

THE FIRST SEVERAL PAGES PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT PROBLEMS.

THE REMAINING PAGES ALSO PROVIDE SOLUTIONS AND ACTION STEPS.

THOM HARTMAN'S RESEARCH SHOWS THE SECOND AMENDMENT WAS RATIFIED TO PRESERVE SLAVERY. See this link from his January 15, 2013 article: <http://truth-out.org/news/item/13890-the-second-amendment-was-ratified-to-preserve-slavery>

WARNING TO STARBUCKS CUSTOMERS: STARBUCKS' POLICY LETS CUSTOMERS CARRY LOADED GUNS IN ITS STORES.

Starbucks policy permits customers to carry loaded guns in its stores – even though Starbucks knows that gun carriers put their employees and customers at risk. HOWEVER, to keep senior management safe, guns are banned at corporate headquarters.

<http://gunvictimsaction.org/starbucks-boycott/> is a project of the National Gun Victims Action Council, “A Force for Sane Gun Laws.” www.gunvictimsaction.org

MILITARY RECRUITERS IN SCHOOLS PROMOTE GUN CULTURE

Throughout the U.S. (except in some of the schools with rich kids), military recruiters use a variety of clever methods to persuade kids to join the military and participate in the military's culture, which promotes guns.

In response, some supporters of peace and students' rights use various methods to counter those efforts. Several “counter-recruitment” organizations exist around the U.S., including one in Seattle, Washington Truth in Recruiting (WaTiR at www.watir.org,

Rick Jahnkow has decades of experience as a “counter-recruitment” organizer, and works with Project YANO (www.projectyano.org). (RJahnkow@aol.com) He criticized an article in the January 28, 2013 *New York Times*: **(See below)**

SELLING A NEW GENERATION ON GUNS

This *NY Times* article by Mike McIntire (www.nytimes.com/2013/01/27/us/selling-a-new-generation-on-guns.html) has some interesting research on how pro-gun organizations have targeted young people for early recruitment into gun culture.

The strategies described in the article closely parallel ones used by Junior ROTC (JROTC) to hide from schools and the public its military connection (*e.g.*, the myth that JROTC is all about teaching “leadership” and “good citizenship,” when it is really about militarizing students). Here are some excerpts from Rick Jahnkow’s article:

“Aware that introducing firearms to young children could meet with resistance, several studies suggested methods for smoothing the way for target-shooting programs in schools. One cautioned, ‘When approaching school systems, it is important to frame the shooting sports only as a mechanism to teach other life skills, rather than an end to itself.’”

The article fails to even mention the fact that the U.S. government is, itself, selling a new generation on guns by sponsoring the JROTC program in thousands of high schools. Included in many of these schools are shooting ranges that train students as young as 14 to shoot with pellet rifles.

Here is another excerpt from the Mike McIntire’s article “Selling a New Generation on Guns” in the January 26, 2013, *New York Times*:

“Threatened by long-term declining participation in shooting sports, the firearms industry has poured millions of dollars into a broad campaign to ensure its future by getting guns into the hands of more, and younger, children.

“The industry’s strategies include giving firearms, ammunition and cash to youth groups; weakening state restrictions on hunting by young children; marketing an affordable military-style rifle for “junior shooters” and sponsoring semiautomatic-handgun competitions for youths; and developing a target shooting video game that promotes brand-name weapons, with links to the Web sites of their makers . . .”

AMERICA’S GUN AND VIOLENCE CRISIS

This was posted on January 15, 2013, on AlterNet (www.alternet.org):

One of the worst feelings that emerges from horrible events like the mass murder at Connecticut's Sandy Hook elementary school is the sense that we live in a country that has

fundamentally lost the ability to protect itself and its most vulnerable citizens from gun violence.

This sense of defenselessness can be overwhelming, especially when the increasingly savage mass killings are blasted over our mass media. When we look at the recent scorecard, it's clear that the problem is spiraling out of control. Six of the 12 most deadly shootings in our history have occurred within the past five years. The vast majority of the world's worst mass shootings, in developed countries, have taken place in the United States. There have been 65 mass shootings since Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords was shot in 2009. On top of that, nearly 15,000 homicides were committed in the U.S. in 2011, two-thirds of them with firearms, and this rate is rising since December.

