

# Fear Thy Neighbor: An American Commandment

By Bobby Watson

*Policy Advocate, Texas Impact*



★ TEXAS IMPACT

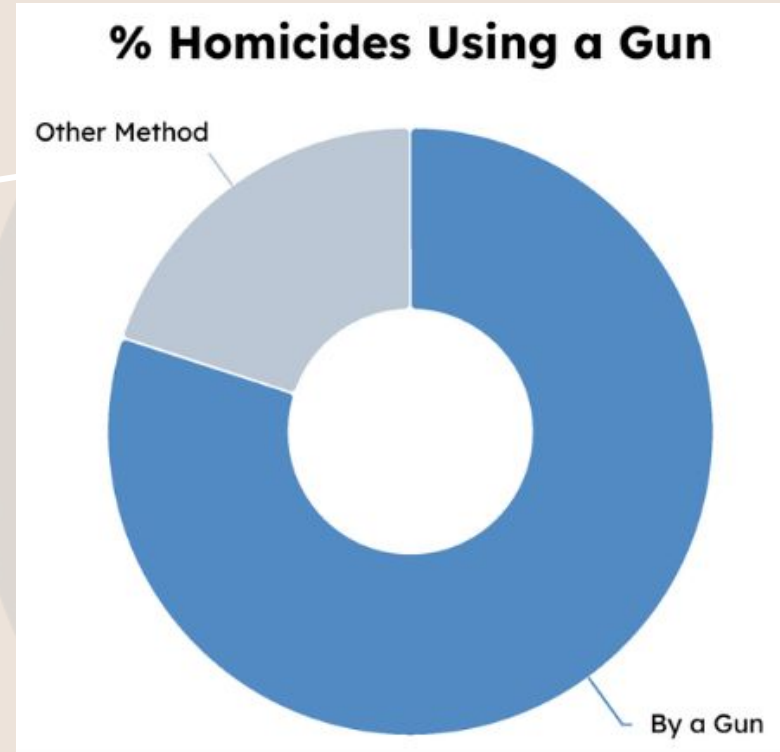
PEOPLE OF FAITH WORKING FOR JUSTICE

# Why are you concerned about gun violence?

- Homicides
    - Intercommunity violence
    - Domestic violence
    - Organized crime
  - Suicides
  - Accidental shootings
  - Youth violence
  - Political violence
  - Mass shootings
- 

# Homicides

- Black men make up less than 2% of the population and are 25% of gun homicides
- Black Americans as a whole are 6 times more likely to die by gun homicide than White Americans
- Young Hispanic men are 3 times more likely to die by gun homicide.



Source: Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health

# Deep South has highest rate of gun homicides among major regions

Average of annual gun homicides per 100,000 people in each region from 2010-2020

Nationwide rate: 4.1 gun homicides per 100,000 people



Notes: First Nation, Greater Polynesia, New France and Spanish Caribbean are not included among major regions. Rates are smoothed across counties due to CDC data suppression.

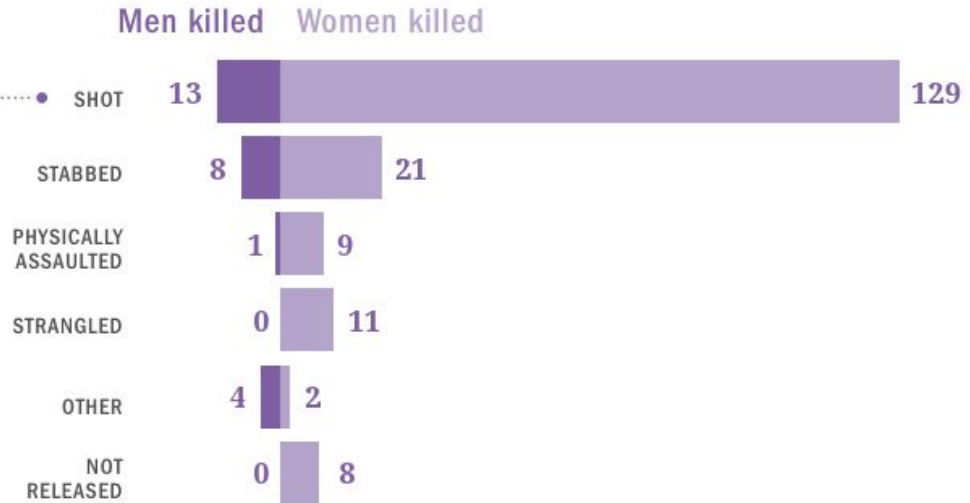
Source: Nationhood Lab at Salve Regina University  
Grant Schwab/POLITICO

# Domestic Violence

- 205 Texans killed by domestic violence in 2023
- Domestic abusers with access to a firearm are 5 times more likely than other abusers to kill their partner.

## Method of Homicide: Firearm Impact

More Texas domestic violence victims are killed by an abusive partner with a firearm than all other means combined.

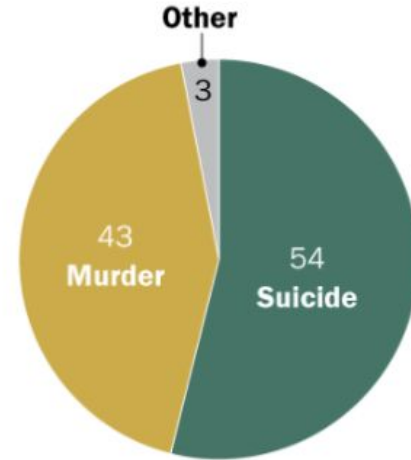


# Suicides

- Gun suicides make up the majority of gun deaths in Texas and in the country as a whole
- White men in Texas over the age of 34 constituted 45% of gun suicides in 2022, despite representing only 12% of the population
- Increase in black teen suicides

## Suicides accounted for more than half of U.S. gun deaths in 2021

*% of U.S. gun deaths, by type*



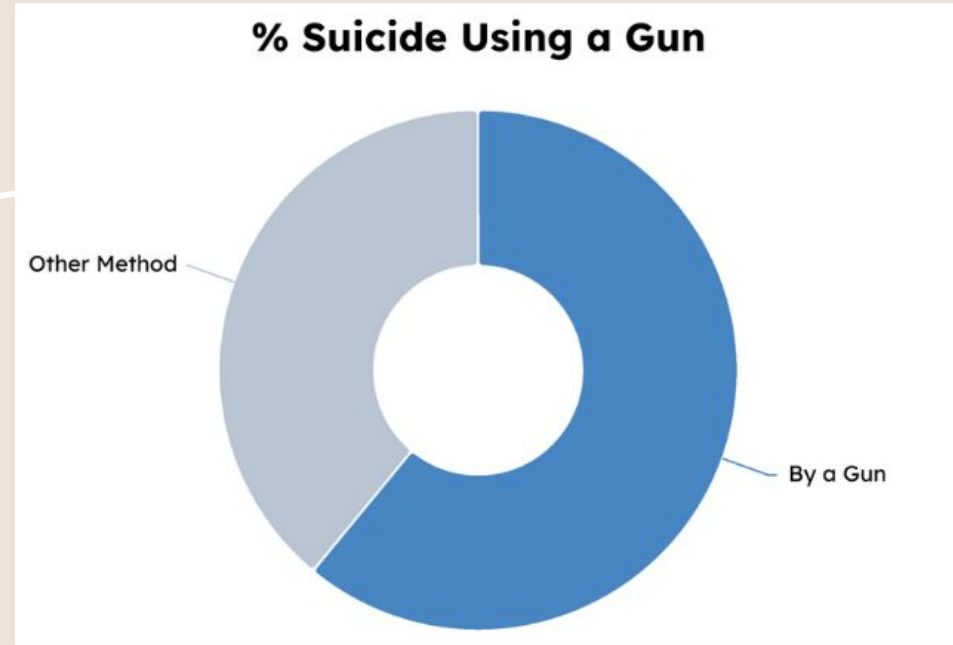
Note: "Other" includes gun deaths that were accidental, involved law enforcement or had undetermined circumstances.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

# Suicides

- Gun suicides make up the majority of gun deaths in Texas and in the country as a whole
- White men in Texas over the age of 34 constituted 45% of gun suicides in 2022, despite representing only 12% of the population
- Increase in black teen suicides

