

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 11, 2000

CONTACT: Joe Sudbay
(202) 289-5763
David Bernstein
(202) 218-4641

Handgun Control Analysis Finds Americans Strongly Favor Specific Proposals to Reduce Gun Violence

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The hundreds of thousands of mothers and others who will march on the National Mall on Mother's Day as part of the Million Mom March Across America is evidence of a growing national movement in support of gun control laws. These mothers, grandmothers, mothers-to-be, dads, sisters, brothers and concerned citizens will not just be gathering in Washington DC. Thousands more will march in local demonstrations against gun violence in 67 other cities across the country, calling on Congress to pass tough gun control laws to help keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children.

The march is the culmination of the massive groundswell of public support for new gun control measures in communities across America in addition to the public's frustration and outrage about lawmakers who put the special interests of the gun lobby ahead of public safety.

But the public's support for stronger firearms regulation and gun safety measures is not a temporary reaction to the mass shooting at Columbine High School and in other schools, workplaces, day care centers, even churches, across the country. According to a July 13, 1999, *Washington Post* op-ed article written by Tom W. Smith, Director of the General Social Survey at the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Center (NORC), the public's support for gun control already existed "...well before Littleton." In fact, Smith writes that, "...after three years of surveying public opinion on guns, NORC has confirmed that even before the horrendous series of school massacres, majorities backed all measures to control guns short of banning ownership outright." Smith continues, "The NORC surveys show that the shootings have not created a transitory and unreflective bubble of public opinion for gun control but rather have focused political attention on the problem of gun violence and have revealed that a public consensus already exists to deal with the problem." In three annual, national surveys NORC found that majorities of up to 90% back all gun safety measures except a complete ban.

Handgun Control has analyzed recent polling conducted in states across the country since the shooting at Columbine in Littleton, Colorado, which confirms the findings of the National Opinion Research Center and indicates that there is still overwhelming public support for common-sense gun control

laws.

(more)

In Colorado, ground zero in the debate about guns in America since last year's tragic shooting at Columbine, support for gun control is strong, even in a Western state with high levels of gun ownership. An April 2000 *USA Today/CNN Gallup Poll* found that over 60% of Coloradans feel that the laws covering the sale of firearms should be made more strict. In addition, a March 2000 *Denver Post* poll found that 83% of Coloradans support closing the gun-show loophole.

In Georgia, traditionally viewed as a solid pro-gun state, a September 1999 Beth Schapiro & Associates poll found that 87% of voters in Georgia support requiring mandatory background checks for all sales at gun shows, even sales by unlicensed, private dealers. The same poll found that about 60% of Georgian voters support legislation to hold parents legally responsible if their children commit crimes with the parents' guns, or a Child Access Protection Law.

A March 2000 poll conducted by the Strategic Marketing Services in the state of Maine found that over 93% of the voters in the state favored raising the minimum age under Maine state law from 16 to 21 for the purchase of handguns. Furthermore, the poll found that over 62% of Maine citizens feel that gun laws covering the sale of firearms should be made stricter.

Maryland citizens also overwhelmingly support reasonable gun control measures. A Penn, Schoen & Berland poll conducted among likely Maryland voters between January 25 to February 3, 2000 found that a wide range of gun control proposals have considerable popular support in the state. Consider this: 74% of Maryland voters support mandatory handgun registration; 85% support requiring potential handgun purchasers to obtain a license from the police in order to purchase a handgun, with a fingerprint-based background check; and 76% favor legislation requiring childproof guns.

New Hampshire voters also strongly favor tougher gun control laws. A Northeastern University Poll conducted in May 2000 found that New Hampshire residents favor the following specific measures: 89% favor a law that makes gun owners responsible for keeping loaded guns away from minor children; 66% favor a ban on the possession of rapid fire assault weapons; and 65% favor stricter handgun controls, or placing limitations on the sale or possession of handguns.

In Ohio, an April 1999 poll conducted by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati found that most Ohioans oppose legislation that would make it easier to obtain a permit to carry a concealed handgun. Specifically, the Ohio Poll, which was conducted last year when the state legislature was considering legislation liberalizing Ohio's prohibition on carrying concealed weapons (CCW), found that 72% of Ohio adults opposed making it easier for citizens to obtain a CCW permit. More telling, 55% said they "strongly" opposed the legislation, while only 17% said they "strongly" favored such legislation.

Likewise, in Pennsylvania – a state with arguably one of the highest rates of gun owners in the country – gun control remains a popular concept. A February 1999 poll conducted by the American Viewpoint, Inc. found that 71% - statewide and 71% rural/suburban voters supported legislation to reduce handgun trafficking by limiting handgun purchases to one per month. What's more, an

overwhelming 88% both statewide and in the rural/suburban areas favored a five day waiting period for the purchase of handguns.

(more)

And in Texas, where Governor George W. Bush failed to act last year to close the gun show loophole in his state, support for mandatory background checks for all sales at gun shows is extremely high. In fact, 85% of Texans, and 82% of Texas gun owners, responded in an October 1999 Scripps Howard poll that they support mandatory background checks before people – including gun dealers- could buy guns at gun shows. Moreover, requiring safety locks or trigger guards to be included with new handgun purchases has widespread support among Texans. In fact, 79% of Texans (72% of gun owners in the state) favor such a trigger lock proposal. Despite the high level of public support for mandatory trigger locks for all handgun sales, Governor Bush has never addressed the people of Texas or the Texas Legislature regarding trigger locks, not that he didn't have the opportunity. During the 1999 session of the Texas legislature, two bills were introduced to require the sale of child safety locks with handguns: Senate Bill 316, introduced by Sen. Rodney Ellis of Houston, and House Bill 489, introduced by Rep. Glenn Lewis of Fort Worth. Both bills failed. There is no record that Governor Bush ever contacted the authors of these bills or worked to enact them.

Given that the public's long-standing favorable attitudes about gun control and gun safety laws, it's no wonder that, when voters are given the choice to express their preference for strengthening or weakening state gun control laws, they consistently side on stronger gun laws.

In 1998, for example, Florida voters overwhelmingly passed ballot initiative Revision 12, a proposal to close the dangerous loophole in the state's gun laws by allowing Florida counties to impose mandatory background checks on all gun-sellers at gun shows. Despite strong NRA opposition and a multi-million dollar campaign to defeat the referendum, more than 70% of Floridians voted in favor of the initiative to close the gun show loophole. The success of the referendum has precipitated a domino effect, and today the gun show loophole is a national concern.

In April 1999, the NRA suffered another major electoral defeat in a Missouri referendum, Proposition B, on the issue of carrying concealed handguns which they had placed on the April 6 ballot, only two weeks before the Columbine massacre. The battle over Prop. B marked the first time that any state's voters were given the chance to vote on the controversial "concealed carry" issue. Missouri has been a no-carry state that has prohibited the carrying of concealed weapons since the outlaw days of Jesse James in 1875, and has long been a battleground for the NRA, for whom liberalizing these laws around the country has been a policy priority since the early '90s.

The NRA spent \$4 million – outspending their opponents by a 5 to 1 margin – and lost 52% - 48%. A strong bi-partisan coalition of law enforcement, business leaders, religious, medical and community activists organized a strong campaign to defeat the hidden handgun measure. In what may be a prophesy for the 2000 election cycle, the Prop. B election was decided by turnout in suburban St. Louis and Kansas City counties, typically Republican strongholds. Suburban St. Louis County, for example, rejected Prop. B by a 70%-30% margin.

Polling – both national and in states -- conducted over the last few years make clear that there is consistent, popular support for strengthening our country's gun control and gun safety laws. The

Million Mom March movement, and grassroots ballot referendum campaigns planned in Colorado, Utah and Oregon, is further proof that the issue of gun violence in America is building momentum as more and more citizens are outraged by the gun lobby's dissembling and stalling tactics on gun safety legislation being debated in Congress and in state houses all over the country.

(more)

The national Million Mom March demonstration, will help mobilize a potent electoral force in November by bringing in thousands of new activists from around the country in support of reasonable gun laws.

**** Complete polling data available to the media upon request.**

#

Handgun Control, chaired by Sarah Brady, was founded in 1974 by Dr. Mark Borinsky and N.T. "Pete" Shields, two victims of gun violence. Based in Washington, D.C., HCI works with law enforcement, public health, religious, and community groups across the country to strengthen and protect federal, state and local gun control laws, but does not seek to ban all guns. HCI has more than 400,000 members nationwide, making it the nation's largest citizens' gun control lobbying organization. More information about HCI and its sister organization, the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, can be found on our website at www.handguncontrol.org.

[illegible]

öììììììììD

F

F

F

F

F

|||||j

1 11111111

ì ì D

4 p2 p ì D

ixiD

D

Ì ` lōö¼£º Œ 0 0 Ö ö D

Arkansas

Opinion Research Associates, Inc.

Sample size – 507 Registered Voters

1. Stricter	53%
2. Less strict	32%
3. Neither	11%
4. Don't know	5%

1. Stricter	62%
2. Less strict	26%
3. Neither	9%
4. Don't know	3%

One suggestion is a Child Protection, Parental Responsibility Law. This is often referred to as a “Safe Storage” law. Generally, such laws require adults to either store guns in a place that is reasonable inaccessible to children, or use a device to lock the gun. If a child obtains an improperly stored gun, the adult owner is criminally liable. Arkansas is considering a Safe Storage Law. Under the provisions it would be a crime to store or leave a firearm within the reach or easy access of a minor, defined as a person sixteen years old or younger. The law would apply only if the minor gains access to the gun. The

law would not apply if the firearm is stored in a locked box, or secured with a trigger lock, or if obtained by a minor through unlawful entry. Would you favor or oppose the state of Arkansas adopting this law?

- | | |
|--------------------|-----|
| 1. Strongly favor | 68% |
| 2. Somewhat favor | 20% |
| 3. Somewhat oppose | 8% |
| 4. Strongly oppose | 14% |
| 5. Don't know | 3% |

Under this law, gun dealers would be required to provide gun purchasers with a written warning about the law, as well as place a warning sign at the counter. Would you favor or oppose this requirement?

