



---

**TO:** The Chief Executive Officers or Equivalents of New York State Chartered or Licensed Financial Institutions

**FROM:** Maria T. Vullo, Superintendent of Financial Services

**DATE:** April 19, 2018

**RE:** Guidance on Risk Management Relating to the NRA and Similar Gun Promotion Organizations

---

The New York State Department of Financial Services is issuing this guidance in the wake of several recent horrific shootings, including in Parkland, Florida that left 17 students and staff members at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School dead. This was only one of many prior gun violence tragedies, including those in Columbine High School, Sandy Hook, Pulse night club, and the Las Vegas music festival, that left many innocent people dead.

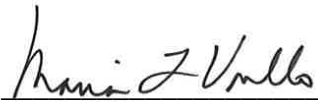
While the social backlash against the National Rifle Association (the “NRA”) and similar organizations that promote guns that lead to senseless violence has in the past been strong, the nature and the intensity of the voices now speaking out, including the voices of the passionate, courageous, and articulate young people who have experienced this recent horror first hand, is a strong reminder that such voices can no longer be ignored and that society, as a whole, has a responsibility to act and is no longer willing to stand by and wait and witness more tragedies caused by gun violence, but instead is demanding change now.

Our financial institutions, whether depository or non-depository, are, and have been, the cornerstone of the communities they serve for generations and are guided by their commitment to corporate social responsibility, including public safety and health. The manner by which financial institutions engage in communities they serve is closely tied to the business they do with their clients and customers and its impact on such communities. In fact, a review of performance reports of many firms to their stakeholders demonstrates how their performance is based on both their strategic business vision as well as on a commitment to society as a whole. There is a fair amount of precedent in the business world where firms have implemented measures in areas such as the environment, healthcare, and civil rights in fulfilling their corporate social responsibility. The recent actions of a number of financial institutions that severed their ties with the NRA and have taken other actions after the AR-15 style rifle killed 17 people in the school in Parkland, Florida is an example of such a precedent.

The tragic devastation caused by gun violence that we have regrettably been increasingly witnessing is a public safety and health issue. Our financial institutions can play a significant role in promoting public health and safety in the communities they serve, thereby fulfilling their corporate social responsibility to those communities. They are also in the business of managing risks, including their own reputational risks, by making risk management decisions on a regular

---

basis regarding if and how they will do business with certain sectors or entities. In light of the above, and subject to compliance with applicable laws, the Department encourages its chartered and licensed financial institutions to continue evaluating and managing their risks, including reputational risks, that may arise from their dealings with the NRA or similar gun promotion organizations, if any, as well as continued assessment of compliance with their own codes of social responsibility. The Department encourages regulated institutions to review any relationships they have with the NRA or similar gun promotion organizations, and to take prompt actions to managing these risks and promote public health and safety.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maria T. Vullo", written over a horizontal line.

Maria T. Vullo  
Superintendent of Financial Services