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For Immediate Release:

Two Towns Top \$31k to End Gun Violence

Facebook Fundraising Campaign Goes Viral in 50 Hours

SOUTH ORANGE AND MAPLEWOOD, NJ (February 21, 2018) – South Orange Village President Sheena Collum and Maplewood Mayor Victor De Luca announced Wednesday that the joint Facebook fundraiser between the two communities to support Everytown for Gun Safety closed at 12 p.m. on Tuesday with \$30,660 in donations from 645 individual donors.

"We never thought we would even come close to this point," Collum said. "When we initially came up with the idea this weekend to have our residents mobilize to support Everytown for Gun Safety, it came from a place of sadness, frustration and wanting to do something immediate about the 17 lives that were lost in Parkland, Florida. There was always the distant hope of raising \$17,000 to honor the lives of the 17 that were taken from us and our residents delivered above and beyond."

"This was a tremendous campaign and I am sure our residents will continue to fight for common sense gun laws. We will not be deterred by the NRA and the do-nothing Congress," DeLuca added. "If every community across the country could replicate what we did in 50 hours, we'd have a war chest and that's what we need."

Moms Demand Action volunteer and Maplewood resident Reshma Ketkar and others pledged to give more as the campaign hit certain benchmarks.

"Donations of \$5 to \$250 came in from students, adults, parents and grandparents and at certain milestones, people 'doubled up' on their original give – it was a part of all the excitement and awareness we were generating. We may not have a lot of \$1K donors like the NRA but we have strength in numbers," Ketkar said. "It was amazing to watch this campaign take on a life of its own!"

Moms Demand Action volunteer and South Orange resident Caroline O'Hare agreed, "We are doing this for our children. We are doing this because it's the right thing to do. And we are going to keep doing this until we are able to stop gun violence. Period."

Mara Bernstein, a Moms Demand Action volunteer and Maplewood resident, said she was encouraged by the fundraiser.

"I've been working on gun violence prevention for four years. Ups and downs. Victories and heartbreaks. Something feels different post-Parkland. Like we just may be at a tipping point. We need to take this momentum and run with it."

Everytown For Gun Safety (everytown.org) is made up of 400 million members nationwide, including members of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America and Mayors Against Illegal Guns. The group works to prevent gun violence and save lives by pushing for lawmakers to improve gun laws, raising awareness about gun violence, educating the public about common-sense gun laws and responsible gun ownership, mobilizing grassroots supporters, and connecting and amplifying the voices of gun violence survivors.

Collum and DeLuca are both members of the Mayors Against Illegal Guns coalition. They were joined in the campaign by all six South Orange Village Trustees - Walter Clarke, Deborah Davis Ford, Howard Levison, Mark Rosner, Karen Hilton and Steve Schnall, as well as all four other members of the Maplewood Township Committee joining De Luca including Deputy Mayor Frank McGehee and Committee members Nancy Adams, Greg Lembrich and Dean Dafis.

Local Moms Demand Action volunteers who worked on the campaign included Reshma Ketkar, Malia Herman, Mara Bernstein, Caroline O'Hare, Christine Olson, Rachel Goldman, Rachel Fischer, Nicole Kleinbaum, Heather Saslovsky and Kristin O'Connor.

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