- | | |
|--------------------|-----|
| 1. Strongly favor | 68% |
| 2. Somewhat favor | 18% |
| 3. Somewhat oppose | 3% |
| 4. Strongly oppose | 8% |
| 5. Don't know | 3% |

A law in Connecticut states that in addition to the above provisions, gun dealers are required to provide trigger locks at the time of purchase. Would you favor or oppose this requirement?

- | | |
|--------------------|-----|
| 1. Strongly favor | 60% |
| 2. Somewhat favor | 16% |
| 3. Somewhat oppose | 9% |
| 4. Strongly oppose | 12% |
| 5. Don't know | 4% |

Would you favor or oppose making laws which apply to the sale of guns in the stores, also apply to the sale of guns at gun shows?

- | | |
|--------------------|-----|
| 1. Strongly favor | 66% |
| 2. Somewhat favor | 13% |
| 3. Somewhat oppose | 6% |
| 4. Strongly oppose | 12% |
| 5. Don't know | 3% |

Would you favor or oppose legislation requiring gun sellers to improve the safety of guns and make them more childproof?

- | | |
|--------------------|-----|
| 1. Strongly favor | 57% |
| 2. Somewhat favor | 15% |
| 3. Somewhat oppose | 10% |
| 4. Strongly oppose | 14% |
| 5. Don't know | 4% |

Would you favor or oppose legislation that holds gun-owning parent legally responsible for keeping firearms out of the reach of children?

- | | |
|--------------------|-----|
| 1. Strongly favor | 66% |
| 2. Somewhat favor | 16% |
| 3. Somewhat oppose | 6% |
| 4. Strongly oppose | 10% |
| 5. Don't know | 3% |

If you knew for a fact that a law like we have been discussing – a “Safe Storage Law” – would cut the number of children killed by gunshot wounds in half, would this make you more likely to favor such a law, or would it make no difference?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Much more likely to favor | 73% |
| 2. Somewhat more likely to favor | 11% |
| 3. No difference | 15% |
| 4. Don't know | 2% |

National statistics show that 55% of all accidental shootings are committed by a child or a teenager. Does knowing this make you more likely to favor a Safe Storage Law, or does it make no difference?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Much more likely to favor | 65% |
| 2. Somewhat more likely to favor | 13% |
| 3. No difference | 20% |
| 4. Don't know | 2% |

Placing requirements on how gun owners must store their guns in their home is an unfair invasion of privacy.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----|
| 1. Strongly agree | 27% |
| 2. Somewhat agree | 15% |
| 3. Somewhat disagree | 16% |
| 4. Strongly disagree | 41% |
| 5. Don't know | 2% |

It is unfair to hold parents legally responsible for the actions of their children.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----|
| 1. Strongly agree | 15% |
| 2. Somewhat agree | 16% |
| 3. Somewhat disagree | 18% |
| 4. Strongly disagree | 46% |
| 5. Don't know | 5% |

Government efforts to regulate gun safety will make guns more expensive and more difficult for law-abiding citizens to own.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----|
| 1. Strongly agree | 37% |
| 2. Somewhat agree | 25% |
| 3. Somewhat disagree | 14% |
| 4. Strongly disagree | 19% |
| 5. Don't know | 6% |

Gun owners should be held responsible if they do not take reasonable care to prevent children having access to their firearms.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----|
| 1. Strongly agree | 75% |
| 2. Somewhat agree | 17% |
| 3. Somewhat disagree | 3% |
| 4. Strongly disagree | 19% |
| 5. Don't know | 2% |

Now, thinking again about the Safe Storage Law, would you favor or oppose the state of Arkansas adopting this law?

- | | |
|--------------------|-----|
| 1. Strongly favor | 58% |
| 2. Somewhat favor | 20% |
| 3. Somewhat oppose | 7% |
| 4. Strongly oppose | 12% |
| 5. Don't know | 3% |

Do you happen to have any guns at your residence, that is, handguns, rifles, or shotguns?

- | | |
|---------------|-----|
| 1. Yes | 71% |
| 2. No | 26% |
| 3. Don't know | 3% |

IF RESPONDENT HAS ANY GUNS:

Do you have a handgun?

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| 1. Yes | 47% |
| 2. No | 50% |
| 3. Don't know (refused) | 3% |

Do you have a rifle?

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| 1. Yes | 55% |
| 2. No | 42% |
| 3. Don't know (refused) | 3% |

Do you have a shotgun?

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| 1. Yes | 54% |
| 2. No | 43% |
| 3. Don't know (refused) | 3% |

Are you, or is any member of your household a member of the National Rifle Association?

- | | |
|--------|-----|
| 1. Yes | 15% |
| 2. No | 84% |

3. Don't know (refused) 1%

Are you, or is any member of your household a hunter?

1. Yes 52%
2. No 48%
3. Don't know (refused) 0%

Colorado

USA Today/CNN Gallup Poll

April 2000

1,006 Adults

Would you generally favor or oppose a law that would hold parents legally responsible if their children commit crimes with the parents' guns?

Favor 69%

Oppose 24%

Do you have a gun in your home?

	April '99	Now
Yes	34%	42%

Do you feel that the laws covering the sale of firearms should be made more strict, less strict or kept as they are now?

	April '99	Now
More Strict	66%	61%
Kept as now	25%	30%
Less Strict	7%	7%

The Denver Post

March 5, 2000

600 Colorado Voters

83% of Coloradans support closing the gun-show loophole.

Georgia
Beth Schapiro & Associates
September 19-22, 1999
Sample Size: 500 Registered Georgians Voters

Mandatory background checks before people – including gun dealers – could buy guns at gun shows?

Overall
Favor 87%
Oppose 12%
Don't Know 1%

Rural
Favor 87%
Oppose 10%
Don't Know 2%

Suburban
Favor 88%
Oppose 12%
Don't Know 1%

Urban
Favor 88%
Oppose 12%
Don't Know 1%

Holding parents legally responsible if their children commit crimes with the parents' guns?

Overall
Favor 59
Oppose 31%
Don't Know 11%

Rural
Favor 56%
Oppose 34%
Don't Know 11%

Suburban
Favor 60%
Oppose 31%
Don't Know 9%

Urban
Favor 62%
Oppose 28%
Don't Know 10%

Maine

Strategic Marketing Services
March 25-27, 2000
Sample size 400 Maine Citizens

Do you support raising the minimum age under Maine state law from 16 to 21 for the purchase of handguns?

Yes	93.7%
No	5.8%
Don't know	0.5%

Do you believe Maine should create a Commission to study whether Maine laws governing the sale and use of handguns should be strengthened?

Yes	59.2%
No	34%
Don't know	6.8%

Do you feel that the gun laws covering the sale of firearms should be made stricter, less strict, or kept as they are now?

Stricter	62.8%
Less Strict	1.5%
Kept as they Are now	33%

Maryland

Penn, Schoen & Berland conducted 512 interviews among likely Maryland voters January 25 to February 3, 2000.

The margin of error is plus or minus 4.3% at the 95% confidence level. The findings represent the views of a cross section of Maryland voters as a whole.

Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor Total favor / oppose Among all Gun in home only 1 Mandatory registration of handguns 74 85/14 74/23 2 Expanding the list of people prohibited from purchasing handguns to include those convicted of violent misdemeanors, such as assault and spousal abuse 73 85/14 87/12 3 Requiring potential handgun purchasers to obtain a license from the police in order to purchase a handgun, with a fingerprint-based background check 72 85/15 75/24 4 Requiring potential handgun owners to pass a handgun safety test before they can purchase one 70 88/11 87/12 5 Mandatory gun-safety training before allowing someone to buy a gun of any type 69 86/13 79/21 6 Requiring ballistics fingerprinting of all new guns prior to sale 60 82/15 73/26 7 Mandatory registration of rifles and shotguns 58 70/29 51/48 8 Require that all new handguns sold in Maryland are personalized and child-proof 54 76/23 61/39 9 Making anyone who illegally sells a handgun financially responsible for any damages caused by the handgun 52 71/27 61/36 10 Imposing taxes on the sale of handguns and ammunition to fund the enforcement of handgun laws 51 69/31 51/48 11 Mandatory gun-safety training for anyone who already owns a handgun 50 76/22 63/36

Summary – 3 in 4 Maryland voters want personalized and child-proof guns

More than three-fourths of Maryland voters (76%) favor new legislation which would require that all new handguns sold in Maryland are personalized and child-proof. Less than one-quarter (23%) are opposed.

Among Maryland voters who have a gun at home, 61% favor new legislation which requires that all new handguns be personalized and childproof.

Support for personalized, child-proof handguns important to voters

This proposed personalized, childproof handgun legislation could have a tremendous impact on Marylanders' next vote for the General Assembly. A 20-point advantage for a Democratic candidate becomes a 42-point advantage if the Democrat supports this proposal and the Republican candidate is opposed. A Republican who supports the proposal has a 22-point advantage against a Democrat who is opposed.

Stop gun raffles

Two-thirds of Maryland voters (66%) want to "stop gun raffles because we need fewer guns in our society, not more." Only 29% say, "gun raffles should be permitted because it is one way that groups can raise money for their activities."

Ballistics fingerprinting

More than four-fifths of Maryland voters (82%) favor ballistics fingerprinting of all new guns prior to sale. Only 15% are opposed to this measure. Ballistics fingerprinting is an example of an existing technology which can be employed immediately to help the police catch criminals who use guns.

In fact, among Maryland voters who have a gun at home, nearly three-quarters (73%) favor ballistics fingerprinting while one-quarter (26%) are opposed.

Strong support for licensing

More than four-fifths of Maryland voters (85%) favor requiring potential handgun purchasers to obtain a license from the police in order to purchase a handgun with a fingerprint-based background check. Only 15% are opposed.

Among Maryland voters who have a gun at home, three-quarters (75%) favor requiring police licenses with a fingerprint-based background check while one-quarter (24%) are opposed.

Why Maryland voters favor childproofing, licensing and other handgun measures

Nearly two in three Maryland voters (66%) agree that "more needs to be done to control handguns." Only one-quarter (25%) believe "efforts to control handguns have gone too far."

Nearly three-quarters of Maryland voters (72%) agree that having a handgun in the home increases the chances of somebody, particularly a child, being shot unintentionally.

