



**An Open Letter to Hillary Clinton, Gary Johnson,
Bernie Sanders, Jill Stein and Donald Trump
from Two Fellow Americans**

In the 48 hours since the mass murder in Orlando, the political environment in our country is worsening. Leaders such as yourselves—who seek the office of the Presidency—must take responsibility for that. Put campaign interests aside and have a serious and principled conversation together and with the American people about the unsettling nature of this devastating act of violence, rather than jockey for position and votes.

We call on you to suspend your campaigning to hold a joint press conference to demonstrate that communicating across the ideological and partisan divide serves the American people best. Whatever differences exist with respect to a posture on terrorism and crimes in the name of Islam, on gun violence and on the free expression of human sexuality, it would be meaningful to the American people for such a joint action to take place. Law enforcement is doing its job, and it is a difficult one. But it's not sufficient for any of us to say on Facebook or Twitter or at the Tony Awards or at campaign rallies that these events must make us stronger, unless we actually do something to make ourselves stronger. You cannot say this is a time where Americans must stand together if the presumptive leaders won't. The problem is that the culture of our partisan election system makes it difficult, if not impossible, to respond as a unified nation. Everything that the Orlando massacre raises does not reduce to guns or immigration. And no candidate, regardless of what they claim, has cornered the market on truth.

Obviously, a joint appearance among the five of you would be shocking to many, but the violence has already shocked us. A shocking response that changes our political culture might put us—and the world—on a safer and better path.

Sincerely,

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