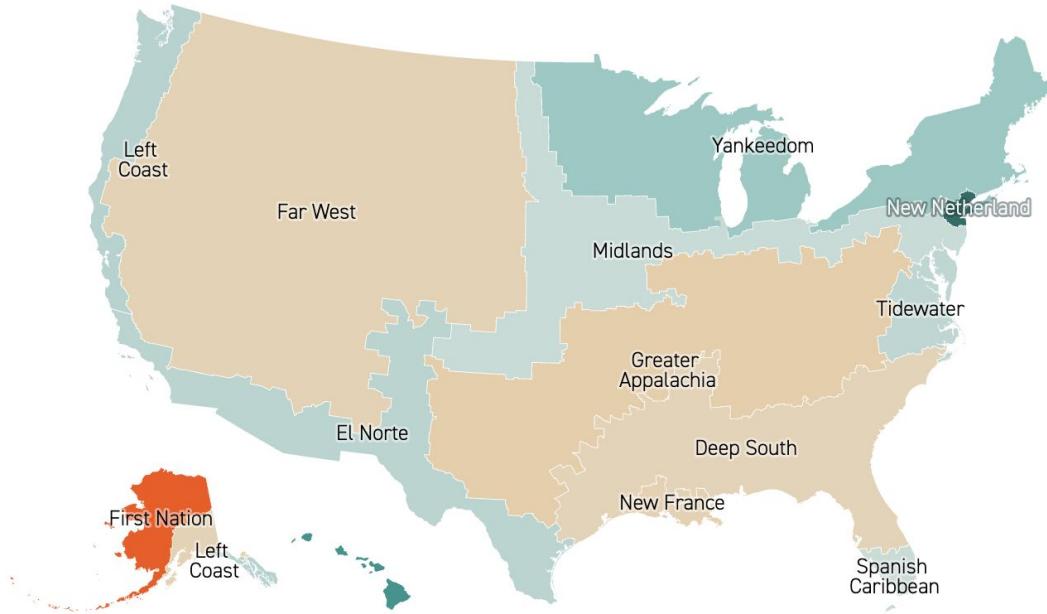
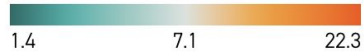


Public Health, Center for Gun Violence Solutions

# Greater Appalachia has highest rate of gun suicides among major regions

Average of annual gun suicides per 100,000 people in each region from 2010-2020

Nationwide rate: 7.1 gun suicides per 100,000 people



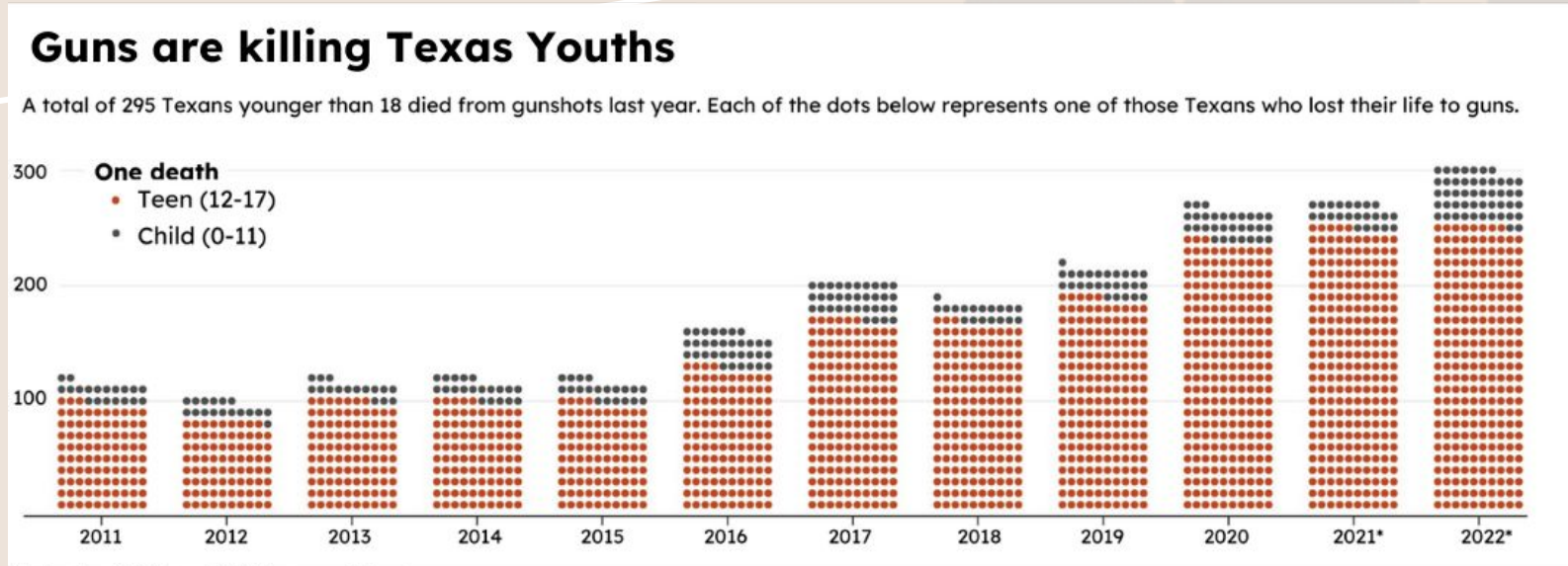
Notes: First Nation, Greater Polynesia, New France and Spanish Caribbean are not included among major regions. Rates are smoothed across counties due to CDC data suppression.

Source: Nationhood Lab at Salve Regina University  
Grant Schwab/POLITICO



# Youth Deaths

Guns are the leading cause of death for youth



\*Data for 2021 and 2022 are not final.

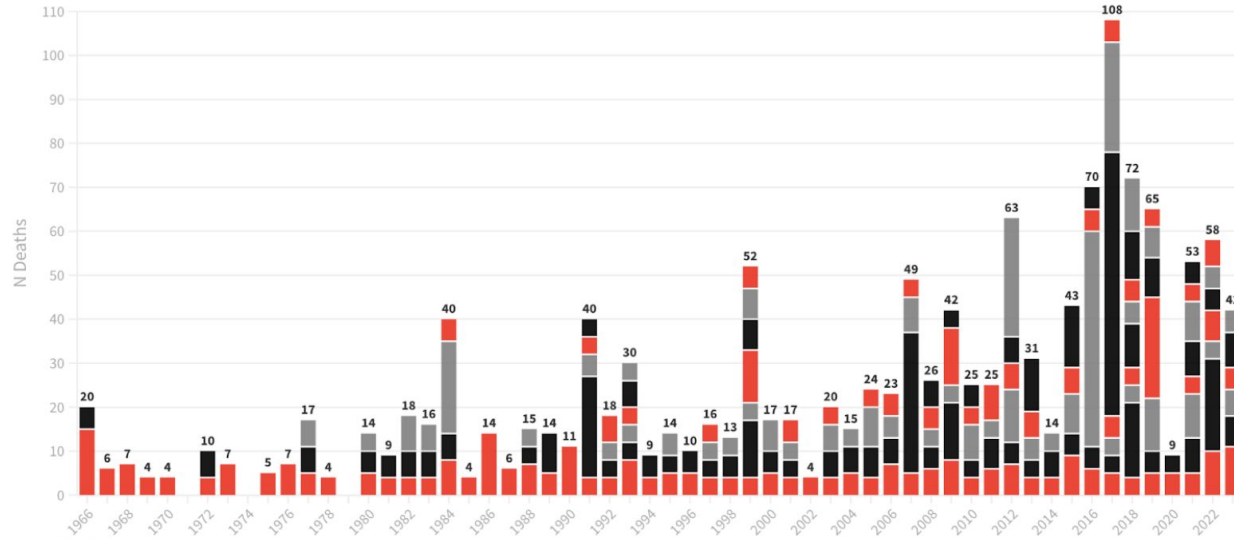
Note: Numbers in this chart include homicides, suicides, accidental shootings and all other undetermined firearm-related causes of death.

Source: Texas Tribune analysis of Texas Department of State Health Services data.

