

Mike Bloomberg's Gun Safety Policy

Mike Bloomberg calls for a gun safety policy that treats the gun violence crisis like a true national emergency: creating an effective background checks system, keeping guns away from people who pose a danger to themselves or others, protecting young people in schools and Americans in their homes, tackling daily gun violence in the hardest-hit communities, and confronting the gun industry head-on. Mike knows the Second Amendment right to self-defense goes hand in hand with strong, common sense gun laws, and his platform is consistent with the country's hunting and shooting sports traditions.

1. **Build a background check system that really works to stop illegal gun sales. Require permits for new gun buyers and notify police when gun owners become prohibited.**

Require point-of-sale background checks for all gun sales.

- Finally close the private sale loophole, which enables prohibited people to buy guns with no questions asked, simply by finding unlicensed sellers at gun shows or on the Internet. In 2018, Armslist.com hosted nearly [1.2 million ads](#)¹ for sales that didn't require a background check.
- A comprehensive law would have exceptions for law enforcement, hunting, gifts between family members, and emergency self-defense.
- *Twenty-one states and DC already require background checks for all handgun sales: CA, CO, CT, DE, DC, HI, IL, IA, MD, MA, MI, NE, NV, NJ, NM, NY, NC, OR, PA, RI, VT, WA.*

Require every gun buyer to get a permit before making a purchase.

- The Department of Justice (DOJ) would offer permits to applicants; in states that have their own systems, state permits could qualify.
- Research shows that the combination of a permit and a point-of-sale background check has an [especially high impact](#)² on reducing gun crimes.
- *Eleven states already require buyers to obtain permits before purchasing new handguns: CT, DC, HI, IL, IA, MD, MA, MI, NE, NJ, NY, NC.*

Use sales records to identify crime guns and notify local police when individuals have been prohibited from having a gun.

- Under the current system, law enforcement has no record of gun sales and can't search for or track illegal guns. Mike believes we need a central system to let local authorities know when a gun owner has become barred from having firearms—due to a restraining order or criminal conviction, for instance.
- A California program to track illegal guns led to nearly 6,000 firearms relinquished by prohibited people between [2017](#)³ and [2018](#).⁴
- *Eleven states and DC keep sales records in a searchable database: CA, CT, DC, HI, MD, MA, MI, NJ, NY, OR, PA, WA.*

¹ Everytown for Gun Safety, [Unchecked](#)

² Johns Hopkins, [Connecticut Handgun Licensing Law Associated With 40 Percent Drop in Gun Homicides](#), June 2015

³ There were 3,685 firearms relinquished in 2017. California Department of Justice, [APPS 2017 Annual Report to the Legislature](#)

⁴ There were 2,290 firearms relinquished in 2018. California Department of Justice, [APPS 2018 Annual Report to the Legislature](#)

Allow for screening before guns are purchased.

- As part of the permit system, issuers (federal or local law enforcement) would deny permits to troubled people who pose a danger to self or others.
- Permit issuers would look at a history of violence and behavioral health risks (e.g. domestic violence, mental health calls, or assault arrests) and use the same standards as in existing red flag laws—and judges would ensure the test is applied appropriately.
- *Seven states and DC have screenings: DC, HI, IL, MA, MI, NJ, NY, NC.*

No gun sale should go through without a complete background check.

- Under current law, guns may be sold before a full check is complete, if three business days have passed and the background check is ongoing. Mike would sign legislation closing this loophole—often called the “Charleston loophole” because it enabled the 2015 Emanuel AME church shooter to get his gun.
- This loophole allowed gun dealers to sell more than 20,000 guns to prohibited people in a five-year period.
- Stores like Walmart and Dick’s Sporting Goods require completed background checks for all sales.
- *Nineteen states and DC have narrowed or closed the Charleston loophole: CA, CO, CT, DE, DC, FL, HI, IL, MD, MA, MN, NJ, NY, NC, PA, RI, TN, UT, WA, WI.*

Curb the dangers of ghost guns and downloadable guns.

- Mike would reverse Trump’s [firearm export regulations](#)⁶ that loosen oversight of gun exports—and make it easier to publish 3D-printing gun blueprints online. And he would work to pass legislation barring online publication of those files.
- Mike would require background checks before purchasing kits that enable people to make their own guns at home—an action that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) can take immediately. He would also pass legislation to require do-it-yourself gunmakers to pass a background check and get a serial number before building a weapon. Homemade weapons are an increasing public safety concern; according to ATF, [30 percent of crime guns recovered](#)⁷ in California are unserialized.

2. Keep guns out of the hands of people who pose a danger to themselves or others by closing domestic violence loopholes, prohibiting violent offenders, and expanding red flag laws.