Ironically and depressingly, sales of guns and ammunition have gone through the roof since the Sandy Hook tragedy, and production cannot keep up with demand. So the 300 million guns in personal hands in the U.S. are increasing for sure.

The NRA Problem

With the mass murders, it is the NRA that is most culpable. The NRA has been transformed from an organization primarily about gun safety to one taken over by gun zealots. The NRA protects the ability of virtually anyone to get their hands on guns, even the most powerful assault weapons like those used in recent killings. This is in stark contrast to the rest of the developed world. For the NRA, "freedom" is now defined as the ability to carry a concealed handgun virtually anyplace.

Like most realities in America **where consumers and citizens are routinely victimized, the adage "follow the money" always rings true.** The NRA for all intents and purposes is the advocacy arm for the booming gun and ammunition industry, where in turn, some of the top gun maker companies are owned by Wall Street hedge funds.

Gun violence is a huge problem for our society and a top editorial priority for AlterNet. Over the weekend we published Steven Rosenfeld's illuminating article, "[The Surprising Unknown History of the NRA.](#)" Today we published: "[How the Second Amendment Was Hijacked by Antonin Scalia and the NRA.](#)" Rosenfeld is a veteran investigative reporter, deeply immersed in the history and controversies regarding American gun culture, gun violence and gun control laws. He is writing a series of articles on gun safety, the NRA, and violence continuing through this week and next.

We at AlterNet know that the fight with the NRA will be long and challenging. Many elected officials fear the NRA, because it will use its deep pockets to try to defeat them if they stray from the NRA's uncompromising hard line. The NRA also donates, along with the gun industry, large amounts of campaign dollars to those running for office (follow the money).

Many Factors in Our Violent Society

Beyond the NRA, other factors that contribute to our violent culture must be examined. Jan Frel and I co-wrote the piece, "[We Are a Country Drenched in Bloodshed: Some Hard Truths About Violence in the Media](#)" several weeks ago about violence in the media, urging all of us to take a look at the interlocking dynamics that pervade much of our media landscape. The NRA works to "normalize" gun violence by sponsoring and collaborating with the production and marketing of violent video games, which deeply affect children and adolescents.

There is a long road ahead of us as a country before we can dig out of the morass of violence that has multiple causes and difficult fixes. But our intelligence tells us that easy access to guns, especially powerful assault rifles, is at the center of our pervasive and unacceptable violence problem. Clearly, the country has strayed from any semblance of balanced and cautionary policies where public safety is more important than the unfettered right to guns, including weapons designed for the military.

We hope that you find our series on gun violence and the NRA enlightening and useful.

Please let us know what you think by writing to comments@altnet.org. If you have an idea for how to cover the issue, please let us know; or perhaps you have written something yourself?

This information from the Faith Action Network (the Seattle-based organization formed by the merger of the Washington Association of Churches and the Lutheran Public Policy Office) in mid-January 2013:

[**HUNDREDS OF WA STATE CLERGY RELEASE STATEMENT DEPLORING "GUN APPRECIATION" EVENT AT STATE CAPITOL ON MLK HOLIDAY**](#)

Seattle — Hundreds of interfaith leaders from across Washington State say they deplore a “Guns Across America” gun appreciation rally to be held at the state Capitol on the same weekend the nation celebrates the legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. These interfaith leaders have issued a joint statement and are sending a delegation to Olympia to provide an alternative voice to the gun rally on Saturday, January 19. (The statement, interview contacts and signatures are at: <http://bit.ly/13JJPrn>)

WHO: Delegation of interfaith leaders

WHERE: State Capitol, Legislative Building, North Steps

WHEN: Saturday, January 19, 10:30 am

“We deplore their celebration of the very instrument of Dr. King’s assassination and see their actions as contemptuous of his legacy,” said **Rev. Dr. Sanford “Sandy” Brown, pastor at Seattle’s First United Methodist Church**. “We will be in Olympia, available to the press as an alternative voice before the event this Saturday.”

“As faith leaders, we revere the legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,” said **Rabbi Daniel Weiner of Temple De Hirsch Sinai**, “and the national holiday in his honor recalls his prophetic leadership in the civil rights struggle as well as his outspoken devotion to non-violent confrontation of evil.”