# Mass Shootings

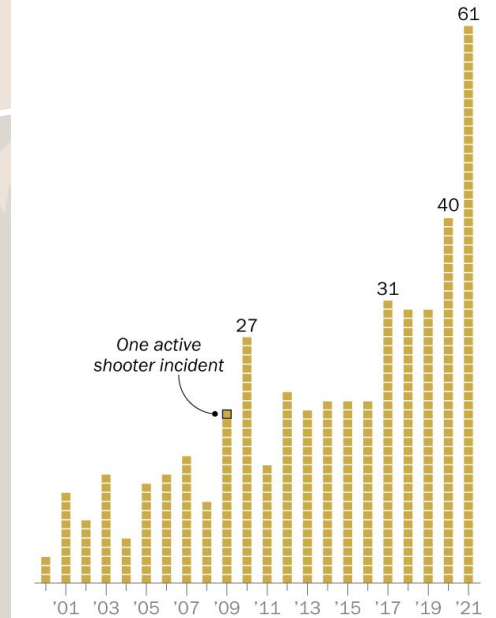
## Mass Public Shooting Deaths by Incident, 1966–present

N=191 Shootings, 1,369 Deaths



## Active shooter incidents have become more common in U.S. in recent years

Number of active shooter incidents, by year



Note: "Active shooter incidents" are defined by the FBI as "one or more individuals actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a populated area."

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation.

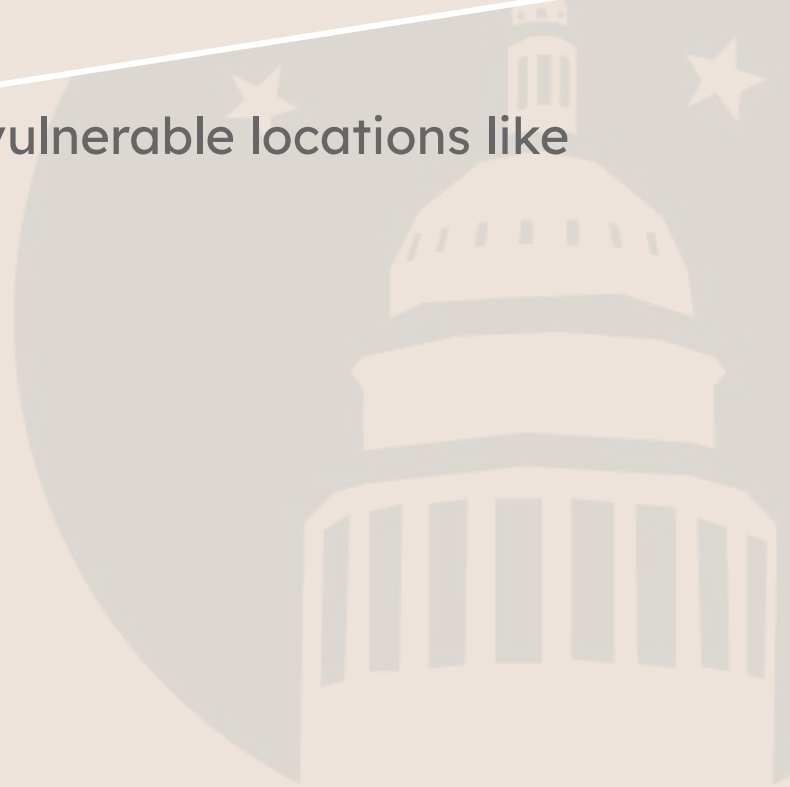
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

# Status Quo

- Good guys with guns
  - Deregulation of firearms in public spaces
  - Deregulation of licensing
  - Hardening tactics
  - Protection of the firearm industry
  - **Myths**
- 

# “Hardening”

- Increase in security measures at vulnerable locations like schools
- Can help mitigate a crisis
- **Doesn't prevent shootings**



## Deregulating Licensing

- One study published in 2014 by a team from Johns Hopkins uncovered how efforts by the Missouri GOP to overturn that state's permit to purchase handguns law were associated with an increase in annual firearm homicides of 1.09 per 100,000, which works out to an increase of between 55 and 63 homicides per year in Missouri.

## Right to Carry

- Right-to-carry laws allow people to carry concealed weapons in public
- Several studies linked increased firearm exposure in the general population to increased gun homicides, suicides, workplace shootings, and the like.

## Stand Your Ground

- “Stand your ground laws” allow “defensive” firearm use when people feel threatened
- In 2017 the Journal of the American Medical Association found that Florida's stand-your-ground law implemented in 2005 has led to an increase in the state's overall monthly homicide rate by 24.4% and the homicide by firearm rate by 31.6%

# Myths

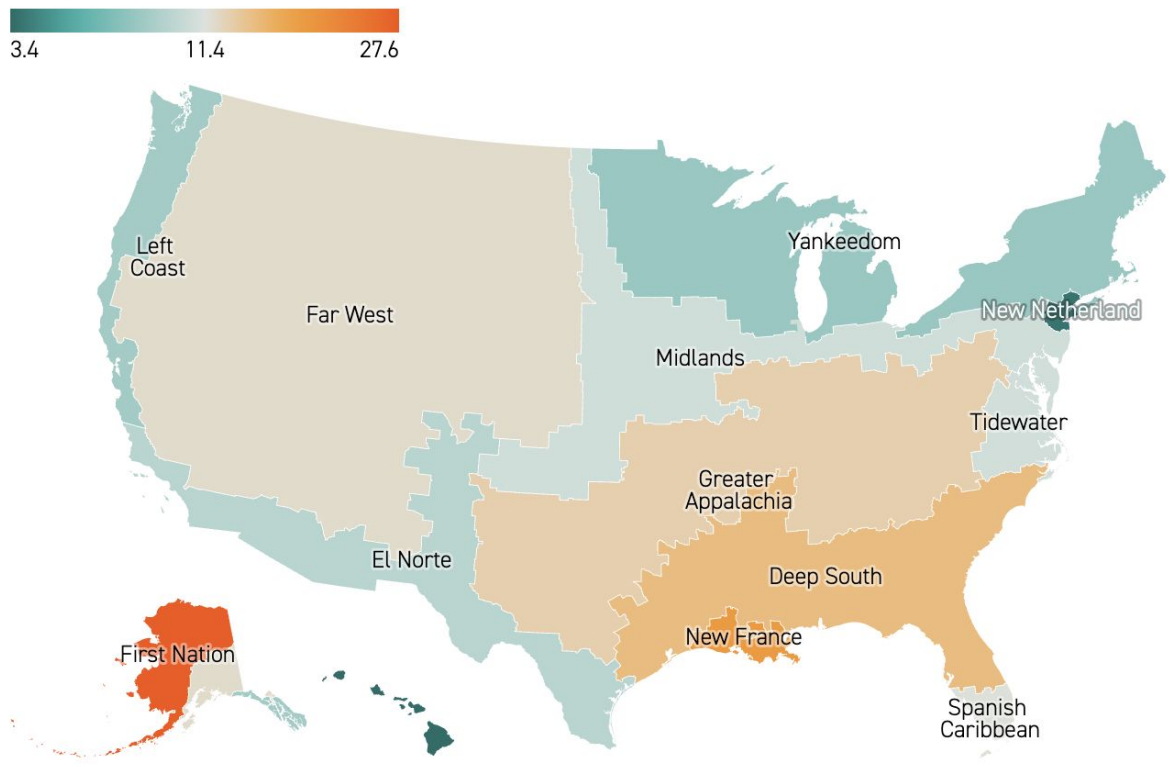
- Cities are overrun with crime
- Immigrants are increasing crime
- Mental health problems create mass shooters

# Reality

- Rural populations have had the a largest increase in gun violence, and now surpass city rates
- Immigrants (legal and non) are less likely than Americans to commit crimes
- Mental health is a factor in mass shootings, but not in the way people think

