

# Illinois House Hearing Addresses Violent Crime And Possible Prevention Measures

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(The Center Square) – With crime stories dominating the headlines daily in Illinois, the bipartisan House Public Safety and Violence Prevention Task Force convened Thursday to discuss ways to address gun violence.

The task force brought together lawmakers, prosecutors, and a licensed gun dealer to come up with possible solutions to deadly shootings occurring around the state.

“We all agree that we have a problem in Illinois and that problem is people are dying from preventable deaths due to violence,” state Rep. LaShawn Ford, D-Chicago, the chair of the task force, said.

Scott Pulaski owns the gun store Piasa Armory in Alton. He was asked what laws could be added to the books to prevent crime. Pulaski said enforcing current law should be the priority.

“Those who may be arrested for committing gun crimes but wind up back out on the street and may face a plea bargain or just be released with charges dropped doesn’t do anything to deter crime,” Pulaski said.

Legislation is being introduced that would ban assault weapons by backing new restrictions and registration requirements for military-style weapons. State Rep. Joyce Mason, D-Gurnee, is sponsoring [House Bill 5522](#), which would ban new assault rifle sales, .50 caliber weapons and high-capacity magazines, and require registration of currently owned assault rifles.

“There is no reason why anyone needs to own weapons of war like the ones used by the Highland Park shooter,” Mason said.

One program that Illinois authorities are using to trace illegal guns used in crimes is the online Crime Gun Connect platform. Officials said the portal contains over 100,000 crime-gun trace records from about 200 law enforcement agencies in Illinois dating back to 2009. Adam Braun, executive deputy from the State Attorