

Schneider Invites Public To 'New Congress Listening Tour' Events

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DEERFIELD, IL — Gun violence, immigration, health care and climate change are on the agenda for a series of roundtable public discussions around the north suburbs next week hosted by U.S. Rep. Brad Schneider.

Constituents in the 10th District identified those four topics as top priorities for the new Congress in a recent survey that received more than 2,600 responses, according to Schneider's office. Starting Tuesday, the Deerfield Democrat plans to convene listening sessions in Fox Lake, Des Plaines, Deerfield and Waukegan to focus on the topics as legislative priorities.

"We picked locations for the tour in diverse locations across the Tenth District to hear from all constituents," Schneider said. He said his hometown was selected for a discussion of gun safety because of the village's effort to ban possession of assault-style weapons through a local ordinance.

Enforcement of the Deerfield Assault Weapons Ban has been put on hold pending a pair of legal challenges in Lake County Circuit Court. A judge is expected to issue a written decision on both cases on March 15, according to an attorney involved in the case. In Springfield, 29th District Sen. Julie Morrison has introduced a statewide ban on the weapons in the Illinois Senate ([Senate Bill 2314](#)) modeled on the Highland Park ban previously upheld in federal court. Schneider said he supported a federal ban on assault weapons ([H.R. 5087](#)) introduced in the U.S. House last year.

"In our most recent priority survey, constituents told us reducing gun violence is one of the very top issues they want the new House majority to address," Schneider said. "Despite overwhelming public support nationally for commonsense measures like closing background check loopholes, Congress has responded with years of inaction." In an email, he said a recent judiciary committee hearing was the first congressional hearing on gun violence in more than eight years.

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Schneider said he expects proposed legislation ([H.R. 8](#)) on universal background checks would focus reach the floor for a vote this term. He identified it as one of the issues where there is a broad public consensus.

"I am hopeful we can take more concrete steps to reduce senseless gun violence and keep our children and communities safer and more secure," said Schneider, a member of the moderate Blue Dog Caucus of House Democrats.

On Jan. 31, Schneider and Illinois U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin introduced the [SECURE Firearm Storage Act](#) in the House and Senate. It would require licensed firearm dealers to securely store guns outside of business hours to reduce gun thefts from retailers. More than 8,100 guns were [stolen](#) from licensed firearm dealers in 2017, according to data from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

In the first committee assignments since the Democrats won control of the lower chamber, Schneider was assigned in January to the House Small Business Committee and the powerful Ways and Means Committee.

The first of Schneider's listening sessions is scheduled for [1 to 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 19](#) at Lakefront Park, 71 Nippersink Blvd. in Fox Lake. Panelists including a policy analyst of the Union of Concerned Scientists, local stormwater management and community development staff, a Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning project manager and Fox Lake Mayor Donny Schmidt. The discussion will focus on the environmental impact of climate change on local communities.

The second stop on the tour is scheduled the following day in Des Plaines, where Schneider is convening a panel on workforce development in the health care industry from [3 to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 20](#) at Oakton Community College, 1600 E. Gold Road. The panel is due to

feature administrators from Rosalind Franklin University and Oakton as well as local health students.

The Deerfield event is scheduled for 6 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 21 at the Patty Turner Center, 375 Elm St. The panel is due to feature Mayor Harriet Rosenthal, state Sen. Julie Morrison and advocates from Moms Demand Action and the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence.

At the end of the week, the listening tour concludes in Waukegan with a roundtable discussion about immigration and access to education from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 22 at the Community Center, 914 8th St. The panel will feature the founder of an immigrant services nonprofit, a DACA recipient and licensed banker, a North Chicago high school teacher and an assistant dean from the College of Lake County.

Earlier

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