“The way to honor Dr. King’s memory,” said **Rev. Aaron Williams, Senior Pastor at Mt. Zion Baptist Church** in Seattle, “is to condemn gun violence and to oppose any and all racial hatred, and we call on gun rights activists to join us in doing this rather than in focusing on the very means of Dr. King's murder.”

“Our faith traditions challenge our communities to live in peace. That’s why we now take this prophetic and public stand,” said Rev. Brown.

“If we are honest about whether or not we are doing enough to protect our children, the answer is no,” said **Bishop Greg Rickel of the Diocese of Olympia**. “Since the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School a month ago, more than 500 people have been killed by guns in America. Every day the number rises. We are getting used to it, and this is something we should never get used to.”

“Faith communities care deeply about the legacy of Martin Luther King and about rooting out the violence in our society,” said **Fr. Michael G. Ryan, pastor of St. James Cathedral**. “When an organized group promotes ‘gun appreciation’ in the wake of the unspeakable tragedy of Newtown, it’s a rejection of everything Dr. King stood for.”

The above came from Faith Action Network, 6218 Beacon Ave S, Seattle, WA 98108
www.fanwa.org

This is based on information from The Color of Change (www.colorofchange.org):

THE NRA’S SIGNIFICANT CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Pressed hard for a response to the tragic shooting deaths of 20 young children and 7 adults in Newtown, the National Rifle Association (NRA) finally broke its silence to announce that the solution to gun violence is more guns. **It just doesn't make any sense — unless you're in the gun business.**

As a long-time funder of the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) — and co-chair of its Public Safety and Elections Task Force — the NRA has directly authored dozens of "model" gun access laws that fly in the face of commonsense efforts to reduce gun violence.¹

And now, **despite the wave of bad publicity ALEC's received for pushing Florida's NRA-drafted "Shoot First" law out to 25 other states, it's clear the NRA isn't prepared to clean up its act.** By doubling down on its callous and irresponsible rhetoric in the wake of the

Newtown shooting, the NRA is presenting ALEC's other corporate funders with a stark choice: they can join the 42 major corporations that have already done the right thing and cut their ties with ALEC and the NRA, or they can align themselves with an organization that brazenly values profits over human lives.

It's time to draw the line. [Please join us today and tell ALEC's corporate funders to stop sanctioning profit-driven gun violence.](#)

The NRA's leadership keeps pushing the dangerous fiction that "[t]he only way to stop a 'bad guy' with a gun is a 'good guy' with a gun."² In reality, the extreme stress experienced in the chaos of an unanticipated shooting makes it incredibly difficult to properly handle a gun — and avoid being shot yourself.³ **Making guns easily accessible to everyone does not make our communities safer: the evidence is clear that more guns mean more homicide.**⁴

Last spring, in the wake of unarmed teen Trayvon Martin's shooting death, we highlighted the role of the NRA/ALEC in the reckless proliferation of deadly "Shoot First" laws across the country.⁵ **ALEC acts as a corporate bill mill, developing, promoting and disseminating corporate-sponsored "model" legislation to statehouses across the country**⁶ — and at the federal level through its extensive alumni network of former state legislators now serving in higher office.⁷ Working hand in glove with the NRA, ALEC is also behind our national race to the bottom in the expansion of concealed carry laws⁸ — and the push for unrestricted access to assault weapons and high-capacity magazines⁹ — because the known cost in human lives of unrestricted gun access¹⁰ takes a backseat to the opportunity for massive corporate profiteering.¹¹

Amidst growing national concern over the role that the gun industry lobby played in Trayvon's entirely preventable death, the NRA has attempted to deflect attention from itself by asking "Where's [the] outrage?" for the legions of young Black men killing each other every day in our nation's cities.¹² It's true that the statistics are horrific: **49% of Black teens in a national survey reported personally knowing someone who has been shot, and 47% said they could get their hands on a gun if they really wanted to.**¹³ Thanks to the NRA and ALEC — who pushed the no-paperwork-required private reseller loophole that accounts for 40% of all gun sales.¹⁴ States with weak gun laws — predominantly rural, red and southern — do big business trafficking guns into cities trying desperately to keep them out.¹⁵

Enough is enough. [Tell ALEC's corporate funders: it's time to take a stand against profiting from tragedy.](#)

This information was sent on January 7, 2013, by the ColorOfChange.org team, including Rashad, Matt, Arisha, Kim, and Johnny

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*This information came from the progressive advocacy group, UltraViolet
(www.weareultraviolet.org)*

Debunk the Claim that "Guns Make Women Safer."

