We affirm the Resolution: The United States Should Require Universal Background Checks for All Gun Sales and Transfers of Ownership.

We observe that a universal background check means expansion of current background checks for two reasons

**First**, because Merriam Webster defines “universal” as “available equitably to all members of a society”, any normal background check implemented across the board would fit under the resolution.

**Second**, because the resolution never specifies what a universal background check would look like other than that it has to apply to all gun sales and transfers.

**Chapter 1**: Decreasing Domestic Violence

[Swaminathan from Al Jazeera](http://america.aljazeera.com/watch/shows/fault-lines/FaultLinesBlog/2014/3/13/domestic-homicideinamerica.html) finds that 40% of women murdered each year are killed by intimate partners, and of those 40%, more than half are killed with firearms. In fact, he quantifies that victims of domestic abuse are five times more likely to be killed if their abuser owns a handgun.

This is because, as [Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1447915/) from [Duke University](https://www.thetrace.org/2016/08/15-facts-that-show-how-guns-make-domestic-violence-even-deadlier/) explains, such killings are usually propelled by high emotions and substance abuse, but when you put a gun in the mix, that’s when things get the most fatal.

However, background checks would solve back for this issue.

[Tanden from the Center for American Progress](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/courts/reports/2013/01/12/49510/preventing-gun-violence-in-our-nation/) reports that under federal law, individuals convicted of “misdemeanor crimes of domestic violence” are disqualified from possessing firearms.

This policy has been proven effective, as [Stachelberg from the Center for American Progress](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/courts/reports/2013/05/09/60705/preventing-domestic-abusers-and-stalkers-from-accessing-guns/) in 2013 finds that out of two million denials of applications to purchase a firearm between 1998 and 2013, more than 146,000 applications have been denied because of the applicant’s history of domestic violence.

Ultimately, Swaminathan quantifies the impact, finding that in states where background checks are mandatory, 38% fewer women are killed by intimate partners each year.

**Chapter 2**: Curtailing Criminals

Requiring a background check on all gun sales and transfers of ownership would decrease criminal access to guns for three reasons.

**First** is by direct denial

Currently, private sellers are not required to conduct background checks on prospective buyers.

Tanden from the Center for American Progress writes that an estimated 40 percent of the gun transfers that occur each year in the United States originate from private sellers.

Luckily, Lowery of the Washington Post explains that federal background checks on licensed sellers have stopped more than 2.1 million illegal firearms sales.

Thus, if background checks were applied universally to all gun sales and transfers, it would dramatically reduce criminal access to firearms.

**Second** is by increasing costs

Cook from the Northwestern University School of Law writes tougher restrictions in the primary market raise prices in the secondary market, and higher prices deters sales. In Chicago, black market prices quadrupled.

In fact Jeff Guo of the Washington Post 2014 finds that people assume incorrectly that criminals will do anything in terms of cost and risk to get their hands on a gun. Due to price inflations, Connecticut’s law deterred criminals enough to drop the gun homicide rate by 40%.

**Third** is by creating a paper trail

Wintermute from UC Davis explains that because they are undocumented, private-party transfers create missing record links between the first retailer and the criminal.

Fortunately, universal background checks solve this issue

Trumbel in 2013 writes that a universal background check would force dealers to obtain a form 4473, which records that a background check has been conducted and approved.

[Sargent from the Washington Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/plum-line/wp/2013/04/03/why-expanding-background-checks-would-in-fact-reduce-gun-crime/?utm_term=.ac2f30136d6d) explains that this would significantly reduce the number of weapons diverted to the illegal market, where highest risk groups often get their guns. This is because universal background checks would force a trafficker to prove that they completed a background check or be prosecuted. This creates a much better disincentive for crime.

Wintermute empirically confirms that with background checks , there is a 48% reduction in gun trafficking.

The impact is two fold.

First is Decreasing Homicide

A study conducted by [Daniel Webster from John Hopkins University](https://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-gun-policy-and-research/_pdfs/effects-of-missouris-repeal-of-its-handgun-purchaser-licensing-law-on-homicides.pdf) discovered that the homicide rate in Missouri skyrocketed by 34% after the repeal of their background check law.

Second is Curbing Cartel Violence

The Council on Foreign Relations 2013 explains that although Latin American nations have strict gun laws, lax US gun policies undercut these gun control regulations and uniquely enable trafficking.

This is why the [Council on Hemispheric Affairs](http://www.coha.org/mexican-drug-violence-fueled-by-u-s-guns/) writes that nearly 80% of the weapons confiscated by Mexican officials were traced to the United States.

[UCLA Law review in 2014](http://www.uclalawreview.org/pdf/61-4-4.pdf) quantifies that after controlling for distance to Mexico, states without mandatory background checks on gun sales and transfers exported 195% more guns to Mexico.

[John Haltiwanger](https://www.elitedaily.com/news/world/mexican-drug-war-kills-more-americans-than-isis-and-ebola/806049) in 2014 explains that between 2007-2010, almost 6,000 Americans were directly killed because of Mexican cartel violence .