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CONTACT:
Billie Weiss - (213) 445-8803
Khalid Shah- (323) 445-6390
Suzanne Verge - (310)-666-2141

TELL STARBUCKS: ESPRESSO SHOTS, NOT GUN SHOTS HEALTH ADVOCATES DEMAND STARBUCKS CHANGE OPEN-CARRY POLICY

WHAT: **The Violence Prevention Coalition of Los Angeles and the Brady Campaign, as well as other** representative from domestic violence, gang intervention, and public health organizations will assemble to protest the Starbucks open carry policy. The event will be followed-up with protests at neighborhood Starbucks.

WHEN: Wednesday, May 12, 2010 1 -1:30 pm.

WHERE: 1000 North Alameda, Joshua Tree Room, Los Angeles, 90012-1804 (The California Endowment Building) PRESS FEEDS NOT AVAILABLE

WHO: California Peace Prize Winner Billie Weiss of the Violence Prevention Coalition of Los Angeles; Suzanne Verge from the VPC and the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, Dallas Stout, President of the California Chapters of the Brady Campaign; Civil Rights Attorney Connie Rice, a member of the VPC Ambassadors Council; Khalid Shah from the Inland Empire VPC, Second Call, the Cease Fire Committee and others.

WHY: Because of Starbucks policy to allow patrons to carry firearms openly on their premises, getting your morning coffee could be a threat to the health, safety and well-being of the community. In 2007, a total of 989 lives were lost due to gun related injuries in Los Angeles County alone. An additional 3,555 nonfatal injuries involved a firearm. Thirty-nine percent (39%; 386 deaths) of the deaths were of children and teens and young adults under the age of 24 and 34% of the nonfatal injuries involving a gun were also young people under the age of 24. Firearms are the leading cause of death for the populations between 15-34 years of age. Guns are lethal and do not belong in family friendly stores.

In response, to the Open Carry movement, establishments such as Peet's Coffee and Tea and California Pizza Kitchen have said no to guns on their premises, but Starbucks continues to allow gun-toting patrons in their establishments. This is reckless behavior that puts all of us at risk. If Starbucks wants to be a good neighbor, they need to change their policy now.

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