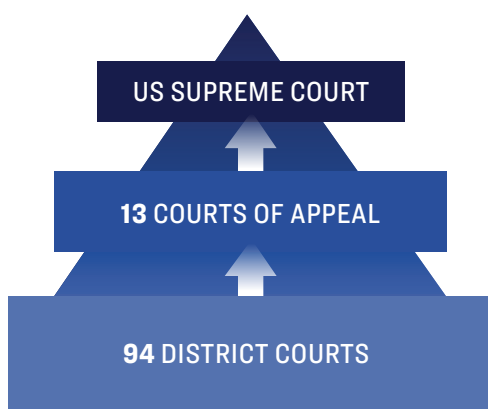


# GUN SAFETY AND THE COURTS

Courts wield a tremendous amount of power over gun safety laws. For years, trial courts, courts of appeal, and even the Supreme Court have affirmed the constitutionality of lifesaving gun laws. More recently, extremist judges have thrown established legal precedent and the progress of the gun safety movement into jeopardy, threatening the safety of all Americans.

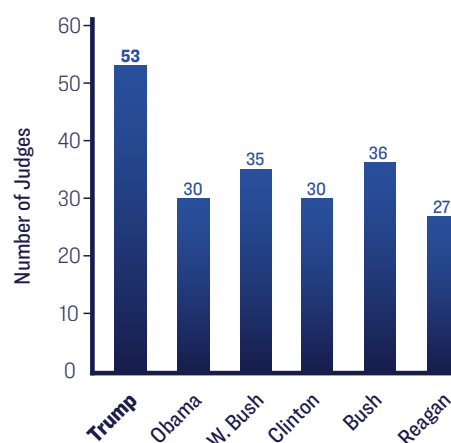
## HOW THE COURTS SHAPE GUN LAWS

A small number of judges can wield an outsized influence. Through opinions reversed on appeal and dissenting opinions, extremist judges on the lower courts can create the building blocks the Supreme Court needs to reshape Second Amendment law.



## A DANGEROUS OUTLIER

President Trump has appointed far more judges to the United States Courts of Appeals than other recent presidents in their first terms. Many of these judges have extremist views of the Second Amendment in line with those of the gun lobby.



## THE ROLE OF THE COURTS: ARGUMENTS FOR ADVOCATES

The gun lobby argues that gun violence prevention laws are incompatible with the Constitution. This is wrong. Gun safety advocates should understand these takeaways about the relationship between the courts and gun safety.

- 1 Gun safety laws are fully compatible with our Constitution.** The Constitution requires that rights be exercised responsibly. The right to bear arms does not trump every other right.
- 2 Gun rights extremism is an historical anomaly.** Gun safety laws are older than the Second Amendment, with more than 100 gun laws enacted between 1700 and 1790 alone. For decades, the NRA supported a wide range of gun safety laws, but in recent years, the organization has become much more extreme.
- 3 Gun safety laws work. Research shows that these laws reduce suicide, homicide, and gun injuries.** They reduce incidents of mass shootings, and they reduce casualties when mass shootings do occur.
- 4 The right to personal safety belongs to all Americans.** A view of self-defense that elevates gun ownership above all other rights—including the right to live—makes everyone less safe.