

## Contention One: Decreasing Gun Deaths

### **Guns are as deadly as cars**

**Ingraham 15** Christopher Ingraham, 12-17-2015, "Guns are now killing as many people as cars in the U.S.," Washington Post <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/12/17/guns-are-now-killing-as-many-people-as-cars-in-the-u-s/> //DF

For the first time in more than 60 years, **firearms and automobiles are killing Americans at an identical rate**, according to new mortality data released this month by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In 2014, the age-adjusted death rate for both firearms (including homicides, suicides and accidental deaths) and motor vehicle events (car crashes, collisions between cars and pedestrians, etc) stood at 10.3 deaths per 100,000 people. The convergence of the trend lines above is driven primarily by a sharp drop in the rate of motor vehicle fatalities since 1950. In the late 1960s, for instance, there were well over 25 motor vehicle deaths for every 100,000 people in the United States. Since then, that rate has fallen by more than half. Over the same period, gun deaths rose, but by a considerably smaller amount. Gun homicide rates have actually fallen in recent years, but those gains have been offset by rising gun suicide rates. Today, suicides account for roughly two out of every three gun deaths. One way of illustrating the shift in gun and auto deaths is to look at state-level data. In 2005, gun deaths outnumbered vehicle deaths in just two states, Alaska and Maryland, plus the District of Columbia. By 2014, gun deaths were greater in 21 states plus D.C. Medical ailments, such as cancer and heart attacks, kill considerably more people each year than either guns or automobiles, according to the CDC. But firearms and motor vehicles are among the leading non-medical causes of mortality in the United States. They kill more people than falls do each year, and considerably more people than alcohol. The steady decline in motor vehicle deaths over the past 65 years can be attributed to a combination of improved technology and smarter regulation. The federal government mandated the presence of seat belts in the 1960s. The '70s brought anti-lock brakes. The '80s brought an increased focus on drunk driving and mandatory seat belt use. Airbags came along in the '90s. More recent years have seen mandates on electronic stability systems, increased penalties for distracted driving and forthcoming requirements for rear-view cameras. The result has been safer cars, safer roads, better drivers and a decades-long decline in motor vehicle fatalities, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. By contrast, the history of American gun control regulation has been more erratic. Restrictions passed in earlier eras, such as the assault weapons ban, have been undone recently. During the George W. Bush administration, Congress passed laws that prohibited law enforcement from publicizing data showing where criminals obtained their guns and granted gunmakers immunity from some civil lawsuits. Technological advances, like smart-gun technology that prevents people other than the owner from firing a gun, have been stymied by opposition from the National Rifle Association and from many gun owners. Modest regulatory changes, including universal background checks, enjoy overwhelming support from gun owners and the American public. But those, too, have been thwarted under pressure from gun-rights advocates and the NRA. The result? A gun mortality rate that's slightly higher than where it stood 50 years ago. Particularly vexing is that there may be ways to improve gun safety and reduce firearm deaths -- particularly suicides -- that haven't even been thought of yet. But innovations in gun safety are hard to come by, in large part because of Congress's longstanding ban on many types of federal gun research. The ban has a chilling effect not only on federal agencies like the CDC but also on academic researchers, such as Harvard's David Hemenway. One well-known researcher, Garen Wintemute of the University of California at Davis, had to donate \$1 million of his own money to keep his research going. **Firearms kill roughly 30,000 people a year**. But Wintemute estimates that there are only a dozen full-time gun violence researchers in the United States. "There's so many things we'd like to do," Hemenway told the Trace earlier this year. "Just pick a topic, and we'd like to know more about it, from things like open carry to gun training to gun storage to gun theft to straw purchasers." But he explicitly tells his students not to join the field because of the severe difficulties that researchers face in obtaining funding and publishing their results.

## Contention One: Decreasing Access For Criminals

### **Most guns used in crimes come from private sales where background checks aren't conducted:**

**Wintemute 13** Garen Wintemute [Baker-Teret Chair in Violence Prevention and Professor of Emergency Medicine, the University of California, Davis], 2013, "Background Checks for Firearm Transfers," Violence Prevention Research Program, University of California, Davis, <http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/vprp/CBC%20White%20Paper%20Final%20Report%20022013.pdf> //DF

Firearm-related criminal violence remains an important threat to the nation's health and safety. **To help prevent firearm violence, federal statute prohibits felons, those convicted of domestic violence** misdemeanors, **and** certain **others from**

