

GUN LAW TRENDWATCH

2019 YEAR-END REVIEW

In 2019, states led efforts to invest in proven solutions to community violence as legislators expanded focus beyond mass shootings.

Our gun violence epidemic looms so large in public consciousness that parents across the country are afraid to send their children to school. While school shootings are a devastating and uniquely American phenomenon, too little attention is paid to the children in underserved communities whose greatest risk of gun violence isn't in the classroom, but on the walk to and from school.

For years, violence in our cities has been dismissed as inevitable—despite the existence of evidence-based solutions like the ones implemented in Oakland, which helped [cut shootings in half](#) in just six years.

Ignoring this violence is both unconscionable and costly. By investing in programs proven to save lives, cities and states can generate enormous savings for taxpayers. The cities of Boston and Springfield, Massachusetts, saved an estimated \$15 million between 2012 and 2013 by investing \$2 million in

local violence reduction programming. For too long, well-funded group violence intervention programs like the ones in Oakland and Boston were the exception, not the norm.

That started to change in 2019, when a growing number of states invested a record amount of funding for [violence intervention and prevention programs](#). **California, Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Virginia** invested most heavily, directing a total of \$132 million towards local violence reduction efforts. To increase the safety of our cities, states should continue to increase their investment in these proven, evidence-based programs.

Federal politicians are following the courageous lead set by these states by introducing bold legislation and plans to tackle community violence. In October, Senator Cory Booker introduced S. 2671, the Break the Cycle of Violence Act, which would appropriate \$90 million in grant funding to expand local violence reduction programs.

While much of the national conversation about gun violence still disproportionately focuses on mass shootings, 2019 has seen a promising trend among lawmakers to direct attention and resources to the daily gun violence that afflicts our nation's most underserved communities.

1786

FIREARM BILLS
TRACKED IN 2019

2019 STATE GUN LAW VICTORIES

New Lifesaving Gun Laws

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Four states enacted laws that add a background check requirement or improve on an existing background check law: **New Mexico** SB 8, **Nevada** SB 143, **New York** SB 2374 and AB 1213, and **Washington** HB 1465.

BUMP STOCKS & TRIGGER ACTIVATORS

Nevada AB 291, a bill introduced by a Route 91 survivor, and **New York** SB 2448 ban all trigger activators. **District of Columbia** B22-0588 bans bump stocks.

CHILD ACCESS PREVENTION

Four states strengthened laws that help keep unattended guns out of the hands of minors: **California** SB 172, **Connecticut** HB 7218, **Nevada** AB 291, and **New York** SB 2450.

COMMUNITY VIOLENCE REDUCTION PROGRAMS

Nine states increased funding to help scale up evidence-based community gun violence reduction strategies. The largest increases were made in **California** (AB 74 and AB 1603) and **Illinois** (SB 262). Other states that passed such funding include **Connecticut** HB 7424, **Massachusetts** HB 4000, **Nebraska** LB 294, **New York** AB 2003, and **Rhode Island** HB 5151. Both **New Jersey** and **Virginia** directed millions of dollars in federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding to community violence reduction strategies.

DEALER REGULATIONS

Illinois SB 337 comprehensively regulates firearms dealers in the state, requiring dealers to obtain a state license, secure their premises, and conduct background checks on employees, among other things. **California** SB 376 tightens restrictions around firearms dealer licenses.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Six states enacted laws that help keep firearms away from domestic abusers: **Arkansas** HB 1851, **California** AB 164, **Louisiana** HB 279, **New Mexico** SB 328, **Oregon** HB 2013, and **Washington** HB 1225, HB 1517, and HB 1786.

EXTREME RISK PROTECTION ORDERS

Seven states and DC enacted or strengthened measures allowing law enforcement or others to petition for temporary orders removing firearm access from at-risk individuals: **California** AB 12, AB 61, AB 339, and AB 1493; **Colorado** HB 1177; **District of Columbia** B22-0588 and B23-0286; **Hawaii** SB 1466; **Indiana** HB 1651; **Nevada** AB 291; **New York** SB 2451; and **Washington** SB 5027.

GHOST GUNS

Five states passed laws regulating untraceable or undetectable firearms: **California** AB 879, **Connecticut** HB 7219, **New Jersey** SB 3897, **New York** SB 1414, and **Washington** HB 1739.

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KEEP UP ON THE LATEST TRENDS IN STATE FIREARM LEGISLATION AND VIEW PAST ISSUES

GUNS IN SCHOOLS

Wyoming SB 22 increases restrictions on programs allowing staff to carry guns in K–12 schools. **New York** SB 101 prohibits schools from arming teachers.

GUN SAFETY TECHNOLOGY

New Jersey SB 101 requires all firearm dealers to offer at least one personalized handgun once a model is approved by a state commission and listed as eligible for sale.

LOST AND STOLEN REPORTING

Hawaii HB 720 requires gun owners to report the loss or theft of a gun to law enforcement.

PROHIBITED PERSONS

Five states prohibited additional categories of people from purchasing or possessing guns: **California** SB 172, **Indiana** HB 1607, **New Jersey** SB 3897, **Washington** SB 5181 and SB 5205, and **Utah** HB 100.