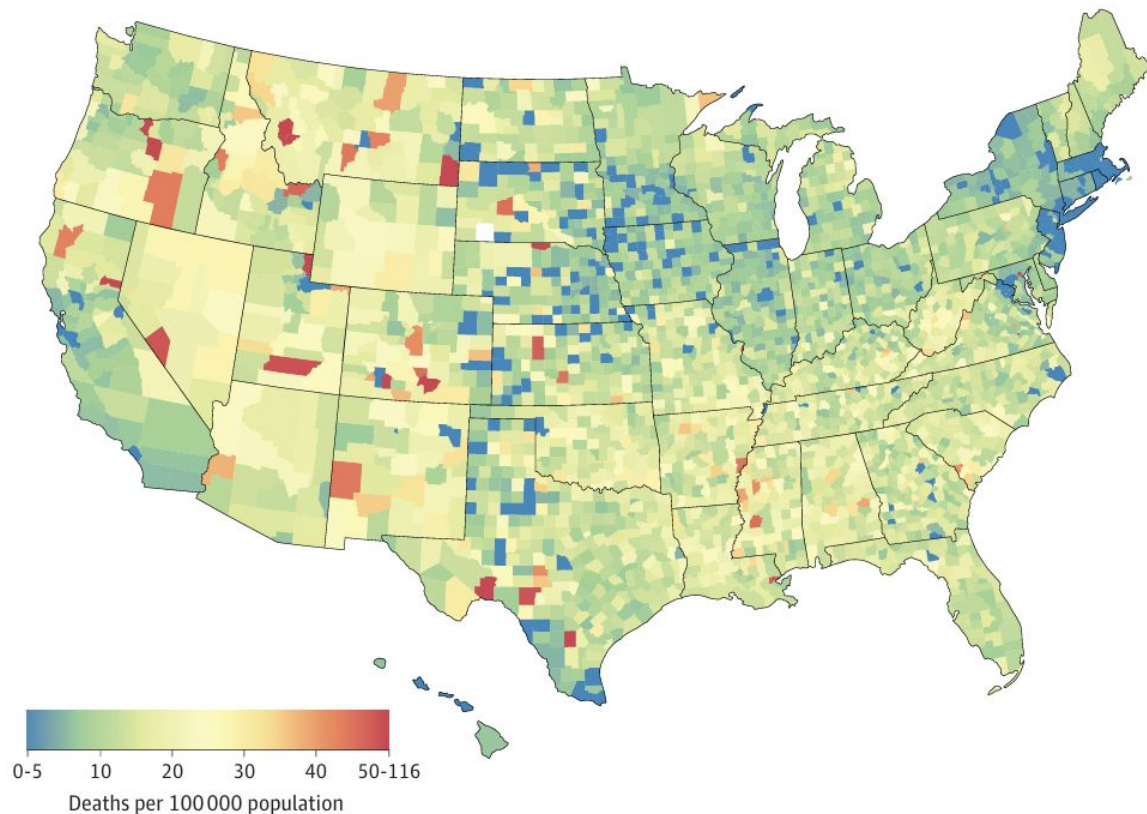
# Deep South has highest rate of gun deaths among major regions

Average of annual gun deaths per 100,000 people in each region from 2010-2020 *Nationwide rate: 11.4 gun deaths per 100,000 people*



Notes: First Nation, Greater Polynesia, New France and Spanish Caribbean are not included among major regions. Rates are smoothed across counties due to CDC data suppression.  
Source: Nationhood Lab at Salve Regina University  
Grant Schwab/POLITICO

**B** Age-standardized firearm mortality rates, 2015 to 2019



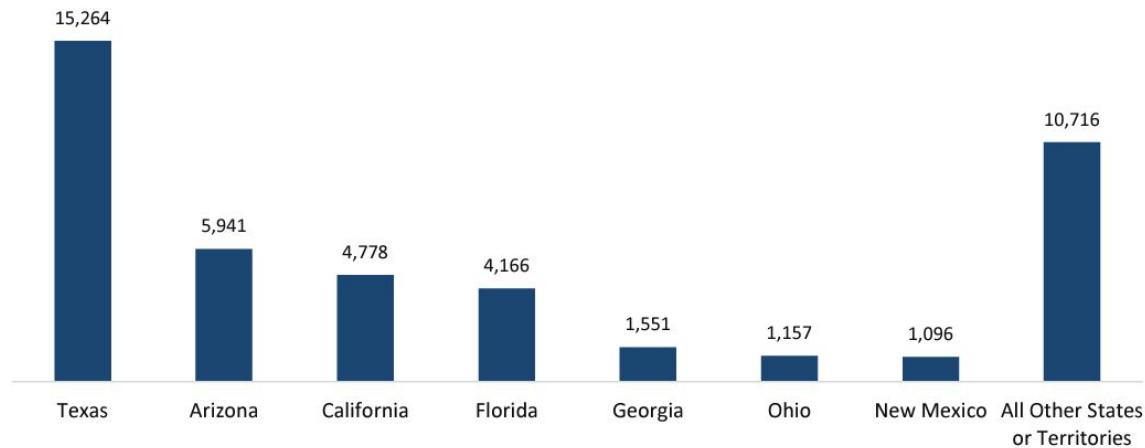
Firearm mortality rates include causes of death by homicide, suicide, unintentional death, and of undetermined intent. The top panel shows age-standardized firearm mortality rates in 1989 to 1993. The bottom panel shows age-standardized firearm mortality rates in 2015 to 2019. Alaska is not shown on these maps because it was excluded as a result of definitional inconsistencies during the study period.



**Table IRT-23: International Crime Gun Traces to a Purchaser by Top 5 Source States and Recovery Country or Grouping, 2017 - 2021**

Recovery Country/Grouping	Source State 1	Trace Total	% Total	Source State 2	Trace Total	% Total	Source State 3	Trace Total	% Total	Source State 4	Trace Total	% Total	Source State 5	Trace Total	% Total
Mexico	Texas	14,216	43.0%	Arizona	5,737	17.3%	California	4,335	13.1%	New Mexico	1,051	3.2%	Florida	662	2.0%
Canada	Ohio	796	14.9%	Florida	670	12.6%	Georgia	533	10.0%	Texas	455	8.5%	Michigan	351	6.6%
Caribbean	Florida	1,846	57.1%	Georgia	437	13.5%	Texas	157	4.9%	Ohio	75	2.3%	North Carolina	68	2.1%
Central America	Florida	472	25.6%	Texas	361	18.8%	California	242	12.6%	Virginia	81	4.2%	Georgia	74	3.9%
Outside North America	Florida	516	47.0%	Texas	75	6.8%	Georgia	48	4.4%	California	45	4.1%	Virginia	39	3.6%

**Figure IRT-22: Total Crime Guns Recovered and Traced to a Purchaser by U.S. Source State or Territory, 2017 - 2021**



# Bills in the 89th

- **Safe Storage Laws**
  - **Raise the age to 21**
  - **Community Violence Intervention**
  - Mechanisms to take firearms away from prohibited people
  - Straw purchasing laws
  - Mainstream policies
    - Red flag laws, universal background checks, waiting periods
- 

# Safe Storage

## **Safe Storage and Gun Sales: HB 639 by Rep. Goodwin**

*SB 661 would require licensed firearm dealers to provide a firearm safety device or secure firearm storage device and certain information with the transfer of a firearm*

# Raising the age to own/purchases semi-automatic-style rifles

**Raising the Age to Purchase Certain Rifles: HB 313 by Rep. Johnson; HB 306 by Rep. Lalani; HB 384 by Rep. Goodwin**

*These bills would raise the age to purchase certain semi-automatic-style rifles to 21 years of age. Most mass shooters are under the age of 21 and frequently use semi-automatic-style rifles. By raising the age to buy these types of rifles to 21 (which is also the legal age to purchase handguns) Texas could decrease the likelihood of mass shootings.*

# Investing in Community Violence Intervention

## **Creation of Office of Youth & Safety: SB 661 by Sen. West**

*SB 661 would create the Office of Youth Health & Safety, an office dedicated to promoting trauma-responsive and culturally informed services for children engaging in delinquent conduct in a manner that supports the child's successful transition to adulthood. The office would provide much-needed resources to communities that experience higher levels of violence.*

## **Investing in CVI: HB 230 by Rep. Rosenthal**

*HB 230 would create the Office of Community Violence Intervention and Prevention and dedicate resources to community violence intervention (CVI) programs. CVI programs have shown success in reducing violence across the country by relying on credible community relationships and addressing systemic issues that lead to violence such as food insecurity.*

# Removal of Firearms from Prohibited Persons

## **Disposal of Firearms by Prohibited Persons: HB 857 by Rep. Moody**

*HB 857 requires the disposal of firearms by individuals prohibited from owning firearms, such as convicted felons, those convicted of family violence, and others. Often those forbidden from owning firearms face no legitimate process to ensure their firearms are disposed of or surrendered—HB 857 fills this gap and creates such a process.*

## **Surrender of Firearms and Protective Orders: HB 234 by Rep. Johnson**

*HB 857 creates process to remove firearms from someone with a family protective order against them.*

# Addressing Gun Trafficking

## **Firearm Trafficking: HB 214 by Rep. Guillen**

*HB 214 creates a state level offense for firearm and ammunition smuggling and terrorism. This follows federal statute and would help address straw purchasing and illegal gun trafficking.*

# VIDAS ROBADAS

1. Connect Congregations, Universities, Advocates, and Texans across the state
2. Engage communities to learn about the reality of gun violence in their neighborhoods
3. Mobilize our partners to join city initiatives aimed at reducing gun violence and to head to the Texas Capitol in 2025 and work towards legislative action





# Join us on February 27th!

Scan the code to register!