Licensing handgun purchasers could influence 2000 presidential election in Maryland

Support for licensing could have a huge impact on the 2000 presidential race. If Al Gore supports legislation to require licensing handgun purchasers and George W. Bush is opposed, Gore's 10-point lead widens to a 20-point lead among Maryland voters.

Strong support for gun measures

Every gun measure we tested is favored by more than two-thirds of Maryland voters. Indeed, every gun measure is strongly favored by a majority of Maryland voters.

Even Maryland voters who have guns at home support all of the handgun measures tested – most of the proposals tested are supported by more than 70% of Maryland voters with a gun at home.

Having a handgun in the home increases the chances of domestic violence. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?

Strongly agree	36%
Somewhat agree	22%
Somewhat disagree	16%
Strongly disagree	23%
Don't know	2%

Having a handgun in the home increases the chances of someone, particularly a child, being shot unintentionally. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?

Strongly agree	53%
Somewhat agree	19%
Somewhat disagree	11%
Strongly disagree	17%
Don't know	1%

Having a handgun in the home means that its owners always have to worry about it being stolen or misused. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?

Strongly agree	49%
Somewhat agree	16%
Somewhat disagree	13%
Strongly disagree	20%
Don't know	2%

Having a handgun in the home increases the chances of someone, particularly a teenager, committing suicide. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?

Strongly agree	32%
Somewhat agree	23%
Somewhat disagree	18%
Strongly disagree	24%
Don't know	3%

Which is closer to your view: more needs to be done to control handguns in Maryland or efforts to control handguns in Maryland have gone too far?

More needs to be done to control handguns	66%
Efforts to control handguns have gone too far	25%
I am satisfied with the current effort	5%
Don't know	4%

Mandatory registration of handguns.

Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	74%
Somewhat favor	11%
Somewhat oppose	4%
Strongly oppose	10%
Don't know	1%

Mandatory registration of rifles and shotguns

Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	58%
Somewhat favor	12%
Somewhat oppose	9%
Strongly oppose	20%
Don't know	1%

Mandatory gun-safety training before allowing someone to buy a gun of any type.

Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	69%
Somewhat favor	17%
Somewhat oppose	6%
Strongly oppose	7%
Don't know	1%

Mandatory gun-safety training for anyone who already owns a handgun.

Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	50%
Somewhat favor	26%
Somewhat oppose	11%
Strongly oppose	11%
Don't know	2%

Requiring potential handgun purchasers to obtain a license from the police in order to purchase a handgun, with a fingerprint-based background check.

Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	72%
Somewhat favor	13%
Somewhat oppose	6%
Strongly oppose	9%
Don't know	1%

Requiring potential handgun owners to pass a handgun safety test before they can purchase one. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	70%
Somewhat favor	18%
Somewhat oppose	4%
Strongly oppose	7%
Don't know	1%

Imposing taxes on the sale of handguns and ammunition to fund the enforcement of handgun laws. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	51%
Somewhat favor	18%
Somewhat oppose	8%
Strongly oppose	23%

Don't know 1%

Making anyone who illegally sells a handgun financially responsible for any damages caused by the handgun. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	52%
Somewhat favor	19%
Somewhat oppose	10%
Strongly oppose	17%
Don't know	3%

Expanding the list of people prohibited from purchasing handguns to include those convicted of violent misdemeanors, such as assault and spousal abuse

Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	73%
Somewhat favor	12%
Somewhat oppose	6%
Strongly oppose	8%
Don't know	1%

Every gun has a unique ballistics pattern, like a fingerprint or DNA. Requiring ballistics fingerprinting of all new guns prior to sale. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	60%
Somewhat favor	22%
Somewhat oppose	7%
Strongly oppose	8%
Don't know	3%

Soon handguns could be equipped with devices that prevent any one but the authorized user from firing them. This technology will personalize handguns and make them useless to criminals if stolen. It will reduce the risk of unintentional shooting and make them child proof. However, these personalized handguns will also cost more than other hand guns, and the chance that the gun will not fire when it is meant to may increase slightly. Would you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation that would require that all new handguns sold in Maryland are personalized and child proof?

Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	54%
Somewhat favor	22%
Somewhat oppose	7%
Strongly oppose	16%
Don't know	2%

Some groups in Maryland hold gun raffles. Some people want to stop gun raffles because we need less guns in our society not more. Other people say gun raffles should be permitted because it is one way that groups can raise money for their activities. Which comes closer to your view?

Stop gun raffles need less guns not more	66%
Gun raffles permitted because one way groups can raise money	29%
Don't know	5%

MISSOURI

Peter Hart Research Associates, Inc,
January 20 –21, 1999
503 Voters Interviewed

Would you say that the current gun-control laws here in Missouri that deal with the sale and possession of handguns – (A) go too far and put too many restrictions on the availability of guns. (B) are about right, or (C) do not go far enough and do not put enough restrictions on the availability of guns?

A. Go too far/too many restrictions on availability of guns	14	(154)
B. Are about right	44	
C. Do not go far enough/ not enough restrictions on the Availability of guns	33	
Not sure	9	

Regardless of how you may vote on this specific proposal, what is your reaction to the general idea of allowing people to carry concealed weapons - favorable, neutral, or unfavorable?

Favorable	32	(166)
Neutral		13
Unfavorable	53	
Not sure	2	

Regardless of how you may vote on this specific proposal, what is your reaction to the general idea of allowing people to carry hidden handguns – favorable, neutral, or unfavorable?

Favorable	28	(167)
Neutral		16
Unfavorable	55	
Not sure	1	

Do you, or does anyone in your household, own a handgun – that is, a gun that can be fired with one hand such as a pistol or revolver?

Yes, household owns a handgun	40	(254)
No, household does not own a handgun	56	
Not sure	4	

(Ask only of respondents who say “no” or “not sure”)

Do you , or does anyone in your household, own a gun of any kind?

Yes, household owns a gun	20	(255)
No, household does not own a gun	36	
Not sure	4	
Household owns a handgun	40	

New Hampshire
Northeastern University Poll
May 2-3, 2000
503 New Hampshire Residents

On laws and policies to deal with criminal violence, New Hampshire residents favor the following specific measures.

89% Favor a law that makes gun owners responsible for keeping loaded guns away from minor children.

66% Favor a ban on the possession of rapid fire assault weapons.

65% Favor stricter handgun controls; that is, limitations on the sale or possession of handguns.

New Jersey

American Viewpoint
October 7 – 11, 1998
500 Republican Voters

73% favor, including 60% strongly, "personalizing" all new handguns to reduce the risk of a child or teenager shooting themselves or someone else.

65% favor, 44% strongly, government safety regulations for the design of handguns.

North Carolina

The Odum Institute

The University of North Carolina

April 1999

714 Voters Interviewed

64% favored making laws covering the sale of handguns more strict. 27% felt that the laws should be kept as they are now. Only 6% said the laws should be made less strict.

Oregon

Oregon Medical Association

February 19 – 21, 1999

500 registered Voters

Would you favor or oppose a law that would prohibit any person, except law enforcement personnel, from carrying a loaded or unloaded gun into a public building or facility?

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| 1. Strongly favor | 49% |
| 2. Favor | 16% (65%) |
| 3. Don't know | 3% |
| 4. Oppose | 13% |
| 5. Strongly oppose | 19% (32%) |

As you may know, a trigger lock is a device placed on a gun to prevent it from being fired until it is unlocked with a key or combination. Would you favor or oppose a law that required all sold in Oregon to have trigger locks?

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| 1. Strongly favor | 40% |
| 2. Favor | 25% (65%) |
| 3. Don't know | 5% |
| 4. Oppose | 13% |
| 5. Strongly oppose | 18% (31%) |

A gun with a trigger lock can be difficult to use for self-defense purposes. After hearing this, would you favor or oppose a law that required all guns sold in Oregon to have trigger locks?

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| 1. Strongly favor | 31% |
| 2. Favor | 23% (54%) |
| 3. Don't know | 5% |
| 4. Oppose | 18% |
| 5. Strongly oppose | 22% (41%) |

Would you favor or oppose a law that required gun dealers to perform identification/background checks on individuals who purchase guns, including those who purchase guns at gun shows, and those who purchase guns from pawn brokers and gun repair shops?

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| 1. Strongly favor | 67% |
| 2. Favor | 19% (86%) |
| 3. Don't know | 2% |
| 4. Oppose | 6% |
| 5. Strongly oppose | 5% (11%) |

Pennsylvania

American Viewpoint, Inc.

February 23, 1999

600 Registered Voters

71% - statewide and 71% rural/suburban support legislation to reduce handgun trafficking by limiting handgun purchases to one per month.

An overwhelming 88% both statewide and in the rural/suburban areas favor a five day waiting period for the purchase of handguns.

TEXAS

Scripps Howard Texas Poll
October 13 – November 1, 1999
1,000 Margin

Do you or anyone else living in your household own a gun?

Yes	65%
No	42%
Don't know/ No answer	3%

Do you think that restrictions on the sales of guns should be increased, decreased or kept the same?

Increased	50%
Decreased	15%
Kept the same	29%
Don't know/ No answer	6%

Do you favor or oppose mandatory background checks before people, including gun dealers could buy guns at gun shows?

Favor	50%
Oppose	37%
Don't know/ No answer	3%

Do you favor or oppose holding parents legally responsible if their children commit crimes with the parents' gun?

Favor	50%
Oppose	37%
Don't know/ No answer	13%

Mandatory background checks before people – including gun dealers- could buy guns at gun shows.

	All Respondents		Gun Owner
Favor	85%	Favor	82%
Oppose	12%	Oppose	15%

Requiring safety locks or trigger guards to be included with new handgun purchases.

	All Respondents		Gun Owners
Favor	79%	Favor	74%
Oppose	17%	Oppose	21%

Holding parents legally responsible if their children commit crimes with the parents' gun.

	All Respondents		Gun Owners
Favor	50%	Favor	47%

Oppose	37%	Oppose	40%
--------	-----	--------	-----

Mandatory prison sentences for felons who commit crimes with guns.

All Respondents		Gun Owners	
Favor	88%	Favor	87%
Oppose	8%	Oppose	7%

Imposing a lifetime ban on gun ownership for juveniles convicted of a felony.