Gayle Trotter, a conservative gun advocate, said, “Guns make women safer” on January 30, 2013, during a US Senate hearing on gun violence.¹ At the hearing, one conservative witness after another argued vehemently against background checks, against limiting high capacity ammunition clips, and for assault weapons.²

But here’s the inconvenient truth: **The presence of a gun in a domestic violence situation increases the chance that a woman will be murdered by 500%.**³

And here’s another fact: In states that require a background check for every handgun sale, 38% fewer women are shot to death by partners.⁴

We need to make sure that people hear the facts about gun violence – that common-sense safety measures, not more guns, will make women safer.

Sources:

1. [Gayle Trotter: 'Guns make women safer.'](#) Washington Post, January 30, 2013
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3. [Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results From a Multisite Case Control Study](#), American Journal of Public Health, September 23, 2002
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“TIME FOR A NATIONAL CONVERSATION & ACTION ON PREVENTING VIOLENCE”

Here are some excerpts from Matthew Albracht’s Dec. 20, 2012, article on Huffington Post:

This is a troubling time for our nation. The frequency of mass shootings, often involving children, is on the rise in a way that only decades ago, few could have imagined. Sadly, this is happening in the U.S. far more than anywhere else in the world. Just consider: 15 of the 25 deadliest mass shootings over the last 50 years took place in the United States.

But the challenge is much broader. Beyond these mass shootings, many of our own neighborhoods are essentially war zones, in which children and adults alike are faced daily with horrific levels of violence and suffer the same kind of post-traumatic stress as our soldiers returning from war – but with even less support, media attention or serious discussion within our culture.

It is time for us finally to engage in a serious, thoughtful national conversation about the root causes of violence, and to take specific, meaningful steps to prevent violence... We must work diligently and vigorously to build and implement the programs, structures and support systems that will help us shift towards a more peaceful culture.

A comprehensive solution must address a wide range of complex issues. Some of the challenges are quite clear; others are less often explored...

Gun control is essential, especially when it comes to these military style semi-automatic weapons that are often involved in mass killings.

We also have a media and entertainment industry that too often glorifies the hyper-violent – from movies, to news, to video games – and this dangerous pattern can desensitize us to violence, especially people suffering from mental illness.

Our mental health services have been slashed across the nation, and they weren't anywhere near what they needed to be to begin with.

We have a political discourse that is growing increasingly divisive and at times hate-filled.

We also must seriously re-examine how and why we have organized ourselves into such a punitive and militaristic culture. How we invest our money and resources is a testament to the kind of nation we will ultimately manifest, and our almost exclusively punitive approach to dealing with conflict sets a tone that should be challenged. Paradoxically, our hardline approach to dealing with conflict actually feeds into a culture of violence and recidivism – and a costly one at that.

There are certainly many other issues we need to explore as well.

Luckily, we have proven methods to prevent violence and engage in smart intervention in all sectors of society. We must invest in these areas -- like peacebuilding and conflict resolution programs – which are universally applicable modalities to help create a more peaceful culture and deal much more effectively with the kinds of violence we've seen recently. Psychological and emotional support resources should also be far more available for all ages in every community.

Every child should also be taught social and emotional learning skills in schools. We must teach our kids how to deal with conflict, how to interact with kids who are different, how to be more accepting and get along in the world. In addition to creating a more peaceful environment – and potentially mitigating the lashing out by these alienated individuals committing such atrocities – these skills have been shown to correlate strongly with success in life and most importantly, provide a more meaning-filled life experience.

To deeply address these and many other issues will certainly require great effort and commitment, but what other choice do we have? The current trajectory is unsustainable and dire.

It is up to US to make our voices heard with all our national, state and local leaders, urging them to push for change that is broad and holistic in scope, addresses the causal issues involved, and builds on proven success in prevention and intervention, rather than pursuing the same old, failed punitive policies and mindsets of the past.

