

Gun Violence

- The 9/11/2001 attacks on America killed 3,000. In 2020, there were 45,222 gun-related deaths in the U.S. We experience 15 9/11 attacks every year.
- 54% of the gun deaths in 2020 were suicides. 43% were murders. In Virginia in 2015, 1/3 of murders were by a family member.
- Based on the number of guns in circulation, we don't have more homicides than other developed countries. The difference is we have 3 to 4 times more guns.
- In 2020 and 2021, the Virginia General Assembly enacted major gun violence prevention initiatives:
 - enacted universal background checks by eliminating the “gun show loophole” and extending the wait to 5 days for an FBI background check;
 - brought back ban against purchasing more than one handgun-a-month to reverse Virginia being the source of guns on the streets up the east coast;
 - gave localities, schools, and colleges authority to deal with the public safety issues they face, including gun buy-backs and banning guns;
 - banned guns in state buildings, Capitol Square, and at polling places;
 - made it illegal for a person convicted of domestic violence or under a protective order to possess a firearm and contempt of court to not surrender a firearm to the court or certify it has been sold or transferred within 24 hours;
 - required gun owners to report lost or stolen firearms within 48 hours to law enforcement;
 - made it a jailable offense to recklessly leave loaded, unsecured firearms around minors under the age of 18; and
 - passed a “red flag law” to prohibit a person deemed by a court to be a risk to themselves or others from purchasing, possessing, or transporting a firearm.
- Attempts in 2022 to overturn these bills were not successful.
- The Virginia General Assembly has not been able to come to an agreement on what defines an assault weapon, types of ammunition, magazine size, or use of silencers that are issues of public safety.
- In 2022, we further strengthen school and law enforcement protection requirements put in place following the Virginia Tech massacre.
- Funding and recruiting school mental health personnel for one counselor per 250 students remains critical.