**acquiring** or possessing firearms. **Persons who acquire firearms from licensed gun dealers** and pawnbrokers **must** provide identification and **undergo a background check to verify that they are not prohibited persons**. A permanent record is kept, in case the firearm is later used in a crime. But perhaps **40% of all firearm acquisitions, and at least 80% of those made with criminal intent, are made from private parties**. **No identification need be shown; no background check is conducted; no record is kept.**

## 1. Criminals would be less willing to seek out gun purchases:

**Webster 14** Daniel Webster, 6-25-2014, "Guns Kill People. And If We Had Universal Background Checks, They Wouldn't Kill So Many.," New Republic, <https://newrepublic.com/article/118286/facts-about-gun-control-and-universal-background-checks//> DF

**When criminals get guns, they get them from friends, family, or from an underground market source. Without universal background check requirements, there is little deterrent to selling guns to criminals**

or gun traffickers. State laws mandating universal **background checks deter the diversion of guns to criminals**. The most comprehensive screening and background check processes, where potential gun purchasers apply in person for permits to purchase handguns, are associated with lower homicide and suicide rates. But won't there still be a whole bunch of guns out there, being sold illegally and falling into the hands of criminals? Yes, some criminals will be able to steal or purchase guns already in circulation. But many of the estimated 300 million guns in civilian hands can't be easily acquired by criminals. Lots of gun owners lock their guns in safes or have other ways to secure their firearms, practices that can be increased by laws and educational campaigns. And it's not as easy or risk free for criminals to buy guns in the underground market as is commonly believed. Duke economist Philip Cook has studied Chicago's underground gun market and said, "there may be a lot of guns, but there is a shortage of trusted sellers." **With greater accountability measures** and choking the supply of new guns into the underground market, **street prices will rise and fewer dangerous people will have guns.**

Daniel Webster (Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/Journal of Urban Health). "Repeal of Missouri's Background Check Law Associated with Increase in State's Murders." February 17, 2014.

<https://www.jhsph.edu/news/news-releases/2014/repeal-of-missouris-background-law-associated-with-increase-in-states-murders.html>

Update May 15, 2014: This news release has been updated to reflect corrections in the Journal of Urban Health, which has published an Erratum to: "Effects of the Repeal of Missouri's Handgun Purchaser Licensing Law on Homicides" by Daniel W. Webster, Cassandra Kercher Crifasi, and Jon S. Vernick. To read the published Erratum, please click here. The Erratum concerns estimates generated from regression analyses due to errors identified in the data for certain covariates used in those analyses. The corrected data are very similar to, but are more accurate than, the findings previously published. As a result of the errors, three corrections have been made to the news release: 1. Missouri's 2007 repeal of its permit-to-purchase (PTP) handgun law contributed to a fourteen percent increase in Missouri's murder rate through 2012 (updated from sixteen percent; first paragraph of press release). 2. The law's repeal was associated with an additional 49 to 68 murders per year in Missouri between 2008 and 2012 (updated from 55 to 63 additional murders per year; second paragraph of press release). 3. **The repeal of Missouri's PTP law was associated with a twenty-five percent increase in firearm homicides rates.** (updated from twenty-three percent; sixth paragraph of press release). Corrected News Release - May 7, 2014: **Missouri's 2007 repeal of its permit-to-purchase (PTP) handgun law, which required all handgun purchasers to obtain a license verifying that they have passed a background check**, contributed to a fourteen percent increase in Missouri's murder rate, according to a new study from researchers with the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research.

## 2. Vendors would be less willing to sell guns

**Kessler 13** Jim Kessler, 1-30-2013, "Would Universal Background Checks Make a Difference?," Third Way, [//DF](http://www.thirdway.org/memo/would-universal-background-checks-make-a-difference)

As George Costanza said, "it's not a lie if you believe it's true." **Under current law, it is illegal for a private individual to sell to felons, minors, and other prohibited buyers—but ONLY if it can be proven that the seller knew the buyer was** a member of a **prohibited** class.<sup>15</sup> **That standard is so high that a person is only slightly more likely to be prosecuted under this statute than they are to be attacked by an alligator.**<sup>16</sup> **This free pass to sell to anyone using the defense that "I didn't know he was an ex-con" is the lubricant that makes the shadow market in crime guns flow. A simple background check requirement would eliminate the high**

**bar of “knowing” and would make all sales occur under the same set of rules**, instead of creating a speedy self-checkout line for those who want to avoid a background check.

### 3. Allows for enforcement

**Kessler 13** Jim Kessler, 1-30-2013, "Would Universal Background Checks Make a Difference?," Third Way, [//DF">http://www.thirdway.org/memo/would-universal-background-checks-make-a-difference](http://www.thirdway.org/memo/would-universal-background-checks-make-a-difference) //DF

It is true that if universal background checks legislation were passed, many criminals would break this law and buy guns illegally, just as they do now. But when they attempt to do so, having such a law in place would make it much easier to catch them. Under a system of universal background checks, every sale conducted without a background check—with the exception of transfers between family members and other transfers typically exempted by such laws—would be illegal. **Such a system would provide law enforcement with the means to stop individuals from participating in suspicious transactions** and interdict guns before they make it into criminals' hands. This approach would be a significant improvement over **the current system, in which police are powerless to intervene when they observe what appear to be suspect sales**, such as an individual selling guns out of the trunk of his car in a crime-ridden neighborhood. Certainly not every criminal who purchases a gun without submitting to a background check will be caught and prosecuted. But **the fact that some people will not be caught** breaking this law **does not mean that the policy is bad** or that the law should not be enacted. By analogy, consider laws that prohibit speeding. **Obviously, not every driver who violates the law by surpassing the speed limit is pulled over and given a ticket. But the fact that this law is in place gives police the authority to pull over speeders and provides a means for enforcing this law.** Likewise, universal background checks—like radar detectors on a highway—provide police with a necessary tool to help sort out transfers between law-abiding citizens and transfers of guns to dangerous criminals.

### 1. Stopping Spillover

No Author (The Economist). "Why America doesn't have universal background checks for gun-buyers." Nov 6, 2015. <https://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2015/11/economist-explains-0> HS.

The politically powerful National Rifle Association and other pro-gun groups oppose universal background checks or indeed any law that could restrict gun sales. They invoke the Second Amendment of 1791, which protects "the right of the people to keep and bear arms". And they argue that guns prevent crime. After one particularly horrific mass-shooting, the killing of 20 small children and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut in 2012, Wayne LaPierre, the boss of the NRA, declared that school employees should have been armed because "the only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun". As the NRA and other pro-gun lobbies seem to be able to intimidate Congress to an extent that it won't try again to pass a law to tighten gun legislation any time soon, several states passed their own stricter gun laws. **New York, California, Massachusetts, Illinois, Rhode Island and Maryland have some of the strictest gun laws in the country. Several of these states require background checks at private sales.** And even though studies show that the rates of murders and suicides are lower in states with strict gun laws, **these states could be doing even better if it weren't for their neighbours with lax gun laws. Illinois, for instance, borders Wisconsin and Indiana, two states with hardly any restrictions on gun sales. In Chicago, which has especially restrictive gun laws, more than half of the guns confiscated by police come from out-of-state.** No wonder then that Chicago's police chief is one of the most vocal advocates of universal nation-wide background checks for gun buyers.

### Gun shows in Nevada increased gun deaths in California:

**Whitcomb 17** Dan Whitcomb, 10-23-2017, "Nevada gun shows tied to firearm violence in California: study," U.S., [//DF">https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-guns-study/nevada-gun-shows-tied-to-firearm-violence-in-california-study-idUSKBN1CS2P8](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-guns-study/nevada-gun-shows-tied-to-firearm-violence-in-california-study-idUSKBN1CS2P8) //DF

**Firearms-related deaths and injuries increased 70 percent in parts of California in the weeks after gun shows in neighboring Nevada, which has fewer regulations** on such events, a University of California, Berkeley study released on Monday found. The research could help prevent gun deaths by charting a pattern between where weapons are purchased at gun shows and where shootings take place, according to the authors. The study, which was partly funded by the National Institutes of Health, examined firearm injury rates before and after California and Nevada gun shows between 2005 and 2013 in areas of California near the shows. Researchers found that rates of firearm injuries were steady after California gun shows but increased significantly, from 0.67 to 1.14 per 100,000 people, in California regions near the Nevada shows. The authors of the study, which will be published in an upcoming issue of Annals of Internal Medicine, say **California's stricter gun regulations could help explain why there was an increase after**

### Nevada gun shows and not California shows. Another possible explanation for the difference is that California gun buyers are bypassing that state's 10-day waiting period by driving into Nevada to make their purchase.

"Better understanding the long-term effects of gun show policies, and the patterns of acquisition and use of firearms, would provide important evidence to inform future efforts to prevent firearm injuries," the study concludes. The new research comes just weeks after wealthy retiree and gambler Stephen Paddock opened fire on an outdoor music festival on the Las Vegas strip, killing 58 people before taking his own life. A gun show scheduled for Las Vegas later that week was canceled in the aftermath of the massacre. An editorial accompanying the study called on Congress to fund more research into the way public policy affects firearms-related injuries and deaths. "The recent mass shooting in Las Vegas, Nevada, was a painful reminder that injuries and deaths resulting from access to guns continue to bedevil many parts of U.S. society," said Ali Rowhani-Rahbar and Frederick Rivara of the University of Washington, who were not involved in the study.

### **Overall, Kalesan at Boston University in 2016 finds:**

Bindu Kalesan (School of Public Health at Boston University/Lancet Public Health Journal). "Firearm legislation and firearm mortality in the USA: a cross-sectional, state-level study." March 10, 2016. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26972843>

The nine laws associated with an increase in the risk of firearm-related deaths were a requirement for the dealer to report records to the state for retention, allowing police inspection of stores, limiting the number of firearms purchased, a 3-day limit for a background-checks extension, background checks or permits during gun shows in states without universal background-check requirement (ie, closure of the gun show loophole), integrated or external or standard locks on firearms, a ban or restrictions placed on assault weapons, law enforcement discretion permitted when issuing concealed-carry permits, and stand-your-ground. In 2009, of four analysed states (Alaska, Florida, California, and New York), Alaska had only stand-your ground (a permissive law), low unemployment, and the highest rates of firearm ownership, non-firearm homicide, and export, with an overall firearm mortality rate in 2009 of 14.9 per 100000 people (table 2). Using the 2009 data and the overall firearm mortality rate of 20.27 per 100000 people in 2010, the predicted IRR was 2.74 (95% CI 2.29–3.30). **Predicted firearm mortality risk would be reduced the most with laws for** firearm identification (by 84%), **universal background checks (by 61%),** and ammunition background checks (by 82%). In 2009, Florida had stand-your-ground and CAP laws, and an overall firearm mortality of 12.5 per 100000 people. In 2010, the overall mortality was 12.06 per 100 000 people (IRR 2.09 [95% CI 1.84–2.37]), and predicted risk of firearm mortality would be reduced the most by firearm identification (by 66%) and ammunition background-check laws (by 63%). In 2009, California had 20 firearm laws (seven associated with reduced mortality, eight associated with increased mortality, and five inconclusive), and overall mortality of 8.37 per 100000 people. In 2010, overall mortality was 7.88 per 100000 (IRR 1.36 [95% CI 1.20–1.54]); predicted risk of firearm mortality would be reduced the most by laws implementing owner theft reporting (by 26%) and ammunition background checks (by 76%). New York had 15 firearm laws in 2009 (five associated with reduced mortality, six associated with increased mortality, and four inconclusive), and an overall firearm mortality of 4.96 per 100000 people. Overall mortality in 2010 was 5.22 per 100000 people (IRR 0.90 [95% CI 0.79–1.01]), and the laws that would reduce predicted firearm mortality risk the most were universal background checks (by 65%) and ammunition background checks (by 84%; data for the remaining 46 states are in the appendix). Table 3 presents the change in national firearm mortality rate with federal-level implementation of the three firearm laws most strongly associated with reduced mortality. With 2009 overall firearm mortality at the national rate, **if a law for universal background checks was implemented federally, overall firearm mortality could reduce from 10.35 to 4.46 per 100000 (57% reduction).** Similarly, in the presence of federal ammunition background checks, overall firearm mortality could decrease to 1.99 per 100000 (81% reduction), and with firearm identification requirements to 1.81 per 100000 (83% reduction). On the basis of our model, federal implementation of all three laws could reduce national overall firearm mortality to 0.16 per 100000. When the results of the adjusted analysis were stratified for homicide and suicide, they showed that six laws were associated with a significant reduction in firearm-related homicide deaths, the largest reduction with background checks for ammunition and firearm identification (table 4). Five laws were associated with increased homicide deaths and 14 had inconclusive associations. Firearm identification and permit processes involving law enforcement were associated with reductions in firearm-related suicide deaths, but three laws were associated with an increase and the remaining 20 were inconclusively associated. Results of the sensitivity analyses of effectiveness of firearm law classifications on overall, homicide, and suicide firearm-related deaths, and firearm laws on the change in firearm-related mortality rate from 2008 to 2010, were similar to the main findings (appendix).

## **Subpoint B: Decreasing Gun Suicides**

### **Suicides are the leading cause of gun deaths:**

**Sanger-Katz 15** Margot Sanger-Katz, 10-8-2015, "Gun Deaths Are Mostly Suicides," New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/09/upshot/gun-deaths-are-mostly-suicides.html> //DF

When Americans think about deaths from guns, we tend to focus on homicides. But the problem of gun suicide is inescapable: **More than 60 percent of people in this country who die from guns die by suicide.** Suicide gets a lot less attention than murders

for a few reasons. One big one is that news organizations generally don't cover suicides the way they do murders. There's evidence that news attention around suicide can lead to more suicides. Suicide is more stigmatized and less discussed than homicide. But, as a matter of public health, gun suicides are a huge problem in the United States. Suicide is the second-most common cause of death for Americans between 15 and 34, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Across all ages, it is the 10th-most common cause of death, and caused 1.6 percent of all deaths in 2012. Not all of those suicides are by gun, but a majority are. And while some people feeling suicidal impulses will choose another method if a gun is not at hand, public health researchers cite two reasons guns are particularly dangerous: 1) Guns are more lethal than most other methods people try, so someone who attempts suicide another way is more likely to survive; 2) Studies suggest that suicide attempts often occur shortly after people decide to kill themselves, so people with deadly means at hand when the impulse strikes are more likely to use them than those who have to wait or plan. That means that strategies that make suicide more inconvenient or difficult can save lives. Guns, when they are in the home, can make self-harm both easy and deadly.

### **A Universal background check would reduce suicides for two reasons.**

#### **First, reducing access to people at risk:**

2015, "STATE BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIREMENTS AND SUICIDE," Everytown For Gun Safety, <http://everytown.org/documents/2015/01/suicide-background-checks-fact-sheet.pdf> //DF

These results are consistent with research that employed other methods. An early evaluation of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act found that the implementation of the background check system was associated with a six percent reduction in suicide rates among people ages 55 and older, though the authors speculated this might also be related to changes in both waiting period and background check requirements.<sup>3</sup> Another study found that state-level firearm purchase permit requirements and bans on firearm sales to minors were associated with lower rates of male suicide.<sup>4</sup> Still, while over 18,000 Americans commit suicide with guns every year, little is understood about the characteristics of the firearms they use or the methods by which they acquire them. Limited data gathered by the Centers for Disease Control and the State of California suggest that young people who commit suicide with guns typically do so inside their homes with guns that belong to their friends, parents, or relatives.<sup>5</sup> But the mechanism by which background checks affect overall suicide rates is not entirely clear. It is plausible that background checks stop severely mentally ill people from obtaining firearms and committing acts of self-harm. People with severe mental illness are at a substantially increased risk of suicide,<sup>6</sup> and partially as a result, they are federally prohibited from buying guns.<sup>7</sup> The National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) has proven effective at stopping such gun sales. Since its inception, more than 50,000 gun sales to severely mentally ill people have been denied,<sup>8</sup> particularly as states shore up their databases identifying prohibited, severely mentally ill people.<sup>9</sup>

#### **Second, decreasing access to guns:**

2015, "STATE BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIREMENTS AND SUICIDE," Everytown For Gun Safety, <http://everytown.org/documents/2015/01/suicide-background-checks-fact-sheet.pdf> //DF

It is plausible that background checks stop severely mentally ill people from obtaining firearms and committing acts of self-harm. People with severe mental illness are at a substantially increased risk of suicide,<sup>6</sup> and partially as a result, they are federally prohibited from buying guns.<sup>7</sup> The National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) has proven effective at stopping such gun sales. Since its inception, more than 50,000 gun sales to severely mentally ill people have been denied,<sup>8</sup> particularly as states shore up their databases identifying prohibited, severely mentally ill people.<sup>9</sup> It is also possible that background check requirements are associated with lower suicide rates due to an unobserved variable, such as the availability of firearms. A study of handgun purchasers in California found that merely acquiring a firearm was associated with a substantially elevated risk of suicide in the weeks following, lasting up to six years.<sup>10</sup> And although estimates of household firearm prevalence are out-of-date and subject to reporting biases, there is evidence that Americans are more likely to commit suicide if they live in an area with a higher prevalence of household gun ownership.<sup>11</sup>

**Mencimer 13** Stephanie Mencimer, 3-13-2013, "Research: Less Access to Guns Does Reduce Suicide," Mother Jones, <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2013/03/suicides-vs-handgun-background-checks/> //DF

That's why simple things that can delay access to a gun, like mandatory background checks for all handgun purchases—including private sales—like those that would be required by a new bill recently passed by a Senate committee, can make a