Together, we can work to make real and serious change.

Read the full article here: (Source: The Peace Alliance's Matthew Albracht posted his article on December 20, 2012, at www.huffingtonpost.com/matthew-albracht/its-time-for-a-national-conversation-on-preventing-violence_b_2339942.html)

ACT BOLDLY TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM GUN VIOLENCE

In December 2012 or January 2013 this information came from the Children's Defense Fund, a highly respected non-profit organization at 25 E Street, NW, Washington DC 20001 (800) 233-1200 www.childrensdefense.org Their website has much more information about protecting children from guns.

Every 30 minutes a child or teen is shot in the United States.

Every 3 hours and 15 minutes a child dies from gun violence. *It's time to say "no more."*

Epidemic gun violence against children—and its toll on all who live in the United States—is a uniquely American phenomenon. In 2010 the U.S. gun death rate—homicides, suicides, and accidents—for children and teens was nearly 65 times higher than the rates in the United Kingdom and Germany and 108 times higher than in Spain. The U.S. gun homicide rate for children and teens was 106 times higher than the rate in Germany and 213 times higher than the rates in Spain and the United Kingdom.

The reason gun deaths are a huge epidemic in the United States is simple: it's the guns and the permissive gun laws that protect them. In a 2007 study of 178 countries by the Geneva-based Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, the U.S. ranked number one in the number of guns per person (88.8 per 100), far ahead of all the other countries in the study. Yemen was a distant runner-up with 55 guns per 100 people, 40 percent less than the U.S. rate.

Although the U.S. accounts for less than five percent of the global population, Americans own an estimated 35 to 50 percent of all civilian-owned guns in the world. Between 270-300 million guns are in civilian hands in the U.S. – nearly one gun for every man, woman, and child. Our nation is saturated with guns and the National Rifle Association wants more and more.

On Saturday, January 26, 2013, Marian Wright Edelman from the Children's Defense Fund ("A strong, effective, independent voice for *all* the children of America") and many others gathered on Washington DC's National Mall for the [March on Washington for Gun Control](#). They

called on members of Congress and state legislators to pass [common sense gun safety laws](#) to stop the epidemic of preventable child and adult gun deaths. Other gatherings occurred elsewhere in the U.S., including Seattle.

A new Gallup poll shows that most Americans support universal background checks for gun buyers, a ban on assault weapons, limiting ammunition magazines to 10 rounds or less, and other proposals in President Obama's Plan to Reduce Gun Violence. It will be a formidable fight to achieve these essential steps but we can and will succeed if all of us raise an irresistible and unrelenting voice in every state in the weeks and months to come, and for as long as it takes.

We can free our nation of this scourge of gun violence. No external enemy ever took the lives of so many children and adults. We can and must change this. I am confident that most Americans value children's safety and right to live more than they value the right of anyone to have assault weapons and high capacity ammunition magazines. If America can't stand up for its children, it doesn't stand for anything.

Marian Wright Edelman is President of the Children's Defense Fund, 25 E Street, NW, Washington DC 20001 (800) 233-1200 www.childrensdefense.org

How Long Will CONGRESS Allow People to Commit MASS MURDER with GUNS?

No legislation can totally prevent these tragedies from happening, but Congress must take **BOLD ACTION** to place reasonable controls on the guns that are killing so many people in our communities. EXAMPLES:

1. Ban assault weapons and large capacity magazines, because they have **NO LEGITIMATE CIVILIAN USES**.
2. Require **BACKGROUND CHECKS** for **EVERY SALE**, including private parties, internet, and gun shows.
3. **PROHIBIT CARRYING CONCEALED WEAPONS**.
4. **FULLY FUND MENTAL HEALTH CARE** for persons at risk of violence to themselves and/or others.

*The information immediately below came from **Think Progress**, the Center for American Progress Action Fund, 1333 H Street NW, 10th Floor, Washington DC 20005:*

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT OBAMA'S GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROPOSALS

by **Annie-Rose Strasser** on January 16, 2013

In a press conference on Wednesday, President Obama outlined a sweeping effort to prevent gun violence in the United States. Surrounded by children who had written him letters voicing their desire to see gun laws passed, Obama announced that he will sign 23 executive orders and bring a set of proposals to Congress.