Scan the code to volunteer!

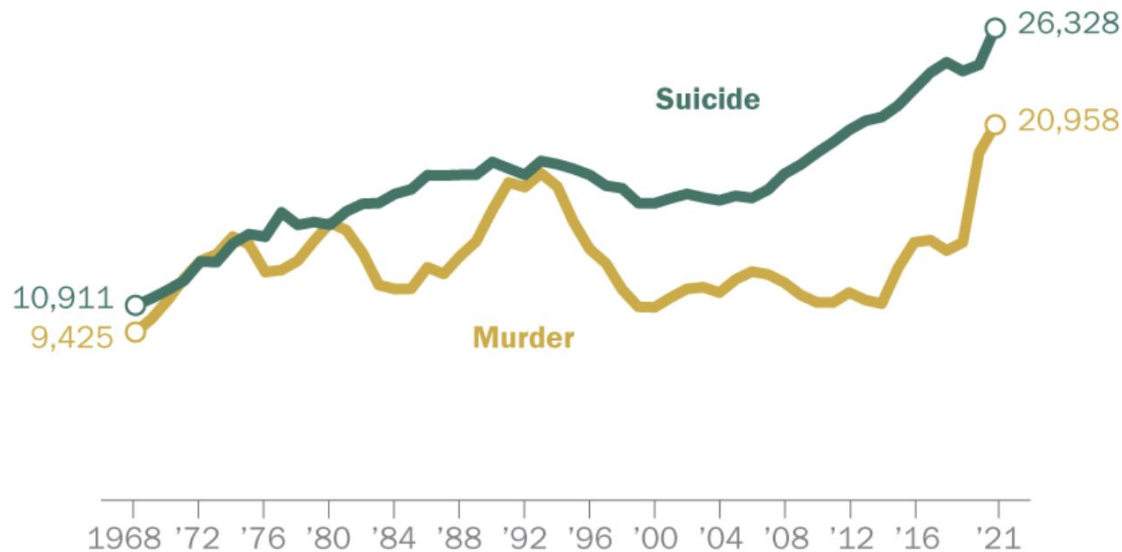


# Questions?



## U.S. saw record numbers of gun suicides and gun murders in 2021

*Gun suicides and gun murders in U.S.*



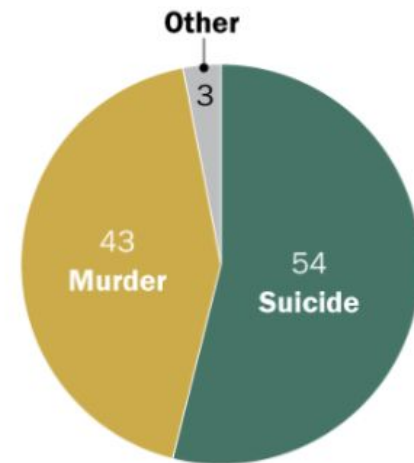
Note: Gun murders and suicides between 1968 and 1978 are classified by the CDC as involving firearms and explosives; those between 1979 and 2021 include firearms only.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## Suicides accounted for more than half of U.S. gun deaths in 2021

*% of U.S. gun deaths, by type*



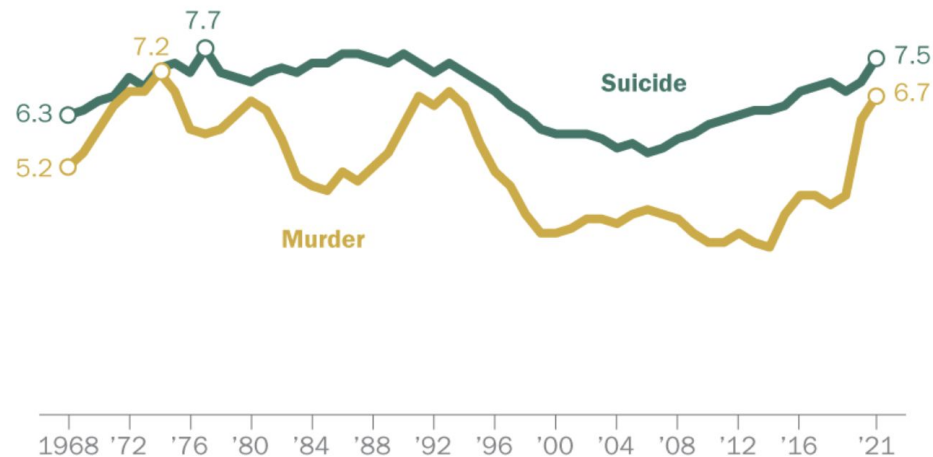
Note: "Other" includes gun deaths that were accidental, involved law enforcement or had undetermined circumstances.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## U.S. gun suicide and gun murder rates reached near-record highs in 2021

Gun deaths per 100,000 people (age-adjusted), by type



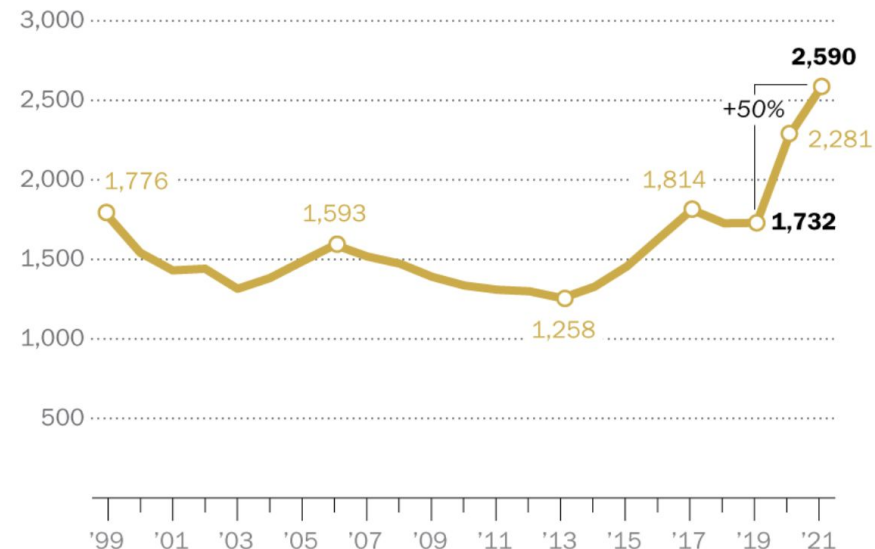
Note: Gun murders and suicides between 1968 and 1978 are classified by the CDC as involving firearms and explosives; those between 1979 and 2021 include firearms only.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## Gun deaths among U.S. kids increased 50% between 2019 and 2021

