



ARMAS Act Advocacy Days

stop the flow of weapons. stop the violence.

September 29 - 30



September 29, 2026 12 pm, Capitol Building Room SVC 201-00

Please join 22 organizations co-sponsoring a congressional staff briefing to hear eyewitness stories about the impact of illegal weapons trafficking in Latin America and the Caribbean, and its connection to immigration.

Sponsors will provide lunch and refreshments.

Presentations will include:



An overview of the issue: Members of the coalition will present an overview of how US weapons fuel violence in Mexico and Haiti.



Testimony from Victims of Gun Violence in Mexico



Weapons trafficking as a system of gender-based violence in Haiti



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Featured Speakers:

Ryan Walsh, Legislative Aide, Senator Chris Murphy

Cristina Bautista is the mother of Benjamin Ascencio Bautista, one of 43 student teachers from the Ayotzinapa Rural College, disappeared by police and criminal groups in Iguala, Guerrero in September 2014, which became the most prominent human rights atrocity in Mexico over a decade. Cristina and other parents of the 43 students have protested and worked tirelessly for truth and justice for their sons. U.S.-exported firearms were used by police in the attack. A native speaker of Nahuatl, Cristina learned Spanish in order to communicate with officials and lawyers in Mexico, the United States, Colombia and Brazil. "As mothers we have to go out and tell the truth," Bautista says.

"We have to take action to bring people together. If we stay home with our arms crossed, crying, we will never know anything,"

Souzen Joseph is a Haitian-born journalist/TV producer, and feminist activist, who has dedicated her career to advancing culture, education, women's rights, and gender equality. With over 16 years of collaboration with Haitian National Television, she has established herself as a prominent voice in media and advocacy. Currently, Souzen serves as the Executive Director of 100 % Fanm, a Haitian feminist organization that focuses on empowering women farmers through targeted programs and initiatives, and has worked extensively with other humanitarian and human rights organizations, including the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in Haiti. Her work is deeply rooted in addressing critical issues such as sexual and reproductive health, social justice, equitable education, women's and girls' empowerment, climate change, migration, and displacement.

Her presentation will emphasize how guns not only enable sexual assault, but also drive the displacement that exposes women, the economic strangulation that traps them, and the blockade of services that severely impacts them.

Co-sponsoring organizations and legislative offices will describe the ARMAS Act and other legislation that will prevent illegal trafficking of weapons and ammunition to Haiti, Mexico, and beyond.