All Respondents		Gun Owners	
Favor	65%	Favor	60%
Oppose	27%	Oppose	32%

Utah

Garin – Hart – Yang Research Group
October 1999
504 Likely Voters

Do you think that law-abiding citizens who hold a concealed firearm permit have a constitutional right to carry concealed weapons anywhere they want? (out of 152)

Yes, law-abiding citizens have constitutional right	32
No, law-abiding citizens do not have constitutional right	64
Not sure	4

Would you vote "yes" on the Safe to Learn-Safe to Worship Act if you knew:

The Utah State Legislature had passed a law prohibiting concealed weapons from being carried on church grounds: out of 212 people

Vote "yes"	84
Not sure yes	10
Depends	3
Not sure	3

The Utah State Legislature had passed a law prohibiting the carrying of concealed weapons in churches and primary and secondary schools, but did not prohibit concealed weapons on college campuses:

Vote "yes"	69
Not sure yes	19
Depends	6
Not sure	6

, © é ò ô & ! i " k † É Ě , - 5 K Y Z ` ... ³ ¹ à < = E j p — Ä Ě ñ p " T ^ ` i u l v ! ë ! ! " " . " / " ' ' ' Ø ' O * P * = + > + X + H , S , - > - . Ó . ! / f 0 Û 0 Œ 1 ø 1 ù 1 p 1 j 2 r 2 Ò 2 Œ 2 [3 \ 3 , 5 ù + ó ñ + ñ é ó æ ñ ù ä þ ä ä ä ä þ ä ä Ø ä ä ä Œ ó ä Œ ñ Í í ñ í ñ ä þ ä ù ä þ Ø þ Ø þ Ø þ ä þ ä þ ä ù ä ù ä ù ä Æ

*Sent to
May McEvoy*

* CNN/Time Poll conducted by Yankelovich Partners.
July 14-15, 1999.
N=1,017 adults nationwide. MoE +/- 3.1 (total sample).

	Repub- ALL	Indepen- licans	Demo- dents	Gun In crats	Home
	%	%	%	%	%
* "Do you favor or oppose stricter gun control laws?"					
Favor	61	47	59	73	46
Oppose	36	49	39	24	54
Not sure	3	4	2	3	2

"Do you favor or oppose the federal government requiring handgun owners to register each handgun they own with the government?"

Favor	76	66	75	82	64
Oppose	23	32	23	15	34
Not sure	1	2	2	3	2

"Do you favor or oppose the federal government requiring people to get a license in order to legally own a handgun?"

Favor	77	70	76	82	64
Oppose	21	30	22	16	34
Not sure	2	-	2	2	2

* "Do you have more confidence in the Democratic Party or the Republican Party to handle the issue of gun control?"

Democratic Party	41	10	36	71	30
Republican Party	32	72	29	10	41
The same in both					
(vol.)	3	2	3	2	3
Neither (vol.)	11	8	16	7	15
Not sure	13	8	16	10	11

* "Would you be more likely or less likely to vote for a candidate who favors stricter gun control laws?"

More likely	59	44	56	70	42
Less likely	32	46	35	20	46
Not sure	9	10	9	10	12

"Do you think criminals should lose their rights to a plea bargain when they commit a crime with a gun, or don't you think so?"

Should lose	
rights	72
Don't think so	21
Not sure	7

Pew Research Center for the People & the Press survey conducted by Princeton Survey Research Assoc.

Latest: May 12-16, 1999.

N=1,179 adults nationwide.

"Would you favor or oppose a law that banned the sale of handguns?"

	5/99 %	12/93 %
Favor	44	45
Oppose	50	51
Don't know/Refused	6	4

"What do you think is more important: to protect the right of Americans to own guns or to control gun ownership?"

	Protect Right To Own Guns %	Control Gun Ownership %
ALL	30	65
Men	42	53
Women	19	75
Whites	32	63
Blacks	17	75
Under 30	26	71
30-49	30	65
50-64	36	59
65 & older	30	61
East	25	70
Midwest	31	65
South	30	64
West	33	60
Republicans	42	53
Democrats	19	76
Independents	33	63

Zogby International Poll.

March 15-17, 2000.

N=826 likely voters nationwide. MoE +/- 3.6 (total sample).

"Which of the following statements do you agree with?"

"Statement A: Wayne LaPierre of the National Rifle Association says that President Clinton actually is willing to accept an increased level of violence so that he can promote an anti-gun agenda, because the President refuses to implement a program that requires mandatory sentencing of criminals who use a gun in a crime.

"Statement B: President Clinton says that, especially with the recent killing of a six-year-old child by a fellow six-year-old, it is time for Congress to strengthen gun control legislation with child-safety trigger locks and waiting periods for gun show sales."

Statement Statement Not

	A %	B %	Sure %	Not %
ALL	27	64	9	
Democrats	12	82	6	
Republicans	46	41	12	
Independents	24	67	9	
Men	35	58	8	
Women	20	70	10	



THE GALLUP ORGANIZATION

PRINCETON

HOME

GALLUP POLL

GALLUP PATH

GALLUP ONLINE

POLL SEARCH

Enter Topic:

FIND

 **GO BACK**

TUESDAY BRIEFING

Click Here to Subscribe
to Gallup's Free Weekly
E-mail Service

E-MAIL TO A FRIEND

E-mail This Page to a
Friend

POLL RELEASES

January 20, 2000

Americans Not Convinced that Stricter Enforcement of Current Gun Control Laws is Sufficient to Curb Gun Violence

Democrats More Likely than Republicans to Feel New Laws are Necessary

by **Frank Newport**

GALLUP NEWS SERVICE

PRINCETON, NJ -- President Clinton announced earlier this week that he will seek almost \$300 million from Congress to hire additional Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agents and inspectors to crack down on illegal gun traffickers. The announcement was interpreted as reflecting an administration concession to gun control critics, who have pressed for an increased enforcement of existing laws rather than attempts to pass new gun control legislation. A new Gallup poll, however, shows that by a slight margin, Americans think that new laws, in addition to stricter enforcement of existing laws, will be needed to control gun-related violence -- rather than a sole reliance on enforcement alone.

New Gun Control Laws, Versus Enforcement of Existing Laws

President Clinton's seemingly subtle shift of emphasis this week between new laws and enforcement of existing laws exemplifies a point that has been at the heart of much of the discussion on gun control legislation in recent months and years. Those who are strongly opposed to guns in any form have argued that news laws - including such measures as requiring the registration of all handguns - are necessary, while the NRA and others opposed to gun control have argued that there are enough laws on the books, and that the emphasis should be placed on stricter enforcement.

There is little question that Americans react in strongly positive ways to the idea of new laws aimed at controlling the availability of guns. In December, for example, 60% said that laws concerning guns should be made more strict than they are now, while only 10% said that they should be made less strict. Additionally, in the most recent Gallup poll conducted this past weekend, 73% said that they favored the registration of all handguns. (Interestingly, when this question was first asked in a slightly different form more than 60 years ago, in 1938, 84% said that they favored the idea that "owners of pistols and revolvers should be required to register with the government.") Such new laws as minimum age for handgun possession, trigger guards, banning high-capacity ammunition clips and mandatory sentences for those convicted of crimes using a handgun also receive overwhelming high levels of support from the public.

New Laws Favored Over Increased Enforcement

Still, when asked directly this past weekend to choose between the argument that gun-related violence can be controlled just with stricter enforcement of the current gun laws, or that passing new gun laws is also necessary,, the percentage of Americans favoring the "new gun laws necessary" alternative is not as high as the percentage of the public that supports the types of individual gun laws reviewed above. Forty-seven percent choose the "new gun laws" alternative, while 41% choose the

[Politics & Elections](#)
[Business & The Economy](#)
[Social Issues & Policy](#)
[Managing](#)
[Lifestyle](#)
 [POLL SURVEYS](#)
 [POLL ANALYSES](#)
 [POLL TRENDS](#)
 [POLL TOPICS: A-Z](#)
 [SPECIAL REPORT](#)
[Setting the Stage Election 2000](#)
[Polls This Century](#)
[Social Audits](#)
[From the Editor](#)
[To the Editor](#)
[FAQ](#)

"stricter enforcement by itself" alternative.

These results suggest that in the aggregate, the public is not strongly supportive of the NRA position - a sole reliance on increased enforcement of existing laws -- as the preferred alternative. Still, the fact that 41% do choose this alternative suggests that the NRA has some support for its position, and that an approach which emphasizes both new laws and better enforcement of existing laws, might be most acceptable to the American population.

Gun Control More Important to Democrats

There are differences by partisan orientation on almost all gun control issues.. Fifty percent of Republicans nationwide say that stricter enforcement would be more effective without having to pass new laws, compared to 37% who favor the "new laws also needed" alternative. Democrats, on the other hand, break the other way, favoring new gun legislation by 58% to 35%. (Independents tilt 47% to new laws, and 39% to stricter enforcement.)

Although gun control issues have already been a point of discussion in early presidential election campaigning this year, the new poll shows that the issue has only mid-range importance to the average voter. Twenty-five percent of those interviewed say that gun laws will be extremely important to their vote, while another 38% say it will be very important, putting the issue about in the middle of the list of 25 diverse issues tested in the latest Gallup poll. Gun control is more important to Democrats than to Republicans, with 31% of Democrats saying it will be extremely important, compared to just 17% of Republicans.

Survey Methods

The results reported here are based on telephone interviews with a randomly selected national sample of 1,027 adults, 18 years and older, conducted January 13-16, 2000. For results based on the whole sample, one can say with 95 percent confidence that the maximum error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

Would you favor or oppose the registration of all handguns?

	Favor	Oppose	No opinion
2000 Jan 13-16	73%	26	1
1999 Feb 8-9	79%	19	2
1993 Dec	81%	18	1
1991	80%	17	3
1990	81%	17	2
1985	70%	25	5
1982	66%	30	4
1938*	84%	16	--

(*) Question wording: *Do you think all owners of pistols and revolvers should be required to register with the government*

Do you think the amount of gun related violence in America could be significantly reduced by stricter enforcement of the current gun laws, or is it also necessary to pass new gun laws?