Close the boyfriend loophole.

- The “boyfriend loophole” allows domestic abusers to have guns, despite criminal convictions or restraining orders—simply because they are not married to their victims, do not share a child in common, and have not lived together. Mike would sign a bill protecting those victims by extending our gun safety laws to cover all intimate partners.
- [Fifty-two U.S. women](#)⁸ are shot and killed by an intimate partner every month—and women are [as likely to be killed by a boyfriend](#)⁹ as a spouse, after a decades-long increase in the proportion of homicide committed by boyfriends.
- *Twenty-six states and DC have barred gun possession by these unmarried abusers, for offenders and/or for restraining order subjects: CA, CT, DE, DC, HI, IL, IN, KS, LA, ME, MD, MA, MN, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NY, NC, OR, PA, RI, TX, VT, WA, WI, WV.*

⁵ If a sale goes forward by default, and then the FBI later makes a denial, FBI refers the case to ATF for a retrieval action. In 2014, 2,511 such referrals were made; 3,648 in 2015; 4,170 in 2016; 6,004 in 2017; and 4,240 in 2018. FBI, NICS Operations Reports, 2014-2018.

⁶ CNBC, [It’s going to get a lot easier to export some firearms from the US due to a new Trump Administration Rule](#), January 2020.

⁷ The Trace, [Ghost Guns are Everywhere in California](#), May 2019.

⁸ Everytown for Gun Safety, [Guns and Violence Against Women](#), October 2019.

⁹ Bureau of Justice Statistics, [Cooper AD, Smith EL. Homicide trends in the United States, 1980-2008](#), November 2011.

Pass a federal red flag law that expands extreme risk orders to 50 states—and funds state efforts to maximize the policy.

- Red flag (or “extreme risk”) laws in 17 states allow law enforcement (and usually family members) to ask courts to intervene and temporarily remove guns from people who pose a danger to self or others. Mike would expand this system across the country—by opening federal courts nationwide to these petitions.
- A new federal law should also fund work at the state level to educate the public about red flags and to build law enforcement teams dedicated to this life-saving work. Between January 2018 and August 2019, there were [nearly 4,000 red flag orders](#)¹⁰ issued nationwide; the government should continue to expand their reach.
- *Seventeen states and DC have red flag laws in place: CA, CO, CT, DE, DC, FL, HI, IL, IN, MD, MA, NV, NJ, NY, OR, RI, VT, WA. They have been signed by Republican governors in IN, VT, FL, MA and MD.*

Require gun buyers to be at least 21 years old to buy handguns and semi-automatic rifles and shotguns.

- Eighteen- to twenty-year-olds are nearly [four times as likely](#)¹¹ to commit homicide, compared with older Americans. And yet federal law allows 18-year-olds to buy firearms—and allows even young children to buy AR-15s.
- Mike would propose legislation with a 21-year-old age minimum for all handgun purchases and for purchase of semi-automatic long guns. This policy would exclude manually operated hunting rifles and shotguns and would not apply to members of the military.
- *Twenty-one states and DC have a 21-year-old age minimum for handgun purchases: CA, CT, DE, DC, CO, FL, HI, IL, IA, MD, MA, NE, NV, NJ, NM, NY, OH, OR, PA, RI, VT, WA.*

Set a temporary bar on gun possession bky assault and other violent misdemeanor offenders.

- A history of violent misdemeanor convictions is highly predictive of future crime: In one study, among offenders who tried to buy guns, [one in three](#)¹² was re-arrested for a new crime shortly thereafter.
- Mike would propose legislation blocking gun possession for one year after a violent misdemeanor offense such as assault.
- *Fourteen states and DC prohibit at least some violent misdemeanor offenders: AL, CA, CT, DE, DC, HI, IL, LA, ME, MA, MN, NY, ND, PA, VT.*

3. Defend America’s children and communities by banning assault weapons, protecting schools, and preventing unintentional shootings.

Reinstate the federal ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.

- During the 1994-2004 federal assault weapons ban, mass shooting deaths were [70 percent less likely to occur](#)¹³—and several hundred deaths could have been avoided had the ban never expired.
- Mike would put new assault weapons and high-capacity magazine bans in place. Existing assault weapon owners can keep their guns, but would have to register those guns with DOJ—and no further transfers would be allowed.
- *Seven states and DC ban assault weapons (CT, DC, HI, IL, MD, MA, NJ, NY) and nine and DC ban high-capacity magazines (CO, CT, DC, HI, IL, MD, MA, NJ, NY, VT).*

¹⁰ Everytown for Gun Safety, [Extreme Risk Laws Save Lives](#), September 2019.

¹¹ Everytown for Gun Safety, [Keeping Our Schools Safe](#), February 2020.

¹² Wintemute GJ, Wright MA, Drake CM, Beaumont JJ. [Subsequent Criminal Activity Among Violent Misdemeanants Who Seek to Purchase Handguns](#). *JAMA*. 2001;285(8):1019–1026.

¹³ DiMaggio C, Avraham J, Berry C, et al. [Changes in US mass shooting deaths associated with the 1994-2004 Federal Assault Weapons Ban: analysis of open-source data](#). *Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery*. 2019 Jan; 86(1):11-19

Require secure storage of firearms.

- Secure firearm storage practices have been shown to reduce the risk of unintentional child gun injuries by [up to 85 percent](#)¹⁴—and yet an estimated [4.6 million](#) American children¹⁵ live in houses with a loaded, unlocked gun.
- Mike would propose a federal law requiring firearms be stored securely when not in use. Criminal penalties would attach only if children or prohibited people gain access, though gun owners could face a civil fine—like a parking ticket—for any case where they leave a gun vulnerable to theft or accessible to a child.
- *Twenty states and DC have some form of secure storage law: CA, CT, DE, DC, FL, HI, IA, IL, MD, MA, MN, NV, NY, NC, NH, NJ, RI, TX, VA, WA, WI.*

Ban all guns in K-12 schools, colleges, and universities—except for law enforcement.

- Mike would propose updating the Gun-Free School Zones Act to prohibit any guns in our schools, other than guns carried by law enforcement.
- For the last several years, the gun lobby has been on a dangerous mission to expand the number of guns in schools—looking to arm elementary school teachers and to arm college students in their dorms and classrooms. One single federal law can stop that.
- *Twelve states now have laws forcing college campus to allow carry for at least some gun owners: AR, CO, GA, ID, KS, MN, MS, OR, TN, TX, UT, WI.*
- *Eight states generally let permit holders carry their guns on K-12 school grounds (DE, HI, KS, MS, NH, OR, RI, UT), while an additional nine states have laws explicitly aimed at allowing K-12 teachers or school personnel to be armed (FL, GA, MO, ND, OK, SD, TN, TX, WY).*

4. Tackle daily gun violence through early interventions and take illicit guns off the streets by giving law-enforcement more powerful anti-trafficking tools.

Fund at least \$100 million annually for local violence intervention programs.

- In 2015, [one-quarter](#) of American gun homicides happen in neighborhoods with less than 2 percent of the population.¹⁶ Community-based programs, such as Cure Violence and other street- and hospital-based interventions, have made dramatic strides in breaking the cycle of violence in our most hard-hit neighborhoods.
- In the South Bronx, [one Cure Violence program](#)¹⁷ was associated with a 37 percent decrease in gun injuries and a 63 percent decline in the quantity of shooting victims.
- California funded \$30 million for these programs for 2020. Mike would commit the federal government to fund at least \$100 million annually to further this critical work.

Fund at least \$100 million annually for public health research into gun violence.

- Due to gun lobby pressure, funding for the Centers for Disease Control to study the causes and effects of gun violence is inadequate—less than [\\$200,000](#) in 2018.¹⁸

¹⁴ Grossman DC, Mueller BA, Riedy C, et al. [Gun Storage Practices and Risk of Youth Suicide and Unintentional Firearm Injuries](#). JAMA. 2005;293(6):707–714. See Table 5.

¹⁵ Azrael D, Cohen J, Salhi C, Miller M. [Firearm storage in gun-owning households with children: results of a 2015 national survey](#). *Journal of Urban Health*. 2018;95(3):295-304. Study defined children as under the age of 18.

¹⁶ Aufrechtig A, Beckett L, Diehm J, Lartey J. [Want to fix gun violence in America? Go local](#). *The Guardian*. January 9, 2017.

¹⁷ Sheyla A. Delgado, Laila Alsabahi, Kevin Wolff, Nicole Alexander, Patricia Cobar, and Jeffrey A. Butts. [Denormalizing Violence: A Series of Reports From the John Jay College Evaluation of Cure Violence Programs in New York City](#).

¹⁸ Everytown for Gun Safety, [Why Funding Gun Violence Research Matters](#), April 2019

- By comparison, the Department of Transportation spends roughly [\\$320 million](#) annually to study road safety. DOT’s investments have paid off—as innovative solutions have helped reduce motor vehicle fatalities by [more than 80 percent](#) since the 1950s.

Increase ATF funding by up to \$100 million annually.

- ATF is chronically underfunded, due to gun lobby pressure, and as a result the Bureau is unable to police the gun industry effectively, inspecting [fewer than 13 percent of dealers](#)¹⁹ on average in a given year.
- Funding commensurate with its important role would enable ATF to take more aggressive action against gun traffickers and prohibited people and would bolster the Bureau’s ability to conduct effective oversight of gun dealers and the broader industry.

Require all gun buyers to wait at least 48 hours before any firearm purchase.

- Studies have shown that required waiting periods before a gun purchase will decrease suicide rates.
- People who attempt to kill themselves with a firearm will die in [85 percent of attempts](#).²⁰ But among those who try to commit suicide by other means, less than [5 percent of attempts](#) end in death.²¹ Preventing firearm access during a suicidal crisis will save lives.
- *Five states and DC have waiting periods: CA, DC, FL, HI, IL, RI.*

Make straw purchasing and trafficking stand-alone federal crimes, with serious penalties for offenders.

- The existing federal penalties for trafficking and “straw purchasing” – buying guns on behalf of another person – are too weak to stop illicit sales. Prosecutors rarely go after these offenders, since they are unlikely to get more than a slap on the wrist.
- With a new criminal law structure focusing on these offenses, and with tough penalties, authorities will be better equipped to deter and crack down on traffickers looking to exploit a weak system.

Require that gun owners report to police when their guns are lost or stolen.

- A lost-and-stolen reporting law would require gun owners inform police within three days after they know or should have known that their gun is missing.
- These laws have been shown to curb gun trafficking: One study showed that state lost-and-stolen reporting laws were associated with [30 percent less risk](#)²² of guns being purchased in-state and then recovered at crimes in other states.
- *Twelve states and DC have lost-and-stolen reporting laws: CA, CT, DC, DE, HI, IL, MD, MA, MI, NJ, NY, OH, RI.*

5. Make the gun industry accountable by removing its protections from liability and invigorating consumer safety oversight. Use presidential power to elevate the government’s response to the gun violence crisis.

Repeal the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (PLCAA).

¹⁹ Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, [Firearms and Explosives, Firearms Commerce in the United States, Annual Statistical Update, 2019](#). ATF Inspected 12.9 percent of licensed business entities in 2018; 13.7 percent in 2017; 12.2 percent in 2016; 11.0 percent in 2015; and 13.4 percent in 2014.

²⁰ Everytown for Gun Safety, [Disrupting Access: Addressing Firearm Suicide in the U.S.](#), September 2018.

²¹ Id.

²² Webster DW, Vernick JS, McGinty EE, Alcorn T. [Preventing the diversion of guns to criminals through effective firearm sales laws](#) (in: Reducing Gun Violence in America: Informing Policy with Evidence and Analysis. Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press; 2013. p.109–21.

- A 2005 federal law called PLCAA gives gun industry actors—including gunmakers and gun dealers alike—broad immunity from civil lawsuits.
- PLCAA takes pressure off the industry to reform dangerous practices and too often bars gun violence victims from seeking relief. Repealing that law would remove a shield that endangers public safety and force the gun industry to innovate, just as lawsuits against car makers led to stronger automobile safety standards.

Let the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) treat guns like other household products.

- Since its inception in 1972, CPSC has lacked authority to regulate guns and prevent manufacturing and design defects that cause injury and death. As a result, the federal government has no safety requirements for gun technology—and gunmakers have consistently refused to improve their products.
- A new law would empower the agency to treat guns like any other household item—like lawn mowers or swimming pools. CPSC could require basic safety testing and design features that prevent firearm injuries and deaths.
- *CA, DC and MA require new gun models to have safety mechanisms and pass safety tests.*

Formally declare the gun violence crisis to be a public health emergency.

- A formal public health emergency declaration not only stands as a values statement, it also expedites and expands funding and research authorities to address the crisis.

Appoint a White House gun coordinator and launch an interagency hub to fight gun violence.

- The federal government lacks the presidential mandate needed to mobilize agencies to address gun violence. The office of the White House coordinator would have a public profile that would allow it to mobilize the public to fight gun violence. A task force pulling from DOJ, the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development would be a centralized hub to build government data and grow the tools needed to fight gun violence.

Focus executive energy on suicide reduction, school safety interventions, and corporate partnerships.

- As president, Mike would have a broad anti-suicide public education campaign, focusing on intervention points for educators, law enforcement, veterans service providers, first responders, and others. Mike would focus on new solutions for our schools, promoting threat assessment programs and funding other intervention strategies like mentoring and social emotional learning. And Mike would look to corporate partners like banks and credit card companies to lead the way, building pressure to force the gun industry to embrace reform with the goal of protecting American lives.