



Legislative Brief

APRIL 18, 2018

HOW DO WE REDUCE MASS KILLINGS?

In 2018 there have been 14 school shootings thus far. In 2017 there were 75. In 2016 there were 80. There were 300 shootings where someone was killed or injured every day in the United States. How are schools trying to protect students from gun violence while at school? Studies show that 95% of schools drill students on violence preparedness. 42% employ school resource officers.

Attention was drawn recently to the senseless killing and wounding of high school students when a former 18 year-old student bought an AR-15 assault rifle and took it to his former school in Parkland, Florida. He began shooting with a large magazine on his rifle, killing 11 students, 3 teachers, and wounding 15 others.

These young people following the massacre made most Americans very proud when they began making plans to speak to a crowd estimated at over 800,000 in Washington D.C. They are very intelligent and knew that the reason Congress and State Legislators were unwilling to consider making changes in our gun laws to protect young students and other citizens who have no guns, is because our legislators receive campaign dollars and support back home from the National Rifle Association. This organization strongly encourages their membership to campaign and vote against any politician that wants to change our gun laws to protect other citizens.

What is more important to hunters and gun-owners having an AR-15 Assault Rifle that is now being used in many massacre killings in places like schools, churches, entertainment spots where many people gather or stopping their executions of innocent children and citizens? The 2nd amendment to our Constitution doesn't allow machine guns and in many respects the AR-15 with a large magazine that has a similar ability to kill many people. Gun violence researchers say that no law can eliminate all risks of mass shootings.

But there are a handful of policies that could reduce the number of people killed when such a shooting occurs and some of these have strong public support. The most effective ones according to criminology researchers would be restricting guns to those found guilty of violent crimes or with mental problems.

“Thus says the Lord: Maintain justice, and do what is right for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed. Happy is the mortal who does this, who keeps the Sabbath, not profaning it, and refrains from doing evil.”

(Isaiah 56: 1-2 NRSV)

**MORE AMERICANS
HAVE DIED FROM GUNS
JUST SINCE 1970 (1.4 M)
THAN IN ALL THE WARS
IN U.S. HISTORY (1.3 M)**

IDENTIFICATION STATEMENT

APRIL 18, 2018

Frequency : Bi-Monthly

Published By:

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Issue:#4-2018

**You are welcome to copy or quote
from the Legislative Brief.
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First, we could require broader background checks for the sale of guns - that includes gun shows and person to person. Then the person must go to a gun dealer and pay a fee for receiving a background check. Experts suggest banning all assault rifles and automatic weapons. They have pointed to the massacre in Las Vegas by Stephen Pollock, who used assault rifles with bump stocks from an open window above a concert below. He fired multiple bullets at a very rapid pace and the victims below had no place to escape. The ending death was 60 with 489 wounded. Another suggestion would be increase the age to purchase a gun from 18 to 21. If all else fails with Congress, we can make an attempt to require the NRA to match the campaign amount given to each Congressman or State Legislator to their personal school system to help pay for a resource officer in their schools. The NRA has already spent \$200 million on campaign dollars to protect their gun factory sales.

Numerous NRA writers have accused the young students of following Democrats when the demand gun law changes. The reality is that these young people have much better judgment than any NRA member who believes that their AR-15 is more important than the lives of any of our grandchildren attending school.

These young citizens may not succeed this year or next, but they are going to see this through and will remember those who refused to stand up to the NRA. Those who were in Congress in 1994 did not attempt to continue the ban on assault rifles and opened the deadly door. Following that there was a 183% increase in gun massacres and 239% in deaths. Meanwhile Australia bought all the Assault rifles and has not had a gun massacre since 1996.

The following are some of the more recent mass shootings in our country:

June 20, 2012 - James Holmes used an AR-15 that killed 12 and wounded 58 in a movie theater in Aurora, Colorado;

Dec. 14, 2012 - Adam Lanza used an AR-15 to kill 27 seven adults and 20 kids, Newtown, Conn.;

June 7, 2013 - John Zawahri used an AR-15 and killed 5 and wounded 3;

June 12, 2016 - Omar Mateen used an AR-15 that killed 49 and wounded 50 in Orlando, Fla.;

Oct. 1, 2017 - Stephen Paddock used an AR-15 that killed 58 and wounded hundreds in Las Vegas;

Nov. 5, 2017 - Devin Kelley used an AR-15 that killed 26, Sutherland Springs Church;

Feb. 19, 2018 - Nikolas Cruz used an AR-15 that killed 17 and wounded 20 in Parkland Fla.

A retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens for 35 years on March 28, 2018 called for the repeal of the 2nd Amendment. "Rarely in my life have I seen the type of civic engagement of school children and their supporters demonstrated in Washington D.C. and other cities throughout the country this past Saturday." (which was March 24, 2018) Stevens, 97 years old wrote in an opinion article in the N Y Times: "These demonstrations demand our respect." Stevens said the Supreme Court curbed the Second Amendment reached during the 20th Century because they feared a national army might pose a threat to states "a relic of the 18th century." Repealing the amendment, Stevens wrote "would eliminate the only legal rule that protects sellers of firearms in the U.S., unlike every other market in the world. It would make our school children safer than they have been since 2008 and honor the memories of the many, indeed far too many, victims of recent gun violence."! †††