



CALIFORNIA STATE TREASURER JOHN CHIANG

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Large Institutional Investors Sign On to Plan Addressing Gun Violence, Following Treasurer Chiang's Path

CalPERS and CalSTRS Sign New Set of Principles Aimed at Curbing Gun Violence

SACRAMENTO, CA – Earlier today, just a week following the deadly Thousand Oaks shooting in Southern California, more than a dozen institutional investors from around the nation came together to establish the *Principles for a Responsible Civilian Firearms Industry* — a joint assertion that investors have a stake in promoting meaningful progress in curbing the abuse of firearms and to advance public safety in the United States. The Principles follow many of the ideas in the plan California State Treasurer John Chiang proposed before both the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) and the California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS) earlier this year, when he called for the nation's institutional investors to engage, and, if necessary, divest from the purveyors of illegal weapons banned for sale in California.

"One week after another vicious mass shooting in Thousand Oaks that took the lives of 12 innocent Californians, I am proud to announce that a powerful group of institutional investors from across the nation — including CalPERS and CalSTRS — are finally taking the necessary steps to implement the engagement and divestment policy I initially proposed before both boards this past spring," said Treasurer Chiang. "Engagement is an important and crucial first step, but these conversations must result in real action, otherwise divestment and other actionable options must be kept on the table. We can end the vicious cycle of mass shootings in our schools, businesses, and places of worship if businesses and citizens stand up, together, and take concrete actions like this."

Treasurer Chiang's original plan called for engagement, with a progressive series of increasingly tougher steps. If engagement proved unsuccessful, these additional steps could include persistent dialogue with the company's board and management, support for shareholder resolutions, public statements, voting against directors, and, ultimately, divestment.

CalPERS CEO Marcie Frost added, “We commend the treasurer for his early focus on this important issue and the need for us to take responsible actions as fiduciaries and asset owners to monitor and manage risks in our investment portfolios. The principles will help advance engagement of companies in the firearms industry.”

In the 318 days of 2018, the United States has already seen 311 mass shootings — almost one for every day — according to the Gun Violence Archive. Washington, DC has, however, never taken a single action after any of these gun tragedies. Nevertheless, earlier this year, multiple Fortune 500 companies began to end their relationships with the gun lobby and socially conscious investors began the effort to shut off both the direct and indirect flow of money to companies that sell or manufacture assault weapons. The Principles being adopted today are proof that some of the nation’s largest investors and funds can be at the forefront of this movement.

In 2013, in response to the Sandy Hook school shooting, both CalPERS and CalSTRS divested from manufacturers of firearms that are illegal in the State of California. Treasurer Chiang — then California State Controller — was a member of both boards at the time and voted for the divestments, but knew more had to be done. Last year, exactly one month after the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history took place in Las Vegas, Treasurer Chiang presented his plan before the CalSTRS board, and, soon after, did the same before the board of CalPERS.

Earlier this year, CalSTRS ultimately adopted Treasurer Chiang’s policy.

Other than CalPERS and CalSTRS, signatories of the *Principles for a Responsible Civilian Firearms Industry* include: Connecticut Retirement Plans and Trust Funds, Florida State Board of Administration, Maine Public Employees Retirement System, Maryland State Retirement and Pension System, Nuveen, OIP Investment Trust, Oregon Public Employees Retirement Fund, Rockefeller Asset Management, San Francisco Employees’ Retirement System, State Street Global Advisors, and Wespath Investment Management.

Video from Treasurer Chiang’s call for the CalSTRS board to adopt his engagement measure, and impassioned pleas from gun reform advocates to adopt that same measure earlier this year can be found [here](#), and a press release with details can be found [here](#).

Video from Treasurer Chiang’s call for the CalPERS board to adopt his engagement measure, and impassioned pleas from gun reform advocates to adopt that same measure earlier this year can be found [here](#), and a press release with details can be found [here](#).

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