



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RIGHTS PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY

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## **NARPA Statement on Mass Shootings in Buffalo, New York and Uvalde, Texas**

Once again, Americans are stunned and grieving after mass shootings in places that people hope to be safe: the local grocery store and a neighborhood elementary school. We share the grief of the communities in Buffalo, New York, and Uvalde, Texas. And yet, we cannot simply grieve.

As too often happens after incidents like these, blame is shunted onto people with psychiatric diagnoses, although in one of these recent cases there is no evidence of existing mental illness. The National Association for Rights Protection and Advocacy (NARPA) and other advocates have, after every highly publicized mass shooting in recent years, issued statements citing the research: absent the use of alcohol or illicit drugs, 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 is experiencing the equivalent of one mass shooting per day. Only in the United States are massacres becoming so routine that many mass shootings take place with no acknowledgement or news coverage. The difference is that no other country makes it so easy to purchase firearms.

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

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