Gun deaths among U.S. children and teens under 18



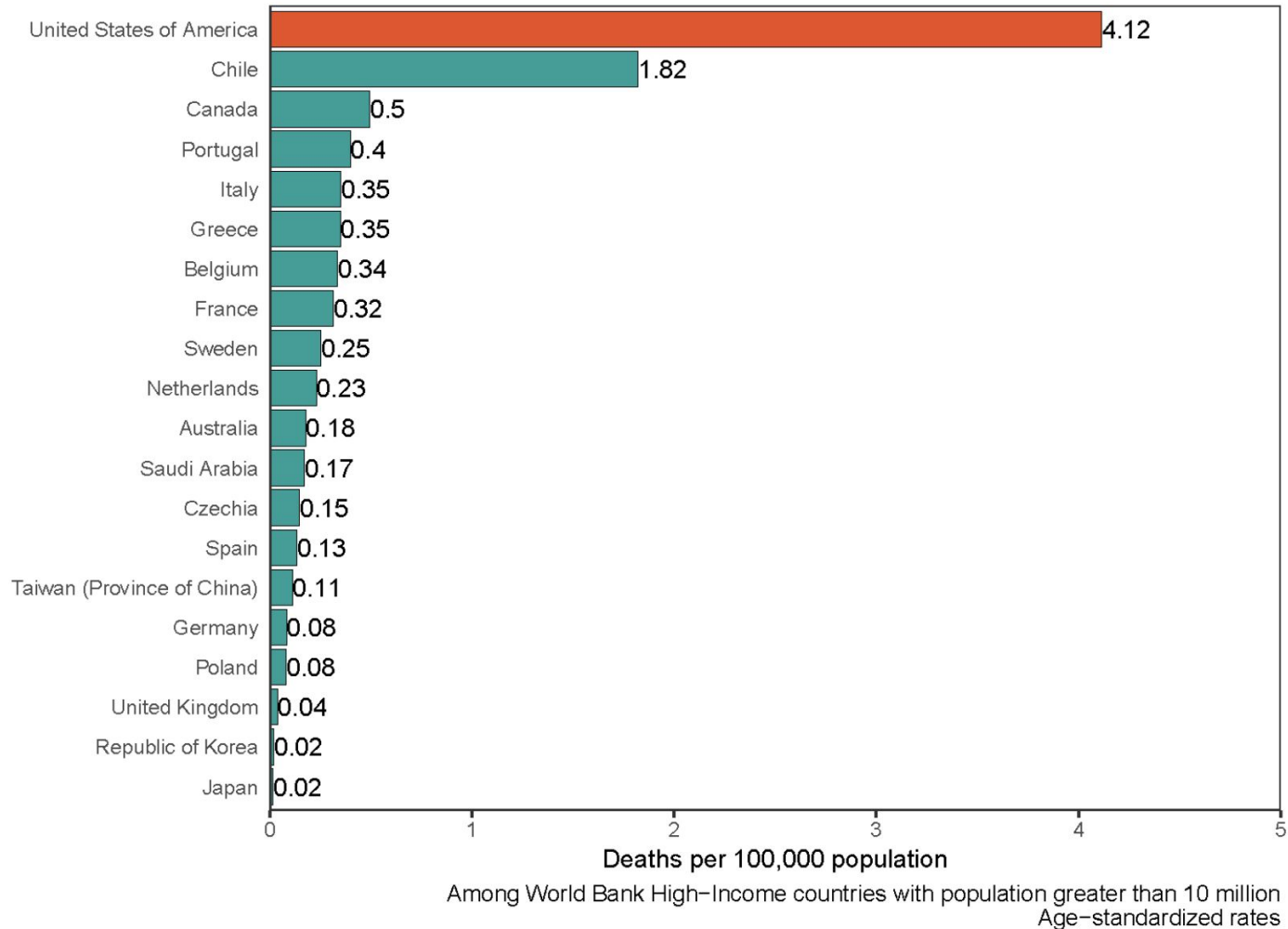
Note: Includes homicides, suicides, accidents and all other categories of gun deaths.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

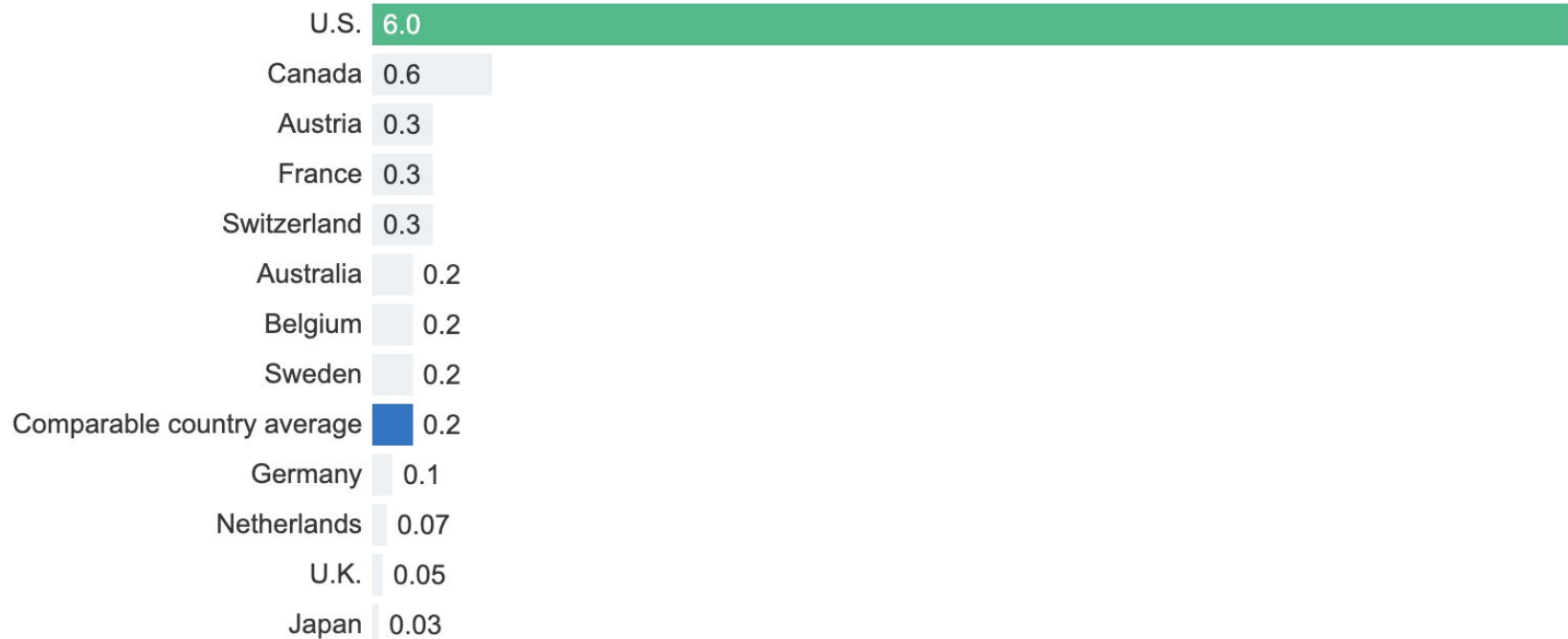


## Rates of firearm homicides per 100,000 population



# The U.S. Has By Far the Highest Child and Teen Firearm Mortality Rate Among Similarly Large and Wealthy OECD Nations

Firearm mortality rate per 100,000 for children and teens ages 1-19 years, U.S. (2021) and peer countries (2019)



NOTE: U.S. data are from 2021, all other countries are from 2019. The comparable country average does not include the U.S. Rates rounded to two decimal places when the rate is less than 0.1 and rounded to one decimal place otherwise.