	Stricter enforcement of current laws	Necessary to pass new gun laws	OTHER (vol.)	NEITHER (vol.)	No opinion
2000 Jan 13-16	41%	47	2	7	3

In general, do you feel that the laws covering the sale of firearms should be made more strict, less strict, or kept as they are now?

	More strict	Less strict	Kept as now	No opinion
1999 Dec 9-12	60%	10	29	1
1999 Aug 3-4	66%	6	27	1
1999 Jun 25-27	62%	6	31	1
1999 May 23-24	65%	5	28	2
1999 Apr 26-27	66%	7	25	2
1999 Feb 8-9	60%	9	29	2
1995 Apr 23-24**	62%	12	24	2
1993 Dec 17-19	67%	7	25	1
1993 Mar	70%	4	24	2
1991	68%	5	25	2
1990	78%	2	17	3

**asked of half sample

[Home](#) | [Contact](#) | [Employment](#) | [Worldwide Offices](#) | [About Gallup](#) | [Bookstore](#) | [Search](#)

Copyright© 2000 - The Gallup Organization

	All	Dem	GOP	Ind	Men	Wom
American	65%	58%	76%	62%	74%	57%
Canadian	31	38	21	35	24	38
D/K	3	4	3	3	2	5

Which of the following do you think is the most likely reason that teenagers will commit crimes against their fellow students?

	All	Dem	GOP	Ind	Men	Wom
Being desensitized to harming human beings by violent video games	10%	10%	8%	13%	7%	12%
Easy access to guns and other weapons	12	17	9	6	10	13
Lack of parental supervision, especially in latch key families	42	38	47	41	50	34
Schools being prohibited from searching and seizing items without parental permission	3	3	3	2	2	3
Violence on TV, in movies, and on records	15	13	15	18	13	17
Not having enough school security	3	2	3	5	3	3
Low self-esteem (vol.)	9	10	6	10	9	8
D/K	8	8	9	6	6	9

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? A woman walking to her car after a night class or shopping should have the right to have a handgun for protection.

	All	Dem	GOP	Ind	Men	Wom
Strongly agree	42%	35%	53%	41%	55%	30%
Somewhat agree	28	28	24	34	27	29
Somewhat disagree	14	15	15	13	9	20
Strongly disagree	13	19	8	12	9	17
D/K	2	3	2	1	-	4

Conducted 2/15-17/99; surveyed 756 likely voters; margin of error +/- 3.7% (release, 3/3). [Click here to see entire national poll.](#)

How often does the organization speak for you?

The National Rifle Association

	All	Men	Wom	Dem	GOP	Ind
All the time	10%	13%	7%	13%	10%	6%
Most of the time	13	17	8	6	17	15
Some of the time	29	32	26	22	40	22
Never	42	34	50	51	27	51
DK	7	4	9	8	6	6

* money spent by hospitals and police departments dealing with gun violence. Do you think gun manufacturers should be held responsible for these costs, or not?

	4/19
Should be held responsible	21%
Should not be held responsible	70
Don't know	8

The federal government requires background checks for most gun purchases. Do you think these background checks help reduce the number of crimes committed with guns, or not?

	4/19
Helps	52%
Doesn't help	42
Don't know	5

Does anyone in your household own a gun?

	4/19
Yes	44%
No	55
Declined to answer	1

Which one of the following measures do you think would be the most effective way to stop violence in schools?

	5/2
Reducing violence in TV shows and movies	27%
Putting metal detectors in schools	23
Increasing counseling for teens	21
Passing stricter gun laws	10
Restricting Internet content	9
None of the above	7
Don't know	4

Thinking about the shootings last week at a Colorado high school, please tell me which one of these do you think is most to blame?

	5/2
The boys' parents	39%
Availability of guns	24
Television and movies	14
The Internet	8
School officials	4
None of the above	6
Don't know	4

CBS NEWS

Conducted 8/15/99; surveyed 736 adults; margin of error +/- 3% (Release, 8/16). [Click here to see entire national poll.](#)

/ What do you think is the main reason why events like these happen?

All GOP Dem Ind

✓ Lack of parental supervision	27%	26%	31%	25%
* Guns/Lack of gun control	12	9	17	10
Lack of religion/moral values	9	17	5	8
Shooters had problems	9	7	10	8
Media promotes violence	7	7	6	8
Lack of discipline in school	6	3	5	8
Family breakdown in society	5	5	4	5
Society's fault	5	7	2	6
Hatred between groups	2	1	3	2
* Laws not enforced	2	3	2	1
Other	6	7	3	8
DK/NA	10	8	12	11

Is there any ONE thing that you think could prevent events like these from happening?

✓ Better parenting	All 20%	GOP 19%	Dem 20%	Ind 22%
* Better/Stricter gun control	14	12	19	10
Society having better morals	9	13	7	8
Discipline in schools	6	4	6	8
Better law enforcement	4	6	5	3
Strengthen families	4	6	3	2
Teach people not to hate	2	1	2	3
Clean up movie/TV violence	2	2	2	1
More mental health treatment	2	1	4	1
No/Nothing	22	24	18	26
Other	2	1	2	1
DK/NA	11	9	12	11

Do you think the Second Amendment of the Constitution guarantees all Americans the right to own guns, or does it not necessarily guarantee that?

Yes	All 48%	GOP 59%	Dem 41%	Ind 46%
No	38	30	44	39
DK/NA	14	11	15	15

In general, do you feel the laws covering the sale of hand guns should be made more strict, less strict, or kept as they are now?

* More strict	All 67%	GOP 62%	Dem 74%	Ind 65%
Less strict	5	6	-	8
Kept as they are	23	30	19	21
DK/NA	5	2	7	6

* Do you favor or oppose each of the following?
Requiring gun manufacturers to put trigger locks or safety devices on all guns - do you favor or oppose that?

Favor	All 81%	GOP 75%	Dem 89%	Ind 77%
Oppose	16	21	10	18
DK/NA	3	4	1	5

At gun shows, extending the waiting period between the time a person applies to buy a gun and the time it is sold to them in order to conduct background checks - do you favor or oppose that?

* Favor	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
	85%	81%	88%	85%
Oppose	11	15	8	11
DK/NA	4	4	4	4

Requiring all gun owners to register each firearm with the government - do you favor or oppose that?

Favor	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
	67%	61%	72%	66%
Oppose	30	38	23	29
DK/NA	3	1	5	5

Permitting people to carry a concealed firearm - do you favor or oppose that?

Favor	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
	34%	40%	23%	38%
Oppose	59	53	67	56
DK/NA	7	7	10	6

Requiring a three day waiting period between the time a person applies to buy a handgun and the time it is sold to them - do you favor or oppose that?

Favor	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
	81%	84%	80%	80%
Oppose	16	14	17	18
DK/NA	3	2	3	2

✓ Do you think stricter gun control laws would, or would not reduce violent crime?

Would reduce	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
	46%	42%	53%	43%
Would not reduce	50	54	44	51
DK/NA	4	4	3	6

Do you think Congress will pass stricter gun control laws this year, or not?

Will pass	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
	39%	37%	40%	39%
Will not pass	49	53	48	46
DK/NA	12	10	12	15

Do you think Congress SHOULD pass stricter gun control laws this year, or not?

Should pass	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
	67%	60%	75%	66%
Should not pass	28	38	19	28
DK/NA	5	2	6	6

Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican party or the Democratic party would do a better job of dealing with gun control?

Republican party	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
	29%	55%	10%	25%
* Democratic party	33	11	59	27
Both (vol.)	3	3	2	3

Neither (vol.)	12	13	10	11
DK/NA	23	18	19	34

Do you favor or oppose the nationwide BAN on assault weapons?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Favor	76%	70%	81%	76%
Oppose	21	26	17	20
DK/NA	3	4	2	4

Would you favor or oppose a BAN on the sale of all handguns, except those that are issued to law enforcement officers?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Favor	35%	28%	42%	34%
Oppose	61	68	53	63
DK/NA	4	4	5	3

In your opinion of the National Rifle Association favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about the National Rifle Association to have an opinion?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Favorable	33%	46%	20%	35%
Not favorable	19	17	26	15
Undecided	13	10	11	18
Haven't heard enough	33	25	41	31
Refused	2	2	2	1

If you had to choose, would you say your opinion of the National Rifle Association is favorable or not favorable?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Favorable	48%	60%	38%	48%
Not favorable	37	28	48	34
Refused	2	2	2	1
DK/NA	13	10	12	17

When it comes to gun control, which comes closer to your view? 1. We need stricter gun control laws in this country to limit the availability of guns, or 2. existing gun control laws are sufficient, but they need to be better enforced.

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Need stricter gun control	40%	35%	47%	37%
Need better enforcement	46	61	53	56
DK/NA	4	4	-	7

Do you or does any member of your household own a handgun, rifle, shotgun or any other kind of firearm?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Yes, self	32%	40%	29%	29%
Yes, other	16	17	13	17
No	48	40	54	50
DK/NA	4	3	4	4

* NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll
Peter Hart (D) and Robert Teeter (R)
April 29-May 1, 2000
N=500 registered voters nationwide.

"Which do you think would be more effective in reducing gun violence: passing new restrictions on the sale of handguns, such as requiring trigger locks and registration; or ensuring stricter enforcement of existing laws on gun sales and ownership; or do you feel that both new restrictions and stricter enforcement would be best?"

	%
New restrictions	11
Stricter enforcement	35
Both	45
Neither/Other (vol.)	7
Not sure	2

"If Congress does not pass gun-control legislation this year, who do you think will be most responsible: the Republicans in Congress, the Democrats in Congress, or President Clinton?"

	%
Republicans in Congress	39
Democrats in Congress	11
President Clinton	10
All (vol.)	16
None/Other (vol.)	3
Not sure	21

widening gender gap.

Pew Research Center survey

With hundreds of thousands of mothers poised to march in favor of gun control in Washington, D.C. and cities around the nation on Mother's Day, support for gun restrictions has declined since March, when the public by better than a two-to-one margin (66%-29%) said such restrictions were more important than the rights of gun owners. That margin has narrowed, and now 57% support gun restrictions while 38% back the rights of gun owners.

