

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 124

WHEREAS, in recent years, our country has been plagued by senseless and devastating mass shootings victimizing numerous innocent persons, and their families, friends, loved ones, and communities; and

WHEREAS, on July 20, 2012, New Jersey, along with the rest of the nation, mourned the loss of the twelve victims and prayed for the full recovery of the fifty-eight individuals injured by acts of violence that befell moviegoers in Aurora, Colorado; and

WHEREAS, on December 14, 2012, we again collectively mourned with profound sadness the death of twenty innocent children and six dedicated educators whose lives were lost in a horrific act of violence at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, with each horrific act, we all grieve the immeasurable losses suffered by the families, friends, loved ones, and communities of the fallen and search for ways to keep our families and communities safe; and

WHEREAS, the facts underlying those and other similar tragedies are varied and complex, and reveal myriad factors contributing to these ghastly acts of violence, including deficiencies in gun control laws, imperfections in the delivery of mental health and addictive behavior services, and vulnerabilities in school safety and emergency response protocol; and

WHEREAS, we can – and indeed – must do more to ensure the safety of all New Jerseyans, specifically our most innocent school children who all too often are victimized by such grave violence; and

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of each tragedy, various solutions have been proffered to prevent future acts of violence and senseless loss of life; and

WHEREAS, responsible gun ownership has always been a part of our State's, and our Nation's history, and new solutions designed to stem the tide of violence in our communities should build on the appropriate traditions of mature, conscientious, and accountable ownership of firearms; and

WHEREAS, a comprehensive, balanced, and well-informed approach is required to adequately and holistically address the underlying causes of mass violence and to offer meaningful solutions that will deter those compelled to acts of destruction while protecting all citizens of our State;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, CHRIS CHRISTIE, Governor of the State of New Jersey, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the Statutes of this State, do hereby ORDER and DIRECT:

1. There is hereby created a "New Jersey SAFE Task Force on Gun Protection, Addiction, Mental Health and Families, and Education Safety" (hereinafter "the NJ SAFE Task Force").

2. The NJ SAFE Task Force shall consist of six (6) members appointed by the Governor who shall serve at his pleasure. The Governor shall select co-chairpersons from among the members of the NJ SAFE Task Force. The NJ SAFE Task Force shall consist of members from both inside and outside government who have knowledge and expertise in the areas of gun control, addiction, mental health, school safety, and related areas. All members of the NJ SAFE Task Force shall serve without compensation. The NJ SAFE Task Force shall organize as soon as practicable after the appointment of its members.

3. The NJ SAFE Task Force is charged with commencing a holistic review of the root causes of mass violence and developing recommendations aimed at ameliorating those root causes in order to keep New Jersey residents, including students at educational facilities, safe from gun violence. In particular, the NJ SAFE Task Force should consider and explore the role that addiction, mental health, gun control laws, responsible gun ownership, and school safety measures play in ensuring the safety of New Jersey residents.

4. The Governor's Office shall provide staff support to the NJ SAFE Task Force. The NJ SAFE Task Force shall be authorized to call upon any department, office, division, or agency of this State to supply it with any information, personnel, or other assistance available as the NJ SAFE Task Force deems necessary to discharge its duties under this Order. Each department, office, division, and agency of this State is hereby required, to the extent not inconsistent with law, to cooperate fully with the NJ SAFE Task Force within the limits of its statutory authority and to furnish the NJ SAFE Task Force with such assistance on as timely a basis as is necessary to accomplish the purposes of this Order. The NJ SAFE Task Force may consult with experts or other knowledgeable individuals in the public or private sector on any aspect of its mission.

5. The NJ SAFE Task Force may report to the Governor from time to time and shall issue a final report to the Governor setting forth the NJ Safe Task Force's recommendations pursuant to this Order no later than sixty (60) days after organizing. The NJ SAFE Task Force shall expire upon issuance of its final report.

6. This Order shall take effect immediately.

GIVEN, under my hand and seal this  
17<sup>th</sup> day of January,  
Two Thousand and Thirteen,  
and of the Independence of  
the United States, the Two  
Hundred and Thirty-Seventh.

[seal]

/s/Chris Christie

Governor

Attest:

/s/Charles B. McKenna

Chief Counsel to the Governor