

2016 Stronger Together Talking Points and FAQ on Gun Safety

September 29, 2016

Core Message

The U.S. mourns about 33,000 gun deaths every year. An overwhelming majority of Massachusetts residents and Americans – including law abiding gun owners – support common sense gun safety measures. Gun ownership is part of the fabric of many law-abiding communities, but as a nation we can no longer allow guns to fall into the hands of violent criminals. It is a rebuke to the families that have lost loved ones, to the communities that are plagued by gun violence, and to this nation that we love.

Massachusetts is a national leader in gun safety. Our state Democratic leaders have fought tirelessly to pass and enforce sensible gun laws. Due to their efforts, Massachusetts has one of the lowest rates of gun related deaths in the country. Massachusetts Democrats will continue to work towards both preventing gun violence and protecting the rights of all Americans.

Hillary Clinton will work to protect and prioritize our communities with sensible gun reform that will drastically lower rates of gun violence without infringing on Second Amendment rights for lawful citizens. She believes that we can—and must—end the epidemic of gun violence.

Donald Trump prioritizes the profit-driven interests of the NRA over the safety of our communities. He has advocated for completely unregulated access to guns and military style weapons, as well as the ability to open carry in all public spaces. He has incited violence through reactive rhetoric, and has even suggested gun violence be used against Hillary Clinton.

Massachusetts Democratic Leadership: U.S. Model for Gun Safety

- Massachusetts Democrats are leaders in gun safety. Our Commonwealth has some of the strongest gun laws in the country.
- Due to our strong laws and low rates of gun ownership, Massachusetts has the third lowest rates of gun-related deaths in the country, proving the effectiveness of gun safety laws.
- Attorney General Maura Healey is working to further protect our community by enforcing the 1998 law banning assault weapons by cracking down on the sale of copycat assault weapons.
- Since her enforcement announcement, Attorney General Healey has noted a drastic decline in assault weapon sales, as well as significant compliance by manufacturers and gun dealers.
- U.S. Representative Katherine Clark is a national leader in advocating for gun safety. She has lead a sit-in in Congress to advocate for a bill that will prevent suspected terrorists from buying guns.

Hillary's Vision for a Safe United States

- Clinton supports keeping military-style assault weapons off our streets.
- She will advocate for comprehensive federal background check legislation.
- Clinton will push Congress to close the "Charleston Loophole" that allows a gun sale to proceed without a completed background check if that check is not complete within three days. This same loophole allowed over 2,500 prohibited gun purchases in 2014.
- Clinton will work to repeal that so-called "Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act," which prevents victims of gun violence from holding negligent manufacturers and dealers accountable for violence perpetrated with their guns.

- She will support legislation to prohibit all domestic abusers from buying and possessing guns, and expand the law to include people in dating relationships or convicted stalkers.
- Clinton will make straw purchasing a federal crime. When an individual with a clean record buys a gun with the intention of giving it to a violent felon – only so that felon can avoid a background check – it should be a crime.
- Clinton will improve existing law prohibiting persons suffering from severe mental illness from purchasing or possessing a gun.

Trump Wants Completely Unregulated Gun Access

- Trump stated in a January debate that there should be no limits on guns under any circumstances.
- He has called gun-free zones “target practice for the sickos and for the mentally ill,” and has suggested abolishing gun-free zones all together.
- Trump has called for civilian policing of neighborhoods, encouraging civilians to take the law in their own hands.
- Trump believes a concealed weapon permit should be valid in all 50 states, comparing it to a driver’s license.
- In addition to encouraging completely unregulated access to guns and military style weapons and open carry in all public spaces, Trump has a pattern of using words that incite violence, and has even suggested gun violence be used against Hillary Clinton.