While Americans are opposed to granting China permanent normal trade status and support development of a missile defense system, there is considerable fluidity in polling numbers on both of these issues. Men and women disagree here as well. Men are more likely to favor building a missile defense system, even if it imperils nuclear arms talks with Russia. Men also think the United States should put economic interests over human rights in determining policies toward China, while women hold the opposite view. (See table.)

More Men Favor Gun Owners' Rights

Since March, most of the movement on gun control has come among men, who now narrowly favor owners' rights over gun control (49%-46%). Men over age 50, in particular, are much more supportive of the rights of gun owners. Fully 55% say those rights are more important than gun control, up from 37% just two months ago. Women of all age groups remain strong supporters of gun control.

The partisan gap on this issue is also substantial. Republicans narrowly choose protecting gun owners' rights over controlling gun ownership (50%-46%). In March, GOP adherents opted for gun control by a 55%-40% margin. Democrats continue to strongly endorse gun control. Two-thirds say (67%) it's more important than protecting owners' rights. Independents come down on the side of gun control, but the percentage supporting owners' rights has increased significantly (41% now, up from 28% in March).

Men With Second Amendment Worries

	-- March 2000 --		-- May 2000 --	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
What's more important? %	%	%	%	%
Gun owners' rights	36	22	49	28
Gun control	59	73	46	67
Don't know	5	5	5	5
	100	100	100	100

Regardless of where they stand on the gun issue, Americans are somewhat dubious about the prospects of major gun legislation this year. Only 14% say it is very likely Congress will pass major new gun control laws this year, another 34% say it is somewhat likely. Nearly half (46%) say it is not too likely or not at all likely that legislation will be enacted.

Supporters of gun control are slightly less optimistic than opponents about the passage of new gun laws. Among those who say gun control is more important than gun owners' rights, 47% believe it is likely there will be new laws this year, while 48% say this is unlikely. Among those who favor gun owners' rights over gun control, 50% say there will likely be new laws, and 43% expect no new laws.

The public has not yet heard much about the Million Mom March. Only 10% have heard a lot, 42% have heard a little, and nearly half (48%) have heard nothing at all. Even among mothers, only 11% have heard a good deal about the march; half have heard at least a little. Roughly one-in-five women (21%) and slightly more mothers (28%) say they would be interested in attending the march. Not surprisingly, those "interested" women overwhelmingly support gun control. Eight-in-ten (81%) say controlling gun ownership is more important than protecting gun owners' rights, this compares with 73% of all moms.



THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER For The People & The Press

[Home](#) | [Online Reports](#) | [Reports By Mail](#) | [More About Us](#) | [Staff Directory](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Gender Gaps on the Candidates, Guns, China and Missile Defense **VOTER PREFERENCES VACILLATE**

- [Other Important Findings and Analyses](#)
- [The Questionnaire and Overall Breakdowns](#)

George W. Bush has repaired some of the damage he endured during the Republican primaries, and is now running dead-even with Al Gore. Since mid-March, Bush has regained substantial support among men and recovered modestly among independents. More voters now than six weeks ago support the Texas governor because of his stand on issues. The vice president continues to get support, albeit diminished, from women, as well as seniors and lower-income voters.

Both candidates get mixed personal image ratings, although Bush fares somewhat better than Gore and decidedly better than Bill Clinton. The Pew Research Center survey finds fewer *personal* criticisms of Bush than just after the GOP primaries. Men find Bush much more personally appealing than Gore. Favorability ratings also show that Americans apparently are not experiencing "Clinton nostalgia." Indeed, the president's favorability scores are near an all-time low. Hillary Clinton's ratings are down as well, especially among men.

These are the findings of two separate Pew Research Center surveys of 2,186 adults, conducted April 24-May 4 and May 2-6, 2000. After trailing Gore by six percentage points in March (43%-49%), Bush has drawn into a statistical tie with the vice president (46%-45%). And while gender is playing a key role in this year's political campaigns, it also is an important factor in many of the current policy debates. Fueled by differences of opinion between men and women, the public is divided over the wisdom of developing a national missile defense system, and gender also plays a role in opinions about the pending China trade debate. There is even a growing division of opinion over gun control that is underscored, again, by a

He Said, She Said

	Men %	Women %
<i>Presidential trial heat ...</i>		
Gore/Lean Gore	43	48
Bush/Lean Bush	50	43
Undecided	7	9
	100	100
<i>Opinion of Hillary Clinton ...</i>		
Favorable	44	54
Unfavorable	48	37
Don't know	8	9
	100	100
<i>More important to ...</i>		
Control guns	46	67
Protect owners' rights	49	28
Don't know	5	5
	100	100
<i>Develop missile defense system even if it jeopardizes nuclear arms negotiations with Russia ...</i>		
Go ahead	45	27
Hold off	49	62
Neither/Don't know	6	11
	100	100
<i>Most important China trade consideration ...</i>		
Human rights	40	44
U.S. economic interests	48	38
Don't know	12	18
	100	100

Other Important Findings and Analyses
The Questionnaire and Overall Breakdowns

[Home](#) | [Online Reports](#) | [Reports By Mail](#) | [More About Us](#) | [Staff Directory](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Maryland

Penn, Schoen & Berland conducted 512 interviews among likely Maryland voters January 25 to February 3, 2000.

The margin of error is plus or minus 4.3% at the 95% confidence level. The findings represent the views of a cross section of Maryland voters as a whole.

Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

		Strongly favor	Total favor / oppose	Gun in home only
1	Mandatory registration of handguns	74	85/14	74/23
2	Expanding the list of people prohibited from purchasing handguns to include those convicted of violent misdemeanors, such as assault and spousal abuse	73	85/14	87/12
3	Requiring potential handgun purchasers to obtain a license from the police in order to purchase a handgun, with a fingerprint-based background check	72	85/15	75/24
4	Requiring potential handgun owners to pass a handgun safety test before they can purchase one	70	88/11	87/12
5	Mandatory gun-safety training before allowing someone to buy a gun of any type	69	86/13	79/21
6	Requiring ballistics fingerprinting of all new guns prior to sale	60	82/15	73/26
7	Mandatory registration of rifles and shotguns	58	70/29	51/48
8	Require that all new handguns sold in Maryland are personalized and child-proof	54	76/23	61/39
9	Making anyone who illegally sells a handgun financially responsible for any damages caused by the handgun	52	71/27	61/36
10	Imposing taxes on the sale of handguns and ammunition to fund the enforcement of handgun laws	51	69/31	51/48
11	Mandatory gun-safety training for anyone who already owns a handgun	50	76/22	63/36

Summary – 3 in 4 Maryland voters want personalized and child-proof guns

More than three-fourths of Maryland voters (76%) favor new legislation which would require that all new handguns sold in Maryland are personalized and child-proof. Less than one-quarter (23%) are opposed.

Among Maryland voters who have a gun at home, 61% favor new legislation which requires that all new handguns be personalized and childproof.

Support for personalized, child-proof handguns important to voters

This proposed personalized, childproof handgun legislation could have a tremendous impact on Marylanders' next vote for the General Assembly. A 20-point advantage for a Democratic candidate becomes a 42-point advantage if the Democrat supports this proposal and the Republican candidate is opposed. A Republican who supports the proposal has a 22-point advantage against a Democrat who is opposed.

Stop gun raffles

Two-thirds of Maryland voters (66%) want to "stop gun raffles because we need fewer guns in our society, not more." Only 29% say, "gun raffles should be permitted because it is one way that groups can raise money for their activities."

Ballistics fingerprinting

More than four-fifths of Maryland voters (82%) favor ballistics fingerprinting of all new guns prior to sale. Only 15% are opposed to this measure. Ballistics fingerprinting is an example of an existing technology which can be employed immediately to help the police catch criminals who use guns.

In fact, among Maryland voters who have a gun at home, nearly three-quarters (73%) favor ballistics fingerprinting while one-quarter (26%) are opposed.

Strong support for licensing

More than four-fifths of Maryland voters (85%) favor requiring potential handgun purchasers to obtain a license from the police in order to purchase a handgun with a fingerprint-based background check. Only 15% are opposed.

Among Maryland voters who have a gun at home, three-quarters (75%) favor requiring police licenses with a fingerprint-based background check while one-quarter (24%) are opposed.

Why Maryland voters favor childproofing, licensing and other handgun measures

Nearly two in three Maryland voters (66%) agree that "more needs to be done to control handguns." Only one-quarter (25%) believe "efforts to control handguns have gone too far."

Nearly three-quarters of Maryland voters (72%) agree that having a handgun in the home increases the chances of somebody, particularly a child, being shot unintentionally.

Licensing handgun purchasers could influence 2000 presidential election in Maryland

Support for licensing could have a huge impact on the 2000 presidential race. If Al Gore supports legislation to require licensing handgun purchasers and George W. Bush is opposed, Gore's 10-point lead widens to a 20-point lead among Maryland voters.

Strong support for gun measures

Every gun measure we tested is favored by more than two-thirds of Maryland voters. Indeed, every gun measure is strongly favored by a majority of Maryland voters.

Even Maryland voters who have guns at home support **all** of the handgun measures tested – most of the proposals tested are supported by more than 70% of Maryland voters with a gun at home.

Having a handgun in the home increases the chances of domestic violence. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?

Strongly agree	36%
Somewhat agree	22%
Somewhat disagree	16%
Strongly disagree	23%
Don't know	2%

Having a handgun in the home increases the chances of someone, particularly a child, being shot unintentionally. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?

Strongly agree	53%
Somewhat agree	19%
Somewhat disagree	11%
Strongly disagree	17%
Don't know	1%

Having a handgun in the home means that its owners always have to worry about it being stolen or misused. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?

Strongly agree	49%
Somewhat agree	16%
Somewhat disagree	13%
Strongly disagree	20%

Don't know 2%

Having a handgun in the home increases the chances of someone, particularly a teenager, committing suicide. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?

Strongly agree	32%
Somewhat agree	23%
Somewhat disagree	18%
Strongly disagree	24%
Don't know	3%

Which is closer to your view: more needs to be done to control handguns in Maryland or efforts to control handguns in Maryland have gone too far?

