



Durbin applauds proposed executive actions to prevent gun violence

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CHICAGO – Following President Obama’s announcement of a series of executive branch actions to help reduce gun violence, U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) today applauded the President's proposal and said additional action is needed at all levels of government to address the epidemic of gun violence plaguing our nation. The proposed executive actions include: strengthening the background check system; better enforcing

the gun laws on the books; increasing mental health treatment and reporting; and promoting smart gun technology.

“The overwhelming majority of Americans support common sense reforms to our gun laws, but the majority in Congress refuses to pass reforms even to keep guns out of the hands of convicted felons, people who are mentally unstable, and those who are on terrorist watch lists,” Durbin said. “President Obama has a list of things he can do—it won’t solve all these problems by a long shot, but it moves us in the right direction. I appreciate his efforts to do more to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people while ensuring that Second Amendment rights are protected.”

Specifically, the President Obama’s proposed actions include:

- Issuing guidance about when a gun show or online seller is “engaged in the business” of dealing firearms and is thus required to get a federal license and conduct background checks;
- Requiring background checks for people who try to buy guns through a corporation or trust;
- Requiring better reporting of lost or stolen guns when they are shipped by a gun seller;
- Ensuring that more federal and state agencies submit records about mentally unstable people;
- Sponsoring federal research into “smart” gun safety technology.

In 2015, there were 2,939 shooting victims in Chicago – an increase of about 13 percent over 2014. Chicago also experienced the highest number of homicides in the city since 2012 – the vast majority of which were shootings.

Nationally, on average 297 people are shot every day. And 89 of those shootings are fatal. Around 32,000 Americans are dying every year from gunfire. In 2015 there were at least 63 incidents where a gun was fired in a school or college.

Nearly 90 percent of Americans agree that a background check should be conducted before a gun is sold. Background checks help make sure that the buyer isn’t a felon, a domestic violence abuser, a person with a history of mental instability, or otherwise prohibited from buying a gun.

The background check system has blocked over 2 million gun sales to prohibited purchasers over the years. But there are still loopholes that allow many sales to take place without background checks, especially at gun shows and over the internet.

“The President is putting forth guidance that makes clear that you can be “engaged in the business” of selling firearms even if you aren’t a storefront operation. And if you’re engaged in this business, you need to get a license and conduct background checks - or else you’re breaking the law,” Durbin said. “It will still take an act of Congress to close the gun show and internet loopholes once and for all and to require background checks for all commercial gun sales nationwide.”