



NARPA

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RIGHTS PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY

NARPA STATEMENT

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### **NARPA Statement on Mass Shootings In El Paso, Texas and Dayton, Ohio**

Once again, Americans are stunned and grieving after two mass shootings in under 24 hours, this time in El Paso, TX and then Dayton, OH. And once again, blame is shunted onto people with psychiatric diagnoses.

At first, this time it felt different. This time the initial scapegoat was “violent video games.” When that didn’t work, blame was shifted back to the most common alleged cause, “mental illness.”

This is getting old. The National Association for Rights Protection and Advocacy (NARPA) and other entities have, after every highly publicized mass shooting in recent years, issued statements citing the research: people with psychiatric diagnoses are **no more likely to be violent than anyone else**. There is no link between gun violence and psychiatric diagnoses.

Every country in the world has citizens with psychiatric diagnoses, yet no other country has the equivalent of one mass shooting **per day**. Just as people around the world play video games, yet only in the US are people routinely massacred with rarely even acknowledgement of the event. The difference is that no other country makes it so easy to purchase firearms.

It’s hard to convince people that there is a newfound concern for “the mentally ill” when the US recently deported a man born in Greece to Iraqi refugee parents who was brought to the US at six months of age. This man began to experience some mental health challenges, and these brought him into contact with law enforcement. This “criminal record” caused him to be deported to a country where he knew no one and did not speak the language, where he died because he was unable to access the insulin he needed for diabetes.

Psychiatric disability is not the cause of mass shootings. We already have a mental health system that many people find oppressive, in which people are routinely held against their will without committing a crime. We must stop blaming tragedy on psychiatric disability and focus on the real cause, easy access to weapons combined with tacit approval of white nationalism. This is hate speech. It must stop.

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**National Association for Rights Protection and Advocacy**

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