More needs to be done to control handguns	66%
Efforts to control handguns have gone too far	25%
I am satisfied with the current effort	5%
Don't know	4%

Mandatory registration of handguns.

Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	74%
Somewhat favor	11%
Somewhat oppose	4%
Strongly oppose	10%
Don't know	1%

Mandatory registration of rifles and shotguns

Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	58%
Somewhat favor	12%
Somewhat oppose	9%
Strongly oppose	20%
Don't know	1%

Mandatory gun-safety training before allowing someone to buy a gun of any type.
Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	69%
Somewhat favor	17%
Somewhat oppose	6%
Strongly oppose	7%
Don't know	1%

Mandatory gun-safety training for anyone who already owns a handgun.
Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	50%
Somewhat favor	26%
Somewhat oppose	11%
Strongly oppose	11%
Don't know	2%

Requiring potential handgun purchasers to obtain a license from the police in order to purchase a handgun, with a fingerprint-based background check.
Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	72%
Somewhat favor	13%
Somewhat oppose	6%
Strongly oppose	9%
Don't know	1%

Requiring potential handgun owners to pass a handgun safety test before they can purchase one. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	70%
Somewhat favor	18%
Somewhat oppose	4%
Strongly oppose	7%
Don't know	1%

Imposing taxes on the sale of handguns and ammunition to fund the enforcement of handgun laws. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	51%
Somewhat favor	18%
Somewhat oppose	8%
Strongly oppose	23%
Don't know	1%

Making anyone who illegally sells a handgun financially responsible for any damages caused by the handgun. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	52%
Somewhat favor	19%
Somewhat oppose	10%
Strongly oppose	17%
Don't know	3%

Expanding the list of people prohibited from purchasing handguns to include those convicted of violent misdemeanors, such as assault and spousal abuse. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	73%
Somewhat favor	12%
Somewhat oppose	6%
Strongly oppose	8%
Don't know	1%

Every gun has a unique ballistics pattern, like a fingerprint or DNA. Requiring ballistics fingerprinting of all new guns prior to sale. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose new legislation to provide the following?

Strongly favor	60%
Somewhat favor	22%
Somewhat oppose	7%
Strongly oppose	8%
Don't know	3%

* CNN/Time Poll conducted by Yankelovich Partners.
 July 14-15, 1999.
 N=1,017 adults nationwide. MoE +/- 3.1(total sample).

	ALL	Repub- licans	Indepen- dents	Demo- crats	Gun In Home
	%	%	%	%	%
* "Do you favor or oppose stricter gun control laws?"					
Favor	61	47	59	73	46
Oppose	36	49	39	24	54
Not sure	3	4	2	3	2

"Do you favor or oppose the federal government requiring handgun owners to register each handgun they own with the government?"

Favor	76	66	75	82	64
Oppose	23	32	23	15	34
Not sure	1	2	2	3	2

"Do you favor or oppose the federal government requiring people to get a license in order to legally own a handgun?"

Favor	77	70	76	82	64
Oppose	21	30	22	16	34
Not sure	2	-	2	2	2

* "Do you have more confidence in the Democratic Party or the Republican Party to handle the issue of gun control?"

Democratic Party	41	10	36	71	30
Republican Party	32	72	29	10	41
The same in both (vol.)	3	2	3	2	3
Neither (vol.)	11	8	16	7	15
Not sure	13	8	16	10	11

* "Would you be more likely or less likely to vote for a candidate who favors stricter gun control laws?"

More likely	59	44	56	70	42
Less likely	32	46	35	20	46
Not sure	9	10	9	10	12

"Do you think criminals should lose their rights to a plea bargain when they commit a crime with a gun, or don't you think so?"

Should lose rights	72
Don't think so	21
Not sure	7

Pew Research Center for the People & the Press survey conducted by Princeton Survey Research Assoc.

Latest: May 12-16, 1999.

N=1,179 adults nationwide.

"Would you favor or oppose a law that banned the sale of handguns?"

	5/99 %	12/93 %
Favor	44	45
Oppose	50	51
Don't know/Refused	6	4

"What do you think is more important: to protect the right of Americans to own guns or to control gun ownership?"

	Protect Right To Own Guns %	Control Gun Ownership %
ALL	30	65
Men	42	53
Women	19	75
Whites	32	63
Blacks	17	75
Under 30	26	71
30-49	30	65
50-64	36	59
65 & older	30	61
East	25	70
Midwest	31	65
South	30	64
West	33	60
Republicans	42	53
Democrats	19	76
Independents	33	63

ABC News/Washington Post Poll.

May 16, 1999.

N=761 adults nationwide.

"Which political party, the Democrats or the Republicans, do you trust to do a better job handling the issue of gun control?"

	%
Democrats	39
Republicans	31
Both (vol.)	3
Neither (vol.)	22
No opinion	5

~~X~~ NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll
Peter Hart (D) and Robert Teeter (R)
April 29-May 1, 2000
N=500 registered voters nationwide.

"Which do you think would be more effective in reducing gun violence: passing new restrictions on the sale of handguns, such as requiring trigger locks and registration; or ensuring stricter enforcement of existing laws on gun sales and ownership; or do you feel that both new restrictions and stricter enforcement would be best?"

	%
New restrictions	11
Stricter enforcement	35
Both	45
Neither/Other (vol.)	7
Not sure	2

"If Congress does not pass gun-control legislation this year, who do you think will be most responsible: the Republicans in Congress, the Democrats in Congress, or President Clinton?"

	%
Republicans in Congress	39
Democrats in Congress	11
President Clinton	10
All (vol.)	16
None/Other (vol.)	3
Not sure	21

Zogby International Poll.

March 15-17, 2000.

N=826 likely voters nationwide. MoE +/- 3.6 (total sample).

"Which of the following statements do you agree with?

"Statement A: Wayne LaPierre of the National Rifle Association says that President Clinton actually is willing to accept an increased level of violence so that he can promote an anti-gun agenda, because the President refuses to implement a program that requires mandatory sentencing of criminals who use a gun in a crime.

"Statement B: President Clinton says that, especially with the recent killing of a six-year-old child by a fellow six-year-old, it is time for Congress to strengthen gun control legislation with child-safety trigger locks and waiting periods for gun show sales."

Statement Statement Not

A B Sure
% % %

ALL 27 64 9
Democrats 12 82 6
Republicans 46 41 12
Independents 24 67 9
Men 35 58 8
Women 20 70 10

THE GALLUP ORGANIZATION

PRINCETON

HOME

GALLUP POLL

GALLUP PATH

GALLUP ONLINE

POLL SEARCH

Enter Topic

FIND

 **GO BACK**

TUESDAY BRIEFING

Click Here to Subscribe
to Gallup's Free Weekly
E-mail Service

E-MAIL TO A FRIEND

E-mail This Page to a
Friend

POLL RELEASES

January 20, 2000

Americans Not Convinced that Stricter Enforcement of Current Gun Control Laws is Sufficient to Curb Gun Violence

Democrats More Likely than Republicans to Feel New Laws are Necessary
by **Frank Newport**

GALLUP NEWS SERVICE

PRINCETON, NJ -- President Clinton announced earlier this week that he will seek almost \$300 million from Congress to hire additional Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agents and inspectors to crack down on illegal gun traffickers. The announcement was interpreted as reflecting an administration concession to gun control critics, who have pressed for an increased enforcement of existing laws rather than attempts to pass new gun control legislation. A new Gallup poll, however, shows that by a slight margin, Americans think that new laws, in addition to stricter enforcement of existing laws, will be needed to control gun-related violence -- rather than a sole reliance on enforcement alone.

New Gun Control Laws, Versus Enforcement of Existing Laws

President Clinton's seemingly subtle shift of emphasis this week between new laws and enforcement of existing laws exemplifies a point that has been at the heart of much of the discussion on gun control legislation in recent months and years. Those who are strongly opposed to guns in any form have argued that new laws - including such measures as requiring the registration of all handguns - are necessary, while the NRA and others opposed to gun control have argued that there are enough laws on the books, and that the emphasis should be placed on stricter enforcement.

There is little question that Americans react in strongly positive ways to the idea of new laws aimed at controlling the availability of guns. In December, for example, 60% said that laws concerning guns should be made more strict than they are now, while only 10% said that they should be made less strict. Additionally, in the most recent Gallup poll conducted this past weekend, 73% said that they favored the registration of all handguns. (Interestingly, when this question was first asked in a slightly different form more than 60 years ago, in 1938, 84% said that they favored the idea that "owners of pistols and revolvers should be required to register with the government.") Such new laws as minimum age for handgun possession, trigger guards, banning high-capacity ammunition clips and mandatory sentences for those convicted of crimes using a handgun also receive overwhelming high levels of support from the public.

New Laws Favored Over Increased Enforcement

Still, when asked directly this past weekend to choose between the argument that gun-related violence can be controlled just with stricter enforcement of the current gun laws, or that passing new gun laws is also necessary, the percentage of Americans favoring the "new gun laws necessary" alternative is not as high as the percentage of the public that supports the types of individual gun laws reviewed above. Forty-seven percent choose the "new gun laws" alternative, while 41% choose the

[Politics & Elections](#)
[Business & The Economy](#)
[Social Issues & Policy](#)
[Managing](#)
[Lifestyle](#)
 [POLL SURVEYS](#)
 [POLL ANALYSES](#)
 [POLL TRENDS](#)
 [POLL TOPICS: A-Z](#)
 [SPECIAL REPORT](#)
Setting the Stage
Election 2000
Polls This Century

[Social Audits](#)
[From the Editor](#)
[To the Editor](#)
[FAQ](#)

"stricter enforcement by itself" alternative.

These results suggest that in the aggregate, the public is not strongly supportive of the NRA position - a sole reliance on increased enforcement of existing laws -- as the preferred alternative. Still, the fact that 41% do choose this alternative suggests that the NRA has some support for its position, and that an approach which emphasizes both new laws and better enforcement of existing laws, might be most acceptable to the American population.

Gun Control More Important to Democrats

There are differences by partisan orientation on almost all gun control issues.. Fifty percent of Republicans nationwide say that stricter enforcement would be more effective without having to pass new laws, compared to 37% who favor the "new laws also needed" alternative. Democrats, on the other hand, break the other way, favoring new gun legislation by 58% to 35%. (Independents tilt 47% to new laws, and 39% to stricter enforcement.)