The President referenced one child's letter that read, "I know that laws have to be passed by Congress, but I beg you to try very hard."

"I promise that I will try very hard," he said.

Obama also condemned lawmakers who vocally resist any new gun measures, pointing out that the gun policies of Ronald Reagan were more reasonable.

The initiatives cover everything from mental health, to gun safety, to blocking the most deadly firearms from making it to market. Here are some of the most important efforts the President introduced today:

- 1. Making background checks universal.** Obama wants every single gun owner to go through a proper background check, so it can be determined whether they have a criminal history or diagnosed mental illness. He wants Congress to close the gun show loophole that allows people at gun shows, and private buyers of used weapons, to avoid getting checked. He will also, through executive action, urge private sellers to conduct background checks, even if they aren't mandatory.
- 2. Improving state reporting of criminals and the mentally ill.** While all states are required to report to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) people who should not have access to guns, some states are sluggish about putting the data into the system. Obama will put more money into the hands of the states so that they can improve their reporting systems, and issue stronger guidelines to let states know when they should report people. Obama will also, through Presidential Memorandum, work to make sure agencies are regularly entering data into NICS.
- 3. Banning assault weapons.** This is likely the most difficult battle Obama will undertake. He wants to reinstate the 1994 Assault Weapons Ban, which outlaws military-grade weapons, like the AR-15 used by Newtown gunman Adam Lanza and by Aurora Theater gunman James Holmes. Obama wants Congress to pass the ban, and close some of the loopholes identified in its 1994 iteration.

4. **Capping magazine clip capacity at 10 bullets.** A military-grade weapon is dangerous, but so are its accessories: Obama proposes banning all extended magazine clips that hold over 10 bullets. Huge magazine clips allow a gunman to fire off hundreds of rounds without having to stop, even once, to reload. The high-capacity magazine ban was also part of the 1994 Assault Weapons Ban.
5. **Purging armor-piercing bullets.** The sale of armor piercing ammunition has been banned for quite some time, but is still legal to possess such bullets. Obama is calling on Congress to outlaw ownership and transfer of these bullets, instead of just the sale. Those who oppose any gun laws try to spin a ban on armor piercing bullets as a ban on deer hunting ammunition, but such ammo has the ability to penetrate bullet-proof vests, and is more colloquially known as “cop killer bullets.”
6. **Funding police officers.** Obama wants Congress to reverse its course of austerity for public employees by approving \$4 billion to fund police enforcement around the country.
7. **Strengthening gun tracking.** In order to track weapons that are used for crimes, Obama will issue a memorandum mandating that all agencies trace back firearms. This means that any agency in the country must trace guns used in crimes back to their original owners, as a way to help collect data on where criminal weapons are coming from. Obama will also ask Congress to allow law enforcement to do background checks on guns seized during investigations.
8. **Supporting research on gun violence.** Obama hopes to be able to gather more information on gun violence and misuse of firearms, and use that data to inform the work of law enforcement. He also wants to restart research, which has been long blocked by the National Rifle Association, on how video games, the media, and violence affect violent gun crimes. The Centers for Disease Control will immediately begin these efforts, but Obama also is calling on Congress to add \$10 million to the pot of funding for such research.
9. **Encouraging mental health providers to get involved.** In order to make sure that those with homicidal thoughts are unable to access the weapons with which to kill, Obama seeks to encourage mental health professionals to alert authorities to such people. He will clarify that doing so is not in violation of patient privacy laws. He also wants to dispel the idea that Obamacare prevents doctors from talking to patients about guns.
10. **Promoting safe gun ownership.** The administration will start a “responsible gun ownership” campaign to encourage gun owners to lock up their firearms. He will also work with the Consumer Product Safety Commission to make sure safes and gun locks on the market are effective. He’s also calling on the justice department to help him come up with new gun safety technology.
11. **Funding school counseling.** Obama is calling on Congress to fund the positions of 1,000 new school counselors. The funding will come both through the already-existent COPS

Hiring Grant, and through a new Comprehensive School Safety program that Congress will need to sign off on. The latter would put \$150 million into funding for new counselors and social workers in schools.

