

Gun Violence Prevention

National Council of Jewish Women works to advance the well-being of children and families.

We believe that:

- All individuals have the right to live in a world of peace.

We endorse and resolve to work for:

- Laws, policies and programs to restrict and regulate firearms and prevent gun violence.
- Laws, policies and programs that protect women and children from gun violence.

To ensure the safety of all Texans, we urge the Legislature to:

- **Support HB 383 (Burnam)**, which would forbid individuals who move to Texas to be able to use concealed handgun licenses issued by other states. Each state differs in their requirements for obtaining a concealed handgun license. A resident of Texas should be required to abide by Texas law, which may be more stringent than laws in other states, and obtaining a Texas license will ensure that the handgun owner is aware of Texas law and is sufficient in handling the gun.
- **Support HB 1030 (Burnam)**, which allows municipalities to regulate gun sales on public property. Unlicensed sales at gun shows do not require background checks. In the absence of laws that require background checks for all sales, allowing a municipality to ban gun shows is one way for the municipality to protect its residents.
- **Oppose HB 47 (Flynn)**, which would reduce the class time required to obtain a concealed handgun license from a mandated 10 hours to "no less than 4 and no more than 6" hours. There is no apparent need to shorten what has been the standard thus far for ensuring that students acquire an understanding of gun laws and usage. For the safety of both the public and for the holder of the license, it is better to have more, rather than less, training.
- **Oppose HB 48 (Flynn)**, which would remove the requirement to take a subsequent renewal course for concealed handgun license holders when renewing their licenses, replacing the course with paperwork to be signed. ^[JR1]Periodic review of laws and ability to use a firearm need to remain a requirement. Since the possession of a handgun could have deadly consequences, a continuing education class for renewal of the license should be required.
- **Oppose SB 182 (Birdwell), HB 706 (Capriliogne), HB 972 (Fletcher), HB 1078 (Kleinschmidt) and any other bill that is filed**, which would allow the carrying of handguns by concealed handgun licensed holders on institutions of higher learning. Introducing guns into a volatile environment where binge drinking and drug use are all too prevalent would dramatically increase the risks of suicide, gun thefts and the number of gun violence victims.

- **Oppose HB 553 (Otto), HB 627 (Krause) and HB 928 (Krause)**, which all attempt in some way to say that any federal intrusion on gun rights is unconstitutional, and would prohibit enforcement of federal gun laws if they in any manner restrict the ownership of firearms or accessories. Stronger gun laws are needed and are best set at the federal level. Texas should not try to overturn laws that work to ensure the safety of all.
- **Oppose HB 700 (Lavender)**, which allows for the open carrying of handguns in public places. Having more guns in public places not only puts more people at risk, it clearly makes people feel less safe. The Second Amendment guarantees a right to possess guns in the home for self-defense, but has never held that the Second Amendment protects the carrying of guns outside the home. The open carrying of firearms in public places is inherently threatening and intimidating, and poses risks to those nearby, to law enforcement and to the community.
- **Oppose HB 1009 (Villalba)**, which allows school districts to have their employees volunteer to be trained as “school marshals.” Children need a healthy and safe environment in their schools, and putting armed guards in the schools is not a good long-term solution to reducing violence. While these school marshals will have more training than required for a concealed handgun license, it will still be over 500 hours less than a Texas peace officer typically receives before being certified. Even trained police officers, on average, hit their intended targets less than 20% of the time. If the marshal works directly with children, the gun would have to be locked in a safe place. Kim Campbell, President of the Utah Education Association, states: "I would be opposed to guns in schools, period. No matter where I would put a gun in a classroom, a class full of little people would find it. And if it were locked up for safety, there would be no chance to get it."

NCJW believes that the nation’s laws and policies should restrict and regulate guns to prevent gun violence. NCJW believes in a multi-pronged response to gun violence that includes stronger guns laws, including passage of a ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazine clips, universal background checks, an effective anti-gun trafficking law and increased mental health services in order to reduce the number of lives cut short and families destroyed by readily available firearms in the hands of violent perpetrators.

Worldwide, the United States is home to 80% of all gun deaths and 87% of all gun deaths of children younger than 15. According to the FBI’s Crime Report for 2011, Texas had 699 firearm-related murders, or 64 percent of all murders in Texas. Women are at a higher risk of homicide victimization than are women in any other high-income country. Women are more likely to be shot by an intimate partner than killed by a stranger. Nationally, 82% of gun owners and 74% of NRA members support background checks on all gun sales (Luntz Global, Aug. 2012). Private sellers are not required by federal law to conduct background checks, and an estimated 40% of all gun sales in this country are private sales.

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