Although gun control issues have already been a point of discussion in early presidential election campaigning this year, the new poll shows that the issue has only mid-range importance to the average voter.

Twenty-five percent of those interviewed say that gun laws will be extremely important to their vote, while another 38% say it will be very important, putting the issue about in the middle of the list of 25 diverse issues tested in the latest Gallup poll. Gun control is more important to Democrats than to Republicans, with 31% of Democrats saying it will be extremely important, compared to just 17% of Republicans.

Survey Methods

The results reported here are based on telephone interviews with a randomly selected national sample of 1,027 adults, 18 years and older, conducted January 13-16, 2000. For results based on the whole sample, one can say with 95 percent confidence that the maximum error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

Would you favor or oppose the registration of all handguns?

	Favor	Oppose	No opinion
2000 Jan 13-16	73%	26	1
1999 Feb 8-9	79%	19	2
1993 Dec	81%	18	1
1991	80%	17	3
1990	81%	17	2
1985	70%	25	5
1982	66%	30	4
1938*	84%	16	--

(*) Question wording: *Do you think all owners of pistols and revolvers should be required to register with the government*

Do you think the amount of gun related violence in America could be significantly reduced by stricter enforcement of the current gun laws, or is it also necessary to pass new gun laws?

	Stricter enforcement of current laws	Necessary to pass new gun laws	OTHER (vol.)	NEITHER (vol.)	No opinion
2000 Jan 13-16	41%	47	2	7	3

In general, do you feel that the laws covering the sale of firearms should be made more strict, less strict, or kept as they are now?

	More strict	Less strict	Kept as now	No opinion
1999 Dec 9-12	60%	10	29	1
1999 Aug 3-4	66%	6	27	1
1999 Jun 25-27	62%	6	31	1
1999 May 23-24	65%	5	28	2
1999 Apr 26-27	66%	7	25	2
1999 Feb 8-9	60%	9	29	2
1995 Apr 23-24**	62%	12	24	2
1993 Dec 17-19	67%	7	25	1
1993 Mar	70%	4	24	2
1991	68%	5	25	2
1990	78%	2	17	3

**asked of half sample

[Home](#) | [Contact](#) | [Employment](#) | [Worldwide Offices](#) | [About Gallup](#) | [Bookstore](#) | [Search](#)

Copyright© 2000 - The Gallup Organization

money spent by hospitals and police departments dealing with gun violence. Do you think gun manufacturers should be held responsible for these costs, or not?

Should be held responsible	4/19
Should not be held responsible	21%
Don't know	70
	8

The federal government requires background checks for most gun purchases. Do you think these background checks help reduce the number of crimes committed with guns, or not?

Helps	4/19
Doesn't help	52%
Don't know	42
	5

Does anyone in your household own a gun?

Yes	4/19
No	44%
Declined to answer	55
	1

Which one of the following measures do you think would be the most effective way to stop violence in schools?

Reducing violence in TV shows and movies	5/2
Putting metal detectors in schools	27%
Increasing counseling for teens	23
Passing stricter gun laws	21
Restricting Internet content	10
None of the above	9
Don't know	7
	4

Thinking about the shootings last week at a Colorado high school, please tell me which one of these do you think is most to blame?

The boys' parents	5/2
Availability of guns	39%
Television and movies	24
The Internet	14
School officials	8
None of the above	4
Don't know	6
	4

CBS NEWS

Conducted 8/15/99; surveyed 736 adults; margin of error +/- 3% (Release, 8/16). [Click here to see entire national poll.](#)

What do you think is the main reason why events like these happen?

All GOP Dem Ind

Lack of parental supervision	27%	26%	31%	25%
* Guns/Lack of gun control	12	9	17	10
Lack of religion/moral values	9	17	5	8
Shooters had problems	9	7	10	8
Media promotes violence	7	7	6	8
Lack of discipline in school	6	3	5	8
Family breakdown in society	5	5	4	5
Society's fault	5	7	2	6
Hatred between groups	2	1	3	2
* Laws not enforced	2	3	2	1
Other	6	7	3	8
DK/NA	10	8	12	11

Is there any ONE thing that you think could prevent events like these from happening?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Better parenting	20%	19%	20%	22%
* Better/Stricter gun control	14	12	19	10
Society having better morals	9	13	7	8
Discipline in schools	6	4	6	8
Better law enforcement	4	6	5	3
Strengthen families	4	6	3	2
Teach people not to hate	2	1	2	3
Clean up movie/TV violence	2	2	2	1
More mental health treatment	2	1	4	1
No/Nothing	22	24	18	26
Other	2	1	2	1
DK/NA	11	9	12	11

Do you think the Second Amendment of the Constitution guarantees all Americans the right to own guns, or does it not necessarily guarantee that?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Yes	48%	59%	41%	46%
No	38	30	44	39
DK/NA	14	11	15	15

In general, do you feel the laws covering the sale of hand guns should be made more strict, less strict, or kept as they are now?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
* More strict	67%	62%	74%	65%
Less strict	5	6	-	8
Kept as they are	23	30	19	21
DK/NA	5	2	7	6

* Do you favor or oppose each of the following?
Requiring gun manufacturers to put trigger locks or safety devices on all guns - do you favor or oppose that?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Favor	81%	75%	89%	77%
Oppose	16	21	10	18
DK/NA	3	4	1	5

At gun shows, extending the waiting period between the time a person applies to buy a gun and the time it is sold to them in order to conduct background checks - do you favor or oppose that?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
* Favor	85%	81%	88%	85%
Oppose	11	15	8	11
DK/NA	4	4	4	4

Requiring all gun owners to register each firearm with the government - do you favor or oppose that?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Favor	67%	61%	72%	66%
Oppose	30	38	23	29
DK/NA	3	1	5	5

Permitting people to carry a concealed firearm - do you favor or oppose that?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Favor	34%	40%	23%	38%
Oppose	59	53	67	56
DK/NA	7	7	10	6

Requiring a three day waiting period between the time a person applies to buy a handgun and the time it is sold to them - do you favor or oppose that?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Favor	81%	84%	80%	80%
Oppose	16	14	17	18
DK/NA	3	2	3	2

Do you think stricter gun control laws would, or would not reduce violent crime?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Would reduce	46%	42%	53%	43%
Would not reduce	50	54	44	51
DK/NA	4	4	3	6

Do you think Congress will pass stricter gun control laws this year, or not?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Will pass	39%	37%	40%	39%
Will not pass	49	53	48	46
DK/NA	12	10	12	15

Do you think Congress SHOULD pass stricter gun control laws this year, or not?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Should pass	67%	60%	75%	66%
Should not pass	28	38	19	28
DK/NA	5	2	6	6

Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican party or the Democratic party would do a better job of dealing with gun control?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Republican party	29%	55%	10%	25%
* Democratic party	33	11	59	27
Both (vol.)	3	3	2	3

Neither (vol.)	12	13	10	11
DK/NA	23	18	19	34

Do you favor or oppose the nationwide BAN on assault weapons?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Favor	76%	70%	81%	76%
Oppose	21	26	17	20
DK/NA	3	4	2	4

Would you favor or oppose a BAN on the sale of all handguns, except those that are issued to law enforcement officers?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Favor	35%	28%	42%	34%
Oppose	61	68	53	63
DK/NA	4	4	5	3

In your opinion of the National Rifle Association favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about the National Rifle Association to have an opinion?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Favorable	33%	46%	20%	35%
Not favorable	19	17	26	15
Undecided	13	10	11	18
Haven't head enough	33	25	41	31
Refused	2	2	2	1

If you had to choose, would you say your opinion of the National Rifle Association is favorable or not favorable?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Favorable	48%	60%	38%	48%
Not favorable	37	28	48	34
Refused	2	2	2	1
DK/NA	13	10	12	17

When it comes to gun control, which comes closer to your view? 1. We need stricter gun control laws in this country to limit the availability of guns, or 2. existing gun control laws are sufficient, but they need to be better enforced.

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Need stricter gun control	40%	35%	47%	37%
Need better enforcement	46	61	53	56
DK/NA	4	4	-	7

Do you or does any member of your household own a handgun, rifle, shotgun or any other kind of firearm?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Yes, self	32%	40%	29%	29%
Yes, other	16	17	13	17
No	48	40	54	50
DK/NA	4	3	4	4

	All	Dem	GOP	Ind	Men	Wom
American	65%	58%	76%	62%	74%	57%
Canadian	31	38	21	35	24	38
D/K	3	4	3	3	2	5

Which of the following do you think is the most likely reason that teenagers will commit crimes against their fellow students?

	All	Dem	GOP	Ind	Men	Wom
Being desensitized to harming human beings by violent video games	10%	10%	8%	13%	7%	12%
Easy access to guns and other weapons	12	17	9	6	10	13
Lack of parental supervision, especially in latch key families	42	38	47	41	50	34
Schools being prohibited from searching and seizing items without parental permission	3	3	3	2	2	3
Violence on TV, in movies, and on records	15	13	15	18	13	17
Not having enough school security	3	2	3	5	3	3
Low self-esteem (vol.)	9	10	6	10	9	8
D/K	8	8	9	6	6	9

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? A woman walking to her car after a night class or shopping should have the right to have a handgun for protection.

	All	Dem	GOP	Ind	Men	Wom
Strongly agree	42%	35%	53%	41%	55%	30%
Somewhat agree	28	28	24	34	27	29
Somewhat disagree	14	15	15	13	9	20
Strongly disagree	13	19	8	12	9	17
D/K	2	3	2	1	-	4

Conducted 2/15-17/99; surveyed 756 likely voters; margin of error +/- 3.7% (release, 3/3). [Click here](#) to see entire national poll.

How often does the organization speak for you?

The National Rifle Association

	All	Men	Wom	Dem	GOP	Ind
All the time	10%	13%	7%	13%	10%	6%
Most of the time	13	17	8	6	17	15
Some of the time	29	32	26	22	40	22
Never	42	34	50	51	27	51
DK	7	4	9	8	6	6