12. **Encouraging safe, anti-bullying school environments.** Over 8,000 schools could receive new funding — \$50 million — under Obama’s plan to encourage safer school environments. Obama wants to help at-risk students by creating a “school climate survey” that will collect data on what services students need, and to remedy any problems by putting professionals into schools. The administration will also issue guidelines on school discipline policies.
13. **Recognizing the mental health needs of low-income Americans.** Medicaid recipients already qualify for some mental health services, but Obama would like to expand that service so that low-income Americans have the same access to professional help as those who have money to pay for it on their own. Obama will issue a directive to heads of state health programs, enforcing “mental health parity” — the idea that mental health should be treated as a priority as important as physical health.

THE BRADY CAMPAIGN COMMENTS ON OBAMA’S PROPOSALS

On January 16, 2013, the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence (www.bradycampaign.org) issued this statement:

One month ago, 20 first-graders and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School lost their lives in a senseless act of violence that never should have happened.

Following the tragedy in Newtown, the Brady Campaign was asked to supply the White House with recommendations for serious, game-changing legislation to reduce gun injuries and deaths. We submitted [this information](#) to Vice President Biden's task force on January 11, outlining a comprehensive approach on the issue.

Today — after weeks of discussion with stakeholders from all sides — President Obama announced a roadmap for progress on preventing gun violence.

I am pleased to see many of our proposed solutions reflected in today's announcement by the President. But make no mistake... This is only the first step toward making America a safer, more secure nation.

Those who oppose common-sense measures to prevent gun violence are counting on fear, disinformation campaigns, and political gridlock going forward.

That's why it's so important for you to stay engaged on this issue.

In the coming weeks, the Brady Campaign will be working with President Obama and members of Congress to ensure **all** Americans — not just supporters of the gun lobby — have a voice in our ongoing national conversation about gun violence.

To ensure the breadth and diversity needed in this discussion, we are already planning our next special briefing call for Brady Campaign supporters.

Last week, thousands of fellow Americans joined us via phone to begin a national conversation about public safety measures like universal background checks. At the end of the call, we promised to share answers to the top three questions submitted by participants.

Those Q&A details are now available on the Brady Campaign website [here](#), along with a [recording of our conversation](#).

On behalf of the Brady Campaign and our supporters, I'm so grateful to all those who have stepped up and put partisanship aside so we can make real progress on meaningful, common-sense reforms. Our President, Vice President, and many other elected officials have shown tremendous leadership on this issue.

I'm also deeply grateful for your generosity and support of the Brady Campaign at this critical time. You can also mail a check to: Brady Campaign · 1225 Eye Street NW, Suite 1100 · Washington, DC 20005

The Brady Campaign is the nation's largest, non-partisan grassroots organization leading the fight to protect you, your family and your community from gun violence.

This is based on information provided by Amnesty International:

SUPPORT THE UN'S ARMS TRADE TREATY TO KEEP WEAPONS OUT OF THE WRONG HANDS

The National Rifle Association (NRA) says it wants to make a “meaningful contribution” to prevent gun violence, but it is interfering with the United Nations’ efforts to keep weapons out of the hands of human rights abusers genocidal regimes.

World leaders will negotiate and vote on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in March 2013.

The unregulated global arms trade allows the wrong people to get guns. Tens of thousands of children are forcibly recruited right now by governments’ armed forces and by non-state armed

groups who are often armed with weapons irresponsibly traded by governments and private corporations. Children are also part of the 26 million people who have been displaced by armed conflict fueled by guns.

The U.S. is the largest exporter of small arms and conventional weapons. The National Rifle Association (NRA), which is largely funded by the manufacturers and sellers of guns, has used a campaign of misinformation and lies to force the U.S. government to oppose and weaken the ATT¹.

Click this link: [**Tell the NRA to stop its campaign of lies about the ATT and stop interfering in U.S. foreign policy.**](#)

The NRA has asserted that the ATT would infringe on the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, the right to bear arms. But, in fact, the ATT will have no bearing on domestic gun ownership², as it deals exclusively with the flow of weapons between – not within – countries.

Let's be clear about something. **There is virtually no regulation of the international arms trade.** Governments and groups known to commit atrocities and abuses can buy weapons traded on the open market and use them with impunity.

