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**Heller Introduces Bill to Crackdown on Criminal Gangs, Protect Nevada Communities**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) introduced the Criminal Alien Gang Removal Act (S. 2380), legislation that would help protect Americans from dangerous criminal gangs, including MS-13, a brutal transnational gang that [operates in Nevada and nearly every other state](https://www.justice.gov/opa/speech/file/958481/download). U.S. Reps. Barbara Comstock (R-VA-10), Peter King (R-NY-02), Raúl Labrador (R-Idaho), and House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte [introduced](https://comstock.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/comstock-king-labrador-goodlatte-introduce-bill-combat-gang-violence-and) the bill in the U.S. House of Representatives and it [passed with a bipartisan vote of 233-175](https://comstock.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/comstock-goodlatte-labrador-king-praise-house-passage-bill-combat-gang).

[MS-13, which stands for “Mara Salvatrucha,” is one of the major gangs operating in Central America with ties to the United States](http://www.crs.gov/Reports/RL34112?source=search&guid=2e98e73fa5c44eb2a9942677fd8885ff&index=0#_Toc460246346). According to the Department of Justice (DOJ), there are approximately 10,000 members inside the United States and 40,000 members worldwide, and the gang is involved in criminal activities that include murder, drug trafficking, and human trafficking. In Nevada, [an MS-13 gang member was found guilty of murder](http://www.rgj.com/story/news/crime/2017/10/13/ms-13-gang-member-found-guilty-sparks-murders/763466001/) in November 2017 after he fatally shot two young men at an apartment in Sparks, NV seven years prior.

The Criminal Alien Gang Removal Act would prohibit gang members from entering the country, and permit the immediate removal of criminal gang members who already are in the United States. Additionally, the proposal ensures that criminal alien gang members are ineligible for immigration benefits, such as asylum, special immigrant juvenile status, and temporary protected status.

“In Nevada, gang violence has infiltrated our neighborhoods and threatened our communities, and that’s why I introduced the Criminal Alien Gang Member Removal Act. This legislation empowers law enforcement with the tools they need to help protect Nevadans from violent criminals, and it boosts public safety in Nevada and throughout the country by cracking down on gangs,” **said Heller.** “Our entire immigration system is broken and in need of reform, and this commonsense bill to stop individuals who are affiliated with dangerous gangs, such as MS-13, from entering the United States represents a positive step in the right direction. I am encouraged by the bipartisan support for this bill, and I look forward to working with my Senate colleagues to send it to the President’s desk for his signature.”

[The White House strongly supports the Criminal Alien Gang Member Removal Act](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/h-r-3697-criminal-alien-gang-member-removal-act/). In a [written statement](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/h-r-3697-criminal-alien-gang-member-removal-act/), the White House stated, “Consistent with President Donald J. Trump’s priorities, the bill strengthens law enforcement’s ability to fight transnational criminal gangs, such as MS-13, and counter the violence these dangerous groups bring to communities and neighborhoods across the Nation.”

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