

Stop the Killing: Pass Gun Control Legislation Now

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A study by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) found that the rate of firearm death of children 14 and under is nearly twelve times higher in the U.S. than in 25 other industrialized nations. When comparing the high U.S. gun murder rate to that of other nations, it is vital to realize that the U.S. is also unique in one other relevant way: lax [gun](#) ownership restrictions. Almost all industrialized nations have more stringent regulations on weapons possession than the United States, and not surprisingly, all of them have a lower murder rate. Many people are finally beginning to recognize the rather significant correlation between high firearm murder rates and high accessibility of guns. Although an overwhelming majority of Americans recognize the need for stricter gun control laws (including 80 percent polled in New Jersey this year), conflict still exists, especially in the world of politics. Many politicians still insist that gun control is not the answer to gun violence, echoing the sentiments of Republican Presidential frontrunner George W. Bush, who blames recent firearm-related deaths not on guns but on "a wave of evil passing through America." What they must realize is that while there may be some "evil" involved, malevolent intentions are harmless in the absence of the sufficient means to execute them. Guns provide these means, and the results are unfortunately instantaneous and irreversible.

Fact: In 1997 alone, 32,436 Americans were killed with firearms. This is about 1,000 fewer than the number of Americans killed in the Korean War and more than half the number killed in Vietnam.

Fact: In 1997, over 11 children and teens (ages 19 and under) were killed with guns each and every day in the U.S.

Fact: Guns kept...

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...antage of this opportunity have been few and weak, immeasurably affected by the money and lobbying of the socially irresponsible NRA. If Congresspersons either refused to submit to NRA pressures or passed stricter campaign finance rules, there is no limit to the progress that could be made. Background checks at gun shows would be only the beginning of the beginning. There could be a licensing system for all gun owners. There could be even stricter limits on who can own a gun. After all, 90 percent of adult murderers have a previous adult criminal record; how about preventing anyone with a criminal record from owning a gun? There is no limit to what can be done, but as for now, we are at a standstill. There are still many kinds of assault weapons for legal sale. It is up to us to do everything we can to force Congress to do what it was meant to do: serve the people.

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