President, led a moment of silence for the victims of mass shootings. He added, “President Trump continues to use white supremacist rhetoric to stoke violence and instill fear in our communities. As hate crime rates continue to rise, we have a duty to call out bigotry in all its forms and to recognize that #WhiteSupremacyKills. We are proud to stand with Voto Latino, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, MoveOn, and others to say enough is enough. Bigotry and white supremacy have no place in the White House.

MoveOn Campaign Director Emma Einhorn stated, "When Trump dehumanizes people through his words and enacts policies for the government to treat them inhumanely, when he normalizes hate speech and jokes about shooting immigrants, when he routinely terrorizes the immigrant community through actions like ending DACA and threatening mass ICE raids and when he hires white supremacists like Stephen Miller in his administration, it clearly lays the groundwork for violence. Guns inflict hate-filled violence all over our country. It is on all of us to reject and disarm hate. "

Labor Council for Latin American Advancement Executive Director Hector Sanchez concluded the event by adding, “We have a lot of media. We need to send a national message that we have people of color in this nation and we need to be reflected in this media because we need to do much better as a nation. We are here, right in front of the White House, to send a clear message. All of us together, who reflect the beautiful tapestry of our nation, are here to say, ‘Enough!’”

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Voto Latino is a pioneering civic media organization that seeks to transform America by recognizing Latinos’ innate leadership. Through innovative digital campaigns, pop culture, and grassroots voices, we provide culturally relevant programs that engage, educate and empower Latinos to be agents of change. Together, we aim to build a stronger and more inclusive democracy.