**big difference in preventing suicide.** States with such a requirement have a gun suicide rate 50 percent lower than states that don't, even when their non-gun suicide rates are about the same. One reason this holds true is that, research shows, **suicide is often an impulsive act, and one that people haven't given much thought.** That's especially true in gun suicides, where the majority of victims don't have a documented serious mental illness. **If some in a crisis simply can't access a gun quickly, they may not try suicide at all, or they may try a less-lethal means that offers more chance that they'll be saved.** And **most people who survive a suicide attempt don't go on to take their own lives at a later time.** It's no coincidence that as American armed forces are plagued with high rates of suicide, Ft. Drum, in upstate New York, stands out with a lower rate of suicide among military personnel than most military bases across the country. New York State has some of the nation's tightest gun laws, and Col. (Ret.) Elspeth Cameron Ritchie, a psychiatrist and former adviser to the Army surgeon general, explained to Stars and Stripes last year that in New York, "it's not so easy to get drunk, get a gun and shoot yourself." Ritchie's isn't just idle speculation, either. The Israeli Defense Forces, much like American troops, was seeing a disturbing number of suicides in the ranks in 2006. In an effort to bring down the numbers, the IDF banned soldiers from bringing their rifles home with them on the weekends. Suicides fell by 40 percent, according to a study by Israeli psychiatrists.

## **Contention Two: Good Vibes**

### **Uniqueness – The pro-gun control movement needs a win:**

**Sottile 16** Alexis Sottile, 7-7-2016, "Why the Gun-Control Lobby Is Playing Catch-Up With the NRA," Rolling Stone, <span> //DF

Still, there's much work left to do to approach anything like the successes of the NRA, or even the LGBTQ movement. Back at the Gays Against Guns meeting, Murphy discusses a conference call he'd been on with three longtime gun-control advocates, who had implored him to bring the LGBTQ movement's fearlessness to bear on the gun issue — the goal being to flip Congress in the upcoming election and ultimately pass a new national assault-weapons ban. **The gun-control movement is still broken after the inability to pass a bill after Sandy Hook,** Murphy says. Talk turns to next steps, visibility and a shaming campaign aimed at politicians and corporations who've taken money from the NRA. "There are corporations such as Hertz Rent a Car who give discounts to [NRA members]. It's vacation season. They want our business. It's them or us. They have to choose," says GAG member Ken Kidd, to riotous applause. The discussion then turns to developing talking points to counter NRA arguments such as "guns don't kill people, people kill people." In the back of the room, GAG member Billy Erb stands up. "How about, 'from my warm, living heart,' instead of 'from my cold, dead hands?'"

"Despite a staggering amount of gun violence affecting every community across the country, **Congress' blind allegiance to the NRA has prevented lawmakers from passing a single sensible gun law** that would make communities safer since the Sandy Hook tragedy in December 2012," said Tim Daly, Director of Campaigns for the Guns and Crime team at the Center for American Progress. "But these poll results make clear that gun owners—particularly NRA members—want the president and Congress to take action now to end this gun violence. If Congress refuses to act, President Obama should use his executive authority to ensure that all high-volume gun sellers become licensed and conduct background checks before they sell a firearm."

**A Universal Background Check would weaken the gun lobby for two reasons.  
First, it would strengthen the gun control movement.**

**Second, it would cause infighting among the NRA.**

**Strong 15** Benton Strong, 11-17-2015, "RELEASE: Gun Owners Overwhelmingly Support Background Checks, See NRA as Out of Touch, New Poll Finds – Center for American Progress," Center for American Progress,

<https://www.americanprogress.org/press/release/2015/11/17/125618/release-gun-owners-overwhelmingly-support-background-checks-see-nra-as-out-of-touch-new-poll-finds/> //DF

Washington, D.C. — **A new national Public Policy Polling survey of gun owners finds overwhelming support for background checks and a higher likelihood of supporting political candidates who move them forward.**

**Gun owners also believe the National Rifle Association, or NRA, is out of touch with them on these issues,** and many believe the organization has lost its way altogether. While the debate over gun policy starkly divides American politics, this poll shows that support for key gun violence prevention policies has remained strong for years, even among gun owners themselves. The poll is being released in conjunction with a delegation of gun owners from around the country that is visiting Washington, D.C., to meet with Obama administration officials and members of Congress on the issue of gun violence prevention. Members of the delegation are calling on President Barack Obama and Congress to take immediate action to close the background checks loophole. "The horrors of gun violence have deeply affected my community," said delegation member Rick Movsky, who lives in rural Oregon, near Thurston High School and Umpqua Community College, both sites of horrific mass shootings. "I have owned guns my whole life, have a concealed weapons permit, and believe strongly in both my right to own a gun and the need to stop the proliferation of easy access to guns." Key findings from the survey include: **Overwhelming support for background checks: 83 percent of gun owners nationally support criminal background checks on all sales of firearms,** while only 14 percent of gun owners oppose them. There is strong bipartisan agreement on the issue, with **90 percent of Democrat and 81 percent of Republican gun owners in support of background checks.**