SOURCE: KFF analysis of [CDC Wonder](#) and [Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation \(IHME\) Global Burden of Disease data](#) • [Get the data](#) •

[PNG](#)

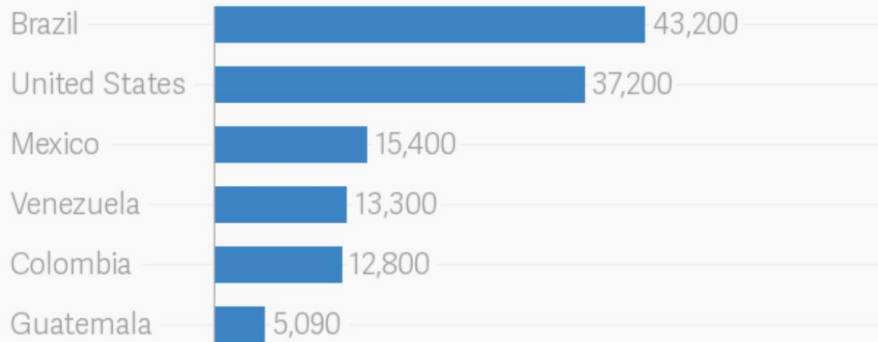
**KFF**

# Top 20 countries for firearms death rate, 2016

Rank	Country	Deaths per 100,000	Total Deaths
1	El Salvador	39.2	2,500
2	Venezuela	38.7	12,800
3	Guatemala	32.3	5,090
4	Colombia	25.9	13,300
5	Greenland	25.9	13
6	Honduras	22.5	1,780
7	Virgin Islands, U.S.	21.3	23
8	Brazil	19.4	43,200
9	Jamaica	18.1	533
10	Puerto Rico	17.1	637
11	Afghanistan	14.2	4,050
12	Belize	14.2	52
13	The Bahamas	13.6	58
14	Trinidad and Tobago	12.7	183
15	Mexico	11.8	15,400
16	Panama	11.0	450
17	Paraguay	10.7	716
18	Guyana	10.7	79
19	Dominican Republic	10.6	1,110
20	United States	10.6	37,200

These nations produced half of the world's gun-related deaths

In 2016

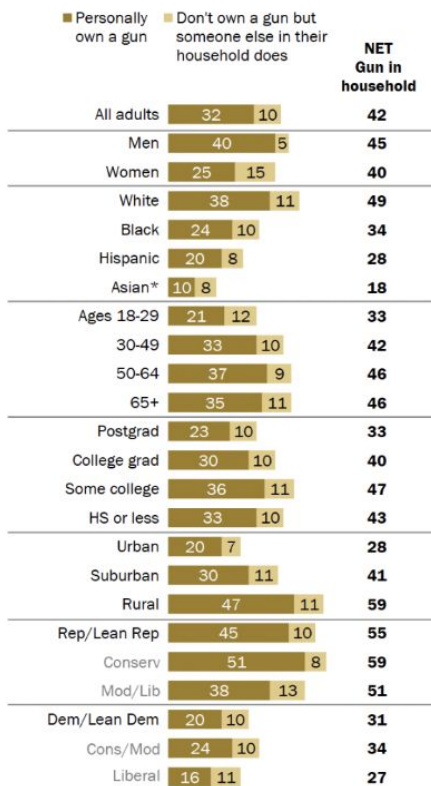


△ T L △ S

| Data: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation

## Nearly a third of U.S. adults say they personally own a gun

% who say they ...



\* Estimates for Asian adults are representative of English speakers only.

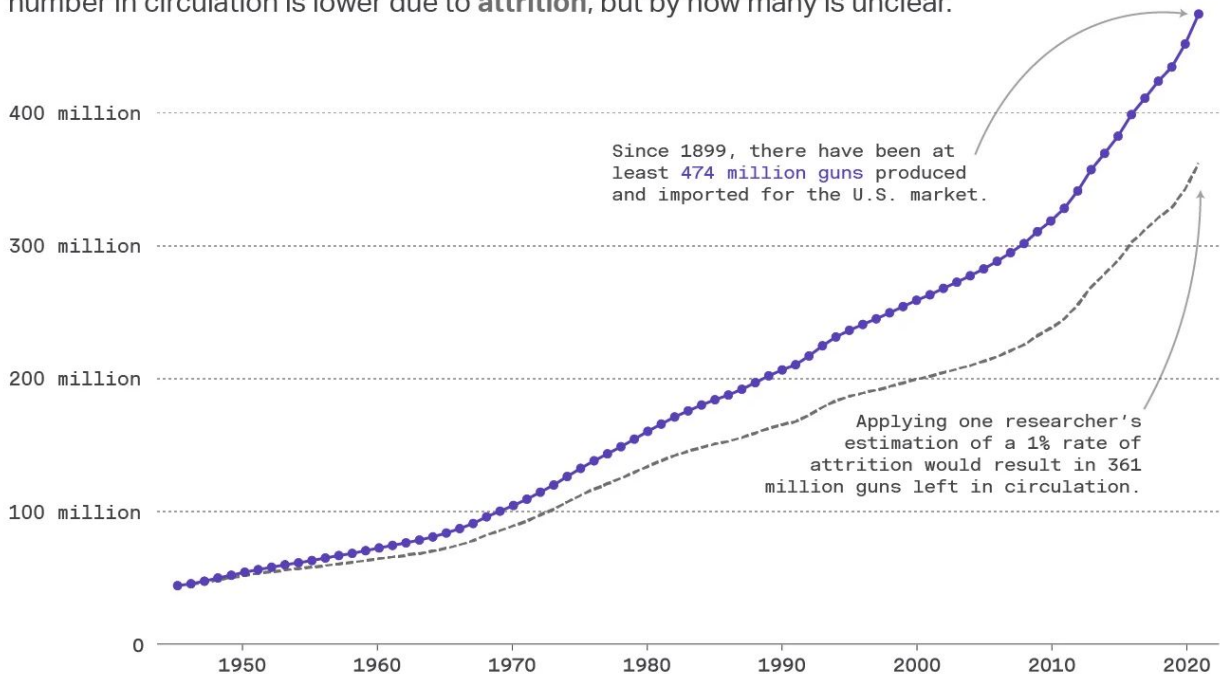
Note: White, Black and Asian adults include only those who report being one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic adults are of any race.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 5-11, 2023.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## The U.S. Civilian Gun Stock Has Grown Significantly

In 2021, the total number of **guns produced** for the U.S. market reached 474 million. The number in circulation is lower due to **attrition**, but by how many is unclear.



Import data for 2021 from the ATF is not yet available. The total imports for 2021 used in chart are based on U.S. International Trade Commission import reports.

THE  
TRACE

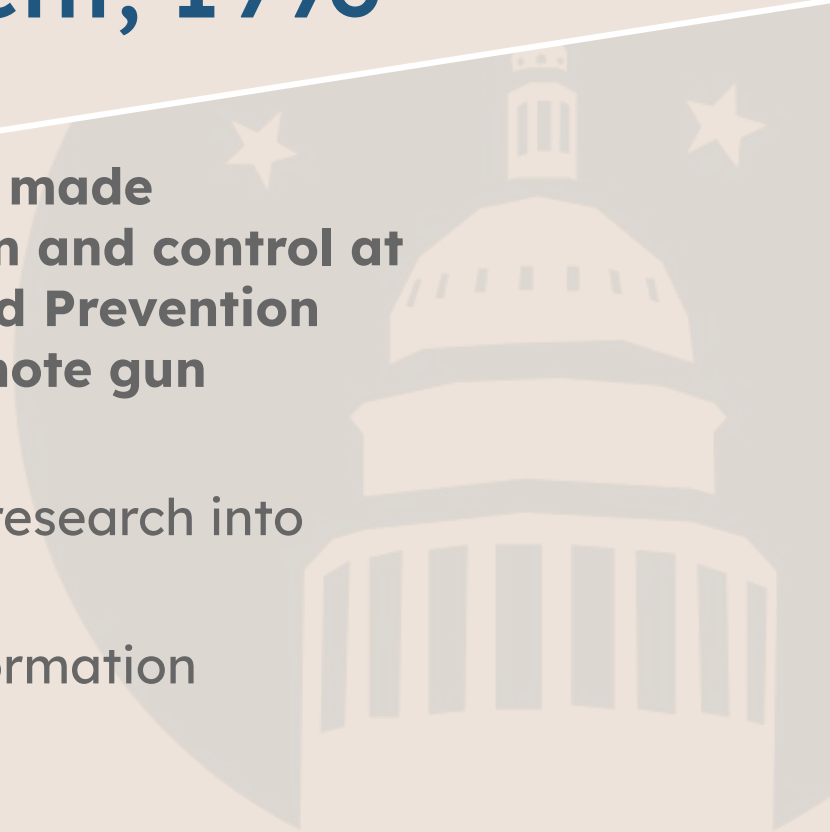
Chip Brownlee for The Trace / Source: Analysis of ATF Data

Chip Brownlee / The Trace



# The Dickey Amendment, 1996

- Stipulated that **“none of the funds made available for the injury prevention and control at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention may be used to advocate or promote gun control.”**
- Created a chilling effect in federal research into gun violence
- Divided states by ideology and information



