

June 29, 2020

Mr. John Chidsey  
CEO of Subway  
325 Sub Way  
Milford, Connecticut 06461

Dear Mr. Chidsey:

We write to urge you to prohibit the open carry of firearms in Subway restaurants in Connecticut and across the country. In doing so, you would send a strong message regarding your commitment to the safety of your employees and customers—and all of the communities that Subway serves.

As you may know, in May, armed demonstrators—equipped with AT4 rocket launchers, pistols, and shotguns—entered a Subway restaurant in Raleigh, North Carolina to protest stay-at-home restrictions enacted in response to the ongoing public health crisis caused by COVID-19.<sup>1</sup> That North Carolina is an open-carry state is inapposite. No person should have to fear gun violence while visiting or working in Subway restaurants.

Photographs of these demonstrators published by the *News & Observer* are as striking as they are intimidating, and, regrettably, reflect more than this one incident.<sup>2</sup> Since 2014, Subway experienced at least 65 incidents of gun violence in or near its restaurants, culminating in more than 20 deaths and almost 30 injuries.<sup>3</sup> As the CEO of Subway, you have both the means and the opportunity to take action to protect your employees and customers by instituting a ban on the open carry of firearms in your restaurants. Such a ban would follow similar actions taken by Chipotle, Sonic, Chili's, Target, Walmart, Panera Bread, Whole Foods, Starbucks, Aldi, CVS, and Walgreens.

Action is more critical now than ever as COVID-19 has spurred a deeply disturbing surge in gun sales.<sup>4</sup> The public health challenges that we face, as a nation, due to this global pandemic

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<sup>1</sup> Jessica Banov & Travis Long, *Photos of Armed Protestors at North Carolina Subway Draw National Attention*, NEWS & OBSERVER (May 11, 2020), <https://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/article242628341.html>.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Search Results (Incidents)*, GUN VIOLENCE ARCHIVE, <https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/query/c5cf84dd-c1f1-42ab-b8eb-285712181584> (last visited June 4, 2020).

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., Kurtis Lee & Anita Chabria, *As the Coronavirus Pandemic Grows, Gun Sales Are Surging in Many States*, L.A. TIMES (Mar. 16, 2020), <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2020-03-15/coronavirus-pandemic-gun-sales-surge-us-california>; Richard A. Oppel Jr., *For Some Buyers with Virus Fears, the Priority Isn't Toilet Paper. It's Guns*, N.Y. TIMES (Mar. 16, 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/16/us/coronavirus-gun-buyers.html>; Bill Whitaker, *Ghost Guns: The Build-It-Yourself Firearms That Skirt Most Federal Gun Laws and Are*

are great, but neither excuse nor absolve us of our obligation to respond to the related and mounting public safety crisis—posed by the tremendous proliferation of firearms sales—in the making.

To that end, we strongly urge you to do your part to meet this moment, to prohibit the open carry of firearms in your restaurants, and to send a strong message that Subway, headquartered in Connecticut, stands proud in helping to stem the gun violence epidemic plaguing this country before it is too late.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,



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RICHARD BLUMENTHAL  
United States Senate



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CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY  
United States Senate

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*Virtually Untraceable*, 60 MINUTES (May 10, 2020), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ghost-guns-untraceable-weapons-criminal-cases-60-minutes-2020-05-10/>.