Additionally, **72 percent of NRA members support them.** A 2012 Frank Luntz survey of gun owners found that 82 percent were in favor of background checks, including 74 percent of gun owners. Despite well-funded efforts by the NRA and associated groups, support among both gun owners and NRA members remains high. Gun owners want to see action and enforcement of current law: **79 percent of gun owners nationally want to see their politicians take action on this issue and require more gun sellers to conduct criminal background checks** before they sell guns, while only 19 percent do not want to see their elected leaders act on this issue. That includes **64 percent of NRA members calling for politicians to take action,** compared with only 32 percent who do not want them to act. Gun owners are more likely to support a politician who supports background checks: **66 percent say they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who backs them,** compared with only 19 percent who say they would be less likely to. Supporting background checks is not even a liability for Republican candidates in a primary election: **56 percent of GOP gun owners say they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supports them,** compared with only 27 percent who say they would be less likely to. The NRA is out of touch with gun owners on gun safety issues such as background checks: **Only 29 percent of gun owners feel that the NRA represents their thinking when it comes to background checks,** with 62 percent saying the NRA is out of line with them on the issue. That fits in with a broader feeling that the NRA has lost its way: **59 percent of gun owners feel that the NRA used to be an organization devoted to gun safety but that it has been overtaken by lobbyists and the interests of gun manufacturers** and lost its original purpose and mission. Nearly one-third of NRA members believe the organization has lost its way.

[Tye, Larry. (Reporter for Boston Globe.) "Gun Control Battle -- Weakened NRA Reels From Defeats In Congress, States" The Seattle Times. June 11, 1990. <<http://community.seattletimes.nwsource.com/archive/?date=19900611&slug=1076660>>]

"There is a level of desire and understanding now that has helped us put politics and emotionalism aside," said Daniel Rosenblatt, head of the 13,000-member International Association of Chiefs of Police. Police backing was instrumental in Massachusetts' approval in December of a ban on assault weapons in Boston - "the first time in 15 years that we've won on any ban on weapons," said state Rep. James Brett, a Dorchester Democrat. Brett added that if Congress fails to extend that ban nationwide, he will push for a state law outlawing the military-style rifle. Such **setbacks have fueled dissension within the NRA** that is playing out in private and public gatherings here this week, as NRA members from around the country assemble to inspect the latest laser-guided pistols and gun-toting pocketbooks and to talk politics. Members directed special venom against NRA Chief Executive Officer J. Warren Cassidy, the former mayor of Lynn, Mass. Bruce Carll, 43, a member from California, worried that the group consists mainly of older, intransigent members, whom he called "a dying breed." Others say recent defeats prove NRA leaders are out of touch. The cost of supporting its extensive lobbying and service network also is extracting a price, forcing up dues and depriving the organization of nearly 250,000 members over the past two or three years.

**A Universal Background Check would be a legislative victory that people want:**

**Wintemute 13** Garen Wintemute [Baker–Teret Chair in Violence Prevention and Professor of Emergency Medicine, the University of California, Davis], 2013, "Background Checks for Firearm Transfers," Violence Prevention Research Program, University of California, Davis, <http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/vprp/CBC%20White%20Paper%20Final%20Report%20022013.pdf> //DF

The United States should adopt a comprehensive background check policy— one that requires all firearm transfers (with certain exceptions) to include a background check on the person acquiring the firearm and the retention of a permanent record. This would establish a simple, single, equitable structure for retail commerce in firearms. Two pitfalls should be avoided. First, the policy should not be limited to transfers at gun shows (an approach known as closing the “gun show loophole”). Gun shows account for only a small proportion of private-party firearm transfers, and most crime-involved firearms acquired at gun shows are acquired from licensed retailers. Second, the policy should not exempt holders of concealed weapon permits and other firearm-related licenses. A small but important fraction of such individuals are in fact prohibited persons. Few policy proposals on any subject have such broad public support. In January 2013, **88.8% of the population overall, 84.3% of firearm owners, and 73.7% of members of the National Rifle Association supported background checks for all firearm transfers.**

## **R2R**

We Affirm, Resolved: The United States should require universal background checks for all gun sales and transfers of ownership.