This must stop. **The ATT could save hundreds of lives every day by establishing common global standards for how countries import, export and transfer conventional weapons.**

By dropping its opposition to the ATT, the NRA has an opportunity to help keep guns out of the hands of those who routinely target children and others—saving countless lives around the world.

Click this link: [**Tell the NRA to stop helping human rights abusers get weapons.**](#)

1. "National Rifle Association vows to fight arms trade treaty at U.N." Reuters, December 28, 2012. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/28/us-arms-treaty-nra-idUSBRE8BR03420121228>

2. http://www.un.org/disarmament/ATT/media/presskit/ATT_Myths_and_Facts.pdf

Don't let the NRA help give war criminals, dictators and human rights abusers a free pass to get weapons. No more standing in the way of an Arms Trade Treaty that could help save millions of lives worldwide!

Amnesty International USA, 5 Penn Plaza, New York NY 10001 (212) 807-8400
www.amnestyusa.org

This information comes from Mayors Against Illegal Guns:

“MAYORS AGAINST ILLEGAL GUNS”

CALLS FOR U.S. SENATE TO REQUIRE BACKGROUND CHECKS

The single most important thing Congress can do to end gun violence and save lives would be to **keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people by requiring criminal background checks for ALL gun sales.**

Senator Chuck Schumer just announced his intent to reintroduce crucial legislation that would fix our broken background check system. The [Fix Gun Checks Act](#) would require criminal background checks for all gun sales.

Right now, loopholes in our federal gun laws allow 40% to 48% of all gun sales to occur without a criminal background check.¹ That's 6.6 million guns in 2012 alone!²

This enormous gap in our gun laws is driving gun violence in our communities. A recent survey revealed that nearly 80% of gun criminals got their handguns without having to pass a background check first.³

[Call your Senators TODAY: Tell them to co-sponsor the Fix Gun Checks Act and save lives by keeping guns out of the hands of dangerous people.](#)

We need to close the loopholes that allow guns to be sold without criminal background checks. But we also need to make sure the data in the background check system is 100% up-to-date.

When a court determines that a person is a danger to himself or others due to mental illness, that person is prohibited from buying guns. Yet nineteen states have submitted fewer than 100 such mental health records to the gun background check system.⁴ That's another tragedy waiting to happen.

82 percent of gun owners - including 74 percent of NRA members - support requiring a criminal background check for all gun sales.⁵ Together we can get this done.

Please take a minute to call your Senators RIGHT NOW:

<http://DemandAPlan.org/FixGunChecksAct>

SOURCES:

1. Philip J. Cook & Jens Ludwig, Guns in America. 1996. Available online: <http://bit.ly/TVcAgy>
2. CBS Detroit, “Bing, Godbee, Eight Local Mayors Oppose New Gun Bill,” Sep. 25, 2012. Available online: <http://cbsloc.al/SkcD5F>
3. U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 2004, Feb 28, 2007.

4. Federal Bureau of Investigation obtained by Mayors Against Illegal Guns. Available online: <http://www.demandaplan.org/fatalgaps>
5. Mayors Against Illegal Guns. "New poll by Frank Luntz shows NRA-members and other gun owners support sensible measures to keep guns out of the hands of criminals." Dec. 10, 2009. Info: www.maig.us or www.mayorsagainstillegalguns.org and <http://www.mayorsagainstillegalguns.org/html/home/demandaplan.html>

HERE ARE SOME ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

The **Coalition to Stop Gun Violence** (www.csgv.org) seeks to secure freedom from gun violence through research, strategic engagement and effective policy advocacy. CSGV, 1424 L Street NW Suite 2-1, Washington DC 20005

www.GunPromise.com is a new project by the Progressive Change Campaign Committee. This is an exciting new project where you can join an action that will continue for weeks and months to come, way past the outrage fatigue that the NRA is counting on.

[**Occupy The NRA has launched on Facebook**](#), and already promises the potential for some very interesting direct action - sign up sooner than later.

Our friend Alex Lawson helped us leak [**this internal NRA members video**](#) that helps explain why they've been so quiet since Friday - they have zero excuse for the racist fearmongering they're sending their members 24/7, which is meant to appeal to the least stable, most paranoid corner of their base. Help us by sharing it on [**Facebook**](#) and [**Twitter**](#).