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GOP comments during the Brady Bill debate

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REPUBLICAN ARGUMENTS DURING THE 1993 DEBATE ON THE BRADY BILL

Senator Bob Dole (R-KS): "But most violent offenders do not obtain handguns in retail establishments. If you want a gun and you are going to commit a crime, or if you are a criminal to start with and have repeated offenses, you are not going to worry about what is legal or illegal. You will find a way to complete your task." [Congressional Record, 11/19/93, page S16312]

Senator Larry Craig (R-ID): "86 to 90 percent of people in our prisons today serving time, felonious records, admit that they do not acquire or did not acquire their handguns legally. Is it not interesting that criminals do not walk boldly through the light of day into a gun shop and say, 'I want to buy a firearm'? The reason they do not is because of current systems that cause some effort at a background check and, most important, criminals just simply do not play by the rules. I think that is how you define criminal: Somebody who breaks the law. So he or she goes to the streets of America or to the back alleys where there remain an abundant supply of handguns and other forms of firearms, and that is where they buy them." [Congressional Record, 11/19/93, page S16309]

Senator Bob Smith (R-NH): "The basic premise of the Brady bill is fundamentally flawed. That premise is that criminals who want to buy guns with which to commit crimes are going to line up at their local gun stores, dutifully comply with the identification requirements of the Brady bill, and then wait patiently for 5 business days before they can go back and pick up their guns. But criminals do not buy guns that way now, Mr. President, and they certainly will not buy them that way if the Brady bill becomes law....by and large, criminals buy their guns on the black market and they steal them." [Congressional Record, 11/19/93, page S16326]

Congressman James Sensenbrenner (R-WI): "It is important to be realistic about the nature of acquiring handguns in this country. The main market for the purchase and sale of such weapons is the illicit market. That is fact, plain and simple. We are deluding ourselves and the citizens of this country if we attempt to paint this bill as the answer to violent crime or even to the proliferation of handguns." [Congressional Record, 11/10/93, page H9100]

Congressman Phil Crane (R-IL): "If the Brady bill is passed, law abiding Americans will see their second amendment rights eroded, but the criminals will still obtain guns. The black market is the hottest place for felons in search of firearms, and they need not wait for a background check in a dark alley." [Congressional Record, 11/10/93, page H9103]

Congressman James Hansen (R-UT): "Criminals are not honest and legitimate. They are sneaking around, making deals under the table, and terrorizing innocent people. Offenders are not buying their handguns from the local dealer. They don't mess with the paperwork and certainly are not going to check back after 5 days to see if their purchase has been approved. Whoever believes a waiting period will deter an offender is very naive. Those who have previously committed a crime, or are contemplating it, will either steal from homes and businesses, send a friend with no record to get the gun, or buy right off the street." [Congressional Record, 11/10/93, page H9104]

Congressman Ernest Istook (R-OK): "And then this bill also has the 5-day waiting period to buy a handgun. But that is only for those who buy a handgun from a licensed dealer. Check out our prisons. Seventy-three percent of those people did not buy their guns through dealers. They brought them on the street. No waiting period, and no instant-check system is going to stop them." [Congressional Record, 11/10/93, page H9106]