Contention One: decreasing gun homicides

**Universal Background Checks would reduce homicides access to guns for three reasons.**

**1. Criminals would be less willing to seek out gun purchases. Webster at The New Republic in 2014 explains:**

When criminals get guns, they get them from friends, family, or from an underground market source. Without universal background check requirements, there is little deterrent to selling guns to criminals background checks deter the diversion of guns to criminals. With greater accountability measures street prices will rise and fewer dangerous people will have guns.

**2. Vendors would be less willing to sell guns. Kessler at Third Way in 2013 writes:**

Under current law, it is illegal for a private individual to sell to felons but ONLY if it can be proven that the seller knew the buyer was prohibited. This free pass to sell to anyone using the defense that “I didn’t know he was an ex-con” is the lubricant that makes the shadow market in crime guns flow. A simple background check requirement would eliminate the high bar of “knowing” and would make all sales occur under the same set of rules.

**For example, Vittes at the BMJ Medical Journal finds in 2013:**

Nearly three of ten gun offenders would have been prohibited from purchasing or possessing firearms when committing their most recent offense if their states had stricter prohibitions.

**3. Increases enforcement. Kessler explains:**

Such a system would provide law enforcement with the means to stop individuals from participating in suspicious transactions the current system, in which police are powerless to intervene when they observe what appear to be suspect sales, universal background checks provide police with a necessary tool to help sort out transfers between law-abiding citizens and transfers of guns to dangerous criminals.



**Fourth, it would stop state spillover.**

**Several states require background checks for private sales. However, those laws are undermined by criminals who can buy guns in states with less regulation.**

**According to the Economist in 2015:**

In Chicago, which has restrictive gun laws, more than half of guns confiscated by police come from out of state.

**Cross-state spillover leads to more guns in the hands of criminals, and more gun deaths. Whitcomb at Reuters in 2017 finds:**

Firearms-related deaths increased 70 percent in parts of California in the weeks after gun shows in neighboring Nevada, which has fewer regulations

**Overall, a universal background check would reduce gun homicides. The Giffords Law Center finds:** states that required background checks on all handgun sales or permits had 35% fewer gun deaths per capita than states without that background check requirement. less than half as many mass shooting incidents

**Scaled up on a national level, a ubc would be similarly effective. Kalesan at Boston University finds in 2016:**

if a law for universal background checks was implemented federally, overall firearm mortality could reduce by 57%.

**Subpoint B: Suicides**

**Everytown for Gun Safety in 2015 explains:**

People with severe mental illness are at a substantially increased risk of suicide, and partially as a result, they are federally prohibited from buying guns.

**Mencimer at Mother Jones in 2013 writes:**

mandatory background checks can make a big difference in preventing suicide. suicide is often an impulsive act, and one that people haven't given much thought. If some in a crisis simply can't access a gun quickly, they may not try suicide at all, or they may try a less-lethal means that offers more chance that they'll be saved.

**That's why he finds that:**

States with such a requirement have a gun suicide rate 50 percent lower than states that don't.

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We Affirm, Resolved: The United States should require universal background checks for all gun sales and transfers of ownership.

Contention One: decreasing gun homicides

Universal Background Checks would reduce criminals access to guns for three reasons.

1. Choking off the black market. Webster at The New Republic in 2014 explains:

When criminals get guns, they get them from friends, family, or from an underground market source. Without universal background check requirements, there is little deterrent to selling guns to criminals. background checks deter the diversion of guns to criminals. With greater accountability measures street prices will rise and fewer dangerous people will have guns.

2. Decreasing private sale loopholes. Kessler at Third Way in 2013 writes:

Under current law, it is illegal for a private individual to sell to felons but ONLY if it can be proven that the seller knew the buyer was prohibited. This free pass to sell to anyone using the defense that “I didn’t know he was an ex-con” is the lubricant that makes the shadow market in crime guns flow. A simple background check requirement would eliminate the high bar of “knowing” and would make all sales occur under the same set of rules.

For example, Vittes at the BMJ Medical Journal finds in 2013:

Nearly three of ten gun offenders would have been prohibited from purchasing or possessing firearms when committing their most recent offense if their states had stricter prohibitions.

3. Increasing enforcement. Kessler explains:

Such a system would provide law enforcement with the means to stop individuals from participating in suspicious transactions the current system, in which police are powerless to intervene when they observe what appear to be suspect sales, universal background checks provide police with a necessary tool to help sort out transfers between law-abiding citizens and transfers of guns to dangerous criminals.

4. Stopping state spillover.

Several states require background checks for private sales. However, those laws are undermined by criminals who can buy guns in states with less regulation.

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In Chicago, which has restrictive gun laws, more than half of guns confiscated by police come from out of state.

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Contention 2: Suicides

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