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**Heller Cosponsors Bill to Strengthen Background Checks for Mentally Ill**

*Graham (R-SC) Introduces NICS Reporting Improvement Act of 2013 Today*

**(Washington, D.C.) –** Today, U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) announced his cosponsorship of the NICS Reporting Improvement Act of 2013, bipartisan legislation that strengthens our the current background check system and closes loopholes related to the mentally ill.

“Congress must be careful to protect Nevadans’ Second Amendment rights while also keeping firearms out of the hands of the mentally ill. While many issues must be addressed at the state level, this measured piece of legislation provides some much-needed clarity to existing law and is a commonsense approach to preventing unnecessary violence. I’m pleased to work with Senator Graham on this important issue and hope to see action on this bipartisan legislation soon,” said Senator Dean Heller.

This bill simply closes a loophole in current law which allows certain mental incompetency adjudications to go unreported to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS).

Senator Heller is an original cosponsor of the legislation, which was introduced by Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) today. Senators Mark Begich (D-AK), Jeff Flake (R-AZ) and Mark Pyor (D-AR) are also original cosponsors.

**Background**

This bill defines the level of due process rights an individual can expect when facing mental illness. The change is consistent with increased state protections for the procedural rights of the mentally ill, as well as the standards for adjudications and commitments related to mental health found in the NICS Improvement Act of 2007.

This measured legislation also clarifies that legal disability no longer applies after a person has recovered from mental illness.

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