



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SAFER COUNTRY CELEBRATES ITS FIFTH ANNIVERSARY BY ANNOUNCING ITS
NEWEST BOARD MEMBER, ANDREW GODDARD, LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR,
VIRGINIA CENTER FOR PUBLIC SAFETY**

**SAFER COUNTRY THANKS ITS OUTGOING BOARD CHAIR, BOYD WALKER, WHO WILL
CONTINUE AS A MEMBER OF SAFER COUNTRY'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

ALEXANDRIA, VA – Safer Country, the Alexandria, VA-based gun violence prevention nonprofit, is celebrating its Fifth Anniversary on February 14, 2024 by announcing its newest Board member, Andrew Goddard, Legislative Director, Virginia Center for Public Safety, who will be joining on that date. Of note, our anniversary is also the Sixth Anniversary of the horrific mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

Andrew's son, Colin, was seriously wounded during the Virginia Tech mass shooting on April 16, 2007 and had to undergo multiple operations. Colin is doing well today and has a beautiful family. Andrew was moved by that incident to become one of Virginia's leading gun safety advocates and is an invaluable source of information to everyone interested in legislation impacting the subject.

Goddard wrote, "Firearms Deaths of American Minors: Perceptions vs. Facts, which was published on January 17, 2023 in the Richmond Public Interest Law Review. Here's a summary:

Firearm violence is now the leading cause of death for Americans under the age of eighteen. This article demonstrates that widely held misconceptions about the true nature and extent of this violence have led to legislative proposals narrowly tailored toward firearm violence in schools, despite facts and data showing school firearm violence to be a small fraction of the problem. These misconceptions are caused by both the narrow focus of national media attention and the deceptive propaganda of the gun industry. The article concludes by examining several bills proposed during the Virginia General Assembly session of 2022 to show how many of the solutions that legislators are proposing are not only ineffective, but also potentially harmful.