SAFE STORAGE

California SB 172 requires the Department of Justice to create procedures to regulate the storage of firearms in elderly residential care facilities and **Connecticut** HB 7223 requires safe storage of handguns in unattended vehicles. **Delaware** HB 63 criminalizes reckless or intentional failure to secure a gun when a prohibited person accesses it.

TRAFFICKING

Three states enacted laws that improve efforts to prevent firearms trafficking: **Nevada** AB 272, **New Jersey** AB 4449, and **Tennessee** HB 754.

DEFEATED GUN LOBBY BILLS

In 2019, gun safety advocates prevented gun lobby-backed bills in the below categories from becoming law in 27 states.

PERMITLESS CARRY: Failed in 7 states

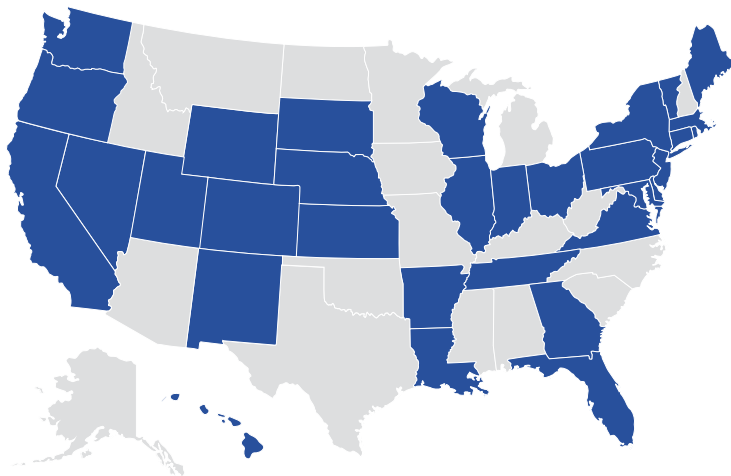
This year, bills to repeal concealed carry permit requirements—a gun lobby priority—failed in **Alabama, Georgia, Iowa, Minnesota, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia**.

GUNS ON CAMPUS: Failed in 15 states

The gun lobby continually attempts to force colleges and universities to allow guns on campus. Campus carry bills failed in **Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming**.

GUNS IN K–12 SCHOOLS: Failed in 19 states

After school shootings, gun lobby-backed legislators predictably call for laws arming teachers and other civilians. This year, bills to allow guns in K–12 schools failed in **Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Washington, and Wyoming**.



**137 GUN SAFETY
BILLS HAVE BEEN
SIGNED INTO LAW IN
32 STATES AND DC
SINCE PARKLAND**

New Gun Lobby Laws

While gun safety advocates made tremendous gains in 2019, the gun lobby continued its push to weaken gun laws. America's gun violence epidemic is fueled by too many guns and too few laws, yet year after year, the gun lobby promotes legislation that expands gun access among individuals at risk of harming themselves or others.

In 2019, gun advocates pushed states to repeal critical laws that require a permit and background check to carry a gun in public and lobbied to recklessly arm teachers. Most of the gun lobby's agenda was thwarted by courageous legislators and advocates, as well as strong public support for gun safety. This progress in the fight to save lives will continue in 2020 and beyond.

WE'RE ON A MISSION TO SAVE LIVES

For over 25 years, the legal experts at Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence have been fighting for a safer America by researching, drafting, and defending the laws, policies, and programs proven to save lives from gun violence. Founded in the wake of a 1993 mass shooting in San Francisco, in 2016 the Law Center joined with former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords to form a courageous new force for gun safety that stretches coast to coast.

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Concealed Carry: Two states weakened laws requiring a permit to carry a concealed weapon: **Tennessee** HB 1264 and **Indiana** HB 1284.

Dangerous Weapons: Three states repealed laws that regulate unusually dangerous weapons and accessories: **Arkansas** SB 400 and HB 1820, **Indiana** SB 119, and **North Dakota** HB 1308.

Guns in Schools: Two states enacted laws aimed at allowing guns in K-12 schools: **Indiana** HB 1284 and **North Dakota** HB 1332. **Florida** SB 7030 expanded the state's "school guardian" program.

Guns in Public: Three states passed laws that allow more guns in public spaces: **Idaho** HB 199, **Texas** SB 535, and **West Virginia** SB 18.

Permitless Carry: Four states enacted or modified laws that would allow people to carry hidden guns in public without a permit: **Idaho** HB 206, **Kentucky** SB 150, **Oklahoma** HB 2597, and **South Dakota** SB 47.

Preemption: Two states further restricted the freedom of local governments to regulate guns: **South Dakota** HB 1056 and **Texas** HB 3231. **Montana** HB 357 puts the issue of preemption on the 2020 ballot.

Other Dangerous Laws: The **Iowa** legislature passed SJR 18, a first step toward putting a constitutional amendment on the 2022 ballot to require courts to use strict scrutiny to review gun laws. **Indiana** HB 1284 expands the state's Stand Your Ground law. **Utah** HB 94 expands the situations in which an intoxicated person can possess a gun in public.

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