# The Heller Decision, 2008

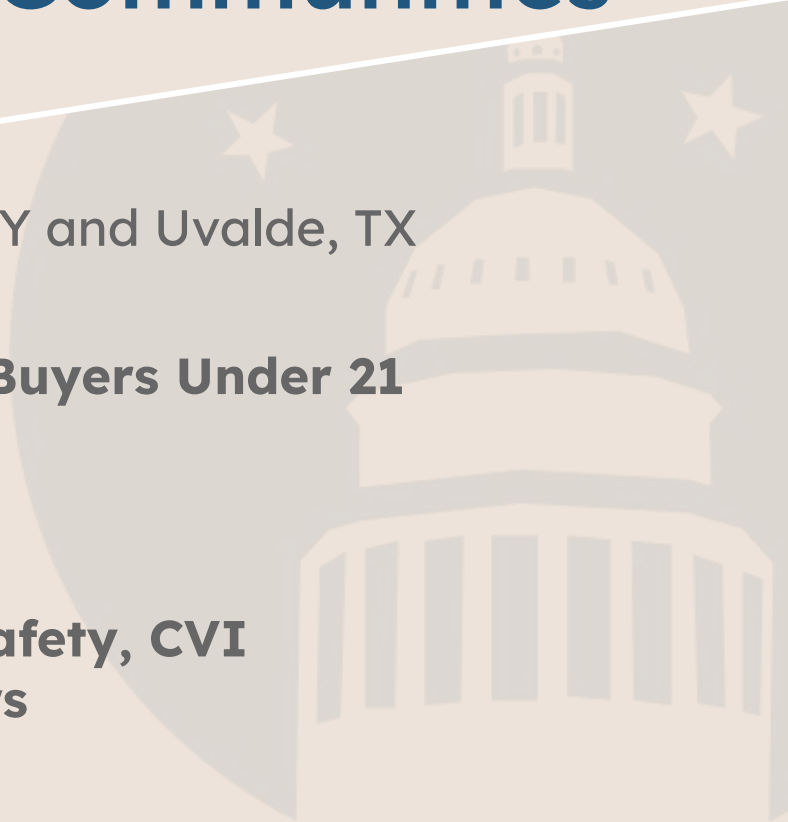
- *District of Columbia v. Heller*, case in which the U.S. Supreme Court on June 26, 2008, held (5–4) **that the Second Amendment guarantees an individual right to possess firearms independent of service in a state militia.**
- Started new era of gun ownership
- Led to deregulation of firearms in some states

# The Mass Shooting Epidemic

- Reinvigorated research into gun violence
- Parkland shooting led to the clarification that **the Dickey Amendment does not prevent federal research into gun violence**
- In 2019 Congress resumed allocated funds to federal research into gun violence



# The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, 2022

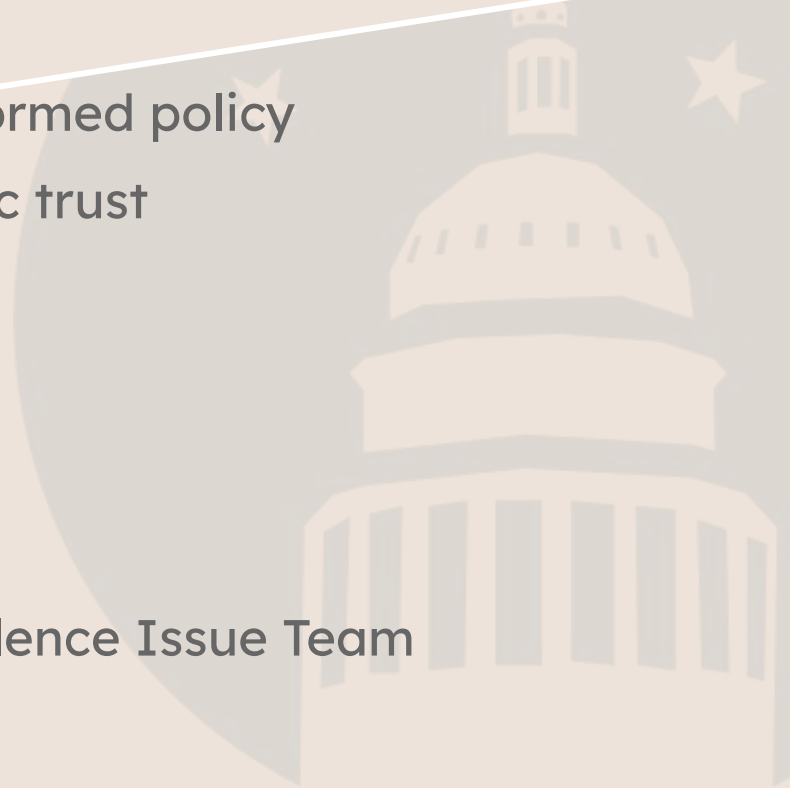
- Passed in reaction to the Buffalo, NY and Uvalde, TX mass shootings
  - **Enhance Background Checks for Buyers Under 21**
  - **Disarm Domestic Abusers**
  - **Crack Down on Gun Trafficking**
  - **Funds for mental health, school safety, CVI programs, and state Red Flag laws**
- 

# The Bruen Decision, 2022

- *New York Rifle & Pistol Association Inc. v. Bruen*
- At issue was a permit law on the books in New York City since 1913 that allowed officials to regulate who could carry loaded guns into some public spaces
- Was a law that was instrumental to NYC decrease in gun violence
- 6–3 decision, **the Supreme Court ruled that New York's law was unconstitutional and that the ability to carry a pistol in public was a constitutional right guaranteed by the Second Amendment.**

# HOW DO WE MOVE FORWARD?

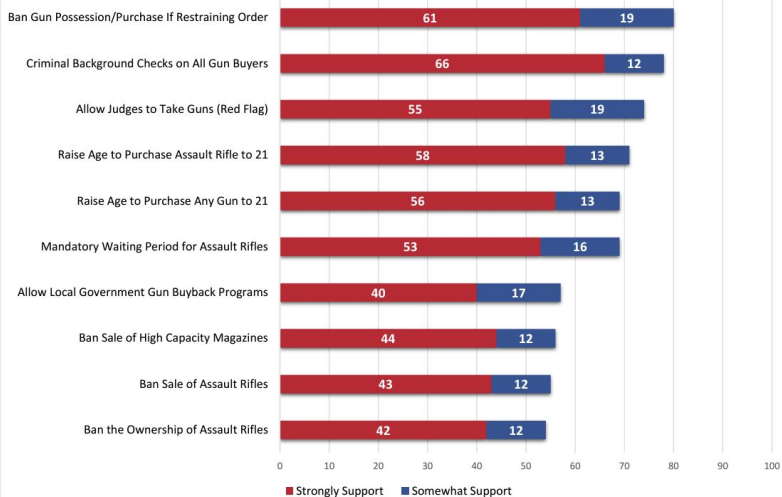
- Continue to work towards data-informed policy
- Re-invest in communities and public trust
- Redefine what gun ownership is
- JOIN A TEAM!
  - Moms Demand Action
  - Giffords Gun Owners for Safety
  - Texas Impact's Ending Gun Violence Issue Team



**Table 1: Texan Support for and Opposition To 10 Potential Gun Control Reforms (%)**

Gun Control Policy Proposal	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Neither Support Nor Oppose	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose
Criminal Background Checks on All Gun Buyers	66	12	10	4	8
Ban Gun Possession/Purchase if Restraining Order	61	19	11	5	4
Raise Age to Purchase Assault Rifle to 21	58	13	11	5	13
Raise Age to Purchase Any Gun to 21	56	13	11	6	14
Allow Judges to Take Guns (Red Flag)	55	19	11	7	8
Mandatory Waiting Period for Assault Rifles	53	16	14	5	12
Ban Sale of High Capacity Magazines	44	12	15	7	22
Ban Sale of Assault Rifles	43	12	11	7	27
Ban the Ownership of Assault Rifles	42	12	11	7	28
Allow Local Government Gun Buyback Programs	40	17	21	5	17

**Figure 1: Texan Support for Proposals to Reduce Gun Violence: Proportion Strongly & Somewhat Supporting (%)**



**Figure 2: Texan Opposition to Proposals to Reduce Gun Violence: Proportion Strongly & Somewhat Opposing (%)**

