

# BACKGROUND CHECKS REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE AND SAVE LIVES

Background checks are a systematic way to keep guns out of the wrong hands and save lives. Since enacted they have blocked over 3 million sales to people with felony convictions, domestic abusers, fugitives, and other people prohibited by law from having guns.<sup>1</sup> But under current federal law, background checks are only required on gun sales at licensed dealers. This loophole in the system makes it easy for millions of guns to change hands each year with no

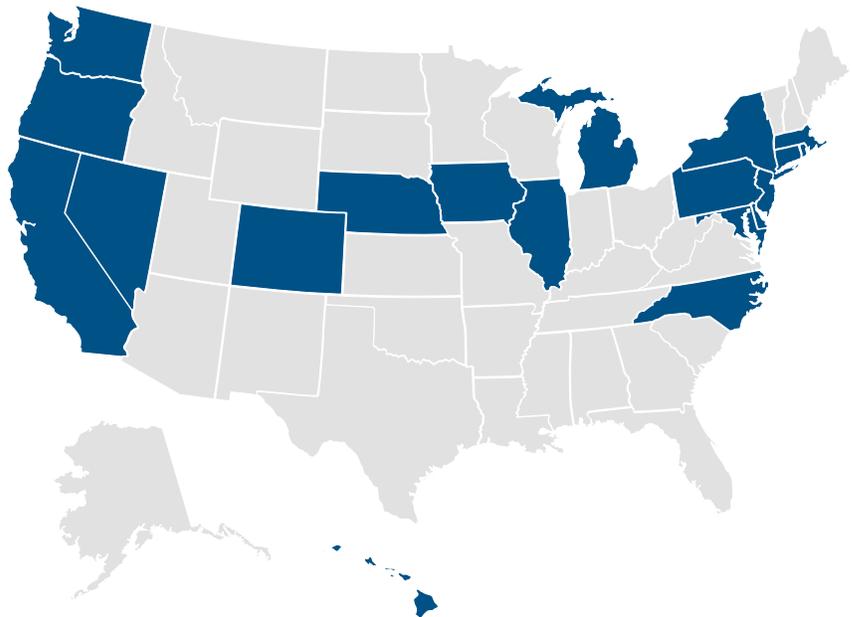
background check, and no questions asked.<sup>2</sup> In fact, an estimated 22 percent of gun transfers take place without a background check—often between strangers who meet online, or at gun shows.<sup>3</sup> Yet states are closing the loophole. As of January 1, 2017, nineteen states and Washington, DC, go beyond federal law by requiring background checks for all handgun sales.<sup>4</sup>

**The background check loophole matters.** Data show that common-sense public safety laws can reduce gun violence and save lives. In states that require background checks for all handgun sales, there are...

**47%**  
fewer women shot to death by intimate partners.<sup>5</sup>

**47%**  
fewer suicides by gun.<sup>6</sup>

**53%**  
fewer law enforcement officers shot and killed in the line of duty.<sup>7</sup>



## REQUIRING A BACKGROUND CHECK FOR EVERY GUN SALE SAVES LIVES.

	Firearm fatality rate: States <b>without</b> comprehensive background checks	Firearm fatality rate: States <b>with</b> comprehensive background checks	Difference
Women shot to death by intimate partners (per 1,000,000 women)	<b>4.77</b>	<b>2.51</b>	<b>-47%</b>
Suicides by gun (per 100,000 residents)	<b>8.41</b>	<b>4.48</b>	<b>-47%</b>
Law enforcement officers shot and killed in the line of duty (per 100,000 officers)	<b>7.38</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>-53%</b>



1. US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Background Checks for Firearm Transfers, 2013-14 - Statistical Tables, by Jennifer C. Varberg, Ronald J. Frandsen, Joseph M. Durst, Trent D. Buskirk, and Allina D. Lee (June 2016), <http://bit.ly/2av5tvL>. Data for 2015 and 2016 were obtained by Everytown from the FBI directly. Though majority of the transactions and denials reported by FBI and BJS are associated with a firearm sale or transfer, a small number may be for concealed carry permits and other reasons not related to a sale or transfer.
2. Miller M, Hepburn L, Azrael D. Firearm Acquisition Without Background Checks: results of a national survey. *Annals of Internal Medicine*.
3. Id.
4. CA, CO, CT, DE, HI, IA, IL, MD, MA, MI, NE, NV, NJ, NY, NC, OR, PA, RI, and WA.
5. Everytown compared the number of women killed with guns by current or former partners between 2010 and 2014 in states that did or did not require background checks for unlicensed handgun sales. Data were obtained from the FBI's Supplementary Homicide Reports and from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.
6. Everytown compared the number of people who committed suicide with guns between 2011 and 2015 in states that did or did not require background checks for unlicensed handgun sales. Data were obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Fatal Injury Reports in December 2016.
7. Everytown compared the number of law enforcement officers feloniously killed in the line of duty with guns that were not their own between 2011 and 2015 in states that did or did not require background checks for unlicensed handgun sales. Data on deaths were obtained from the FBI's Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted database in December 2016. Population data for law enforcement officers ("Police Protection - Persons with Power of Arrest") were taken from the United States Census Bureau.