

To: Interested Parties

From: Global Strategy Group and Everytown for Gun Safety

Date: May 18, 2020

Re: New poll shows Americans are increasing their call for background checks and disarming domestic abusers amid coronavirus pandemic

In recent years, voters across party lines have increasingly demanded common-sense solutions to reduce gun violence. Even before the coronavirus pandemic took hold of the United States, voters were united in support of stronger gun laws and ready to vote on this issue come November 2020.

Now, a new survey shows **Americans are prioritizing gun violence prevention even more, amid the pandemic.**

Before the pandemic, voters from across the political spectrum were strongly supportive of gun violence prevention policies

Mere months ago, polling showed that voters agreed, we must pass stronger gun laws. A January survey showed that even in traditionally conservative battleground states like Arizona, Iowa, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania, where, collectively, a plurality of voters identify as conservative (29% liberal/39% conservative) and Democrats have only a two-point party identification advantage (45% Democrat/43% Republican), voters:

- support stronger gun laws by a 5:1 margin (53% stronger/10% less strong); and
- broadly agree that it is possible to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and other dangerous people while also protecting the rights of gun owners (65% possible/35% not possible).

Support for specific gun violence prevention policies crosses party lines in battleground states. That same January poll showed that voters across the ideological spectrum all overwhelmingly want their elected officials to pass gun safety legislation.

% total support (strong support) for...	Total	Dem.	Ind.	GOP
Blocking domestic abusers from owning guns	91 (69)	97 (84)	90 (65)	85 (56)
Requiring background checks on all gun sales	86 (70)	97 (90)	86 (66)	76 (50)

Amid coronavirus, Americans feel even more strongly about gun violence prevention policies

Now that the coronavirus pandemic has caused many to stay home, Americans are seeing gun violence in a new light. An estimated 4.2 million guns were sold in March and April – nearly doubling the 2.3 million guns sold during the same time period last year. This continued surge in gun sales is bringing new risks into American homes. Already, [unintentional gun deaths by children](#) have risen 43 percent, and calls to local domestic abuse hotlines are skyrocketing across the country – which is especially troubling since access to a gun in a domestic violence situation makes it five times more likely that the woman will be killed.

Americans say background checks on all gun sales and disarming domestic abusers are even more important amid coronavirus. New polling shows that even before learning about the surge in gun sales, 60 percent of Americans think passing background checks on all gun sales is even more important than it was before the pandemic, while 68 percent of Americans think disarming domestic abusers is more important now, than before the pandemic. This includes more than half of independents and two-thirds of suburban women, who played a crucial role in deciding the 2018 elections and are likely to do so again come November, as well as Americans in presidential battlegrounds (NV, AZ, CO, NM, IA, MN, WI, MI, PA, OH, NH, GA, NC, and FL).

	Overall	Dem.	Ind.	GOP	Gun owners	Suburban women	Presidential battlegrounds
<i>Is it more or less important to <u>require background checks on all gun sales</u> now than it was before the coronavirus outbreak?</i>							
% more important	60	70	55	51	59	59	59
% less important	3	1	5	4	3	1	3
<i>Is it more or less important to <u>pass legislation to keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers</u> now than it was before the coronavirus pandemic?</i>							
% more important	68	75	59	62	66	69	66
% less important	2	1	4	3	2	2	2

Learning about the surge in gun sales only increases this bipartisan push for background checks and disarming domestic abusers. After Americans read about the surge in gun sales (see statement below), the share saying passing background checks and disarming domestic abusers are more important now increases even further: An additional 10 percent of Americans say it's more important to pass background checks now, including 53 percent who say it is much more important to pass background checks now than it was before the outbreak.

	Overall	Dem.	Ind.	GOP	Gun owners	Suburban women	Presidential battlegrounds
<i>Is it more or less important to <u>require background checks on all gun sales</u> now than it was before the coronavirus outbreak?</i>							
% more important	70	82	60	61	68	73	69
% less important	4	4	2	4	4	3	4
<i>Is it more or less important to <u>pass legislation to keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers</u> now than it was before the coronavirus pandemic?</i>							
% more important	72	81	63	65	70	76	72
% less important	4	3	3	4	4	2	4

Candidates who oppose common-sense gun safety laws could be in trouble come November. Americans have been clear: They want background checks on all gun sales and legislation to disarm domestic abusers. And with gun purchases, calls to domestic violence hotlines, and unintentional gun deaths by children on the rise, Americans are even more focused on gun violence prevention than ever before, leaving candidates who oppose stronger gun laws, like background checks and disarming domestic abusers, at risk this November.

ABOUT THESE POLLS

Global Strategy Group conducted an online survey of 1,500 adults nationwide from April 17th to 22nd, 2020. The survey had a confidence interval of +/- 2.5%. This followed an online survey Global Strategy Group conducted of at least 600 likely voters in five states (Arizona, Iowa, Minnesota, North Carolina, Pennsylvania) for a total of 3,185 interviews from January 2nd to 12th, 2020. The survey had a confidence interval of +/- 1.7%.

Appendix

Statement about surge in gun sales: As you may know, the federal government has declared gun stores essential businesses during the coronavirus pandemic, allowing them to stay open and continue sales. And there has been a record number of firearm sales in the month of March, with more than an estimated 2.5 million being sold nationwide. In many states, more than double as many guns were sold as in February, and in some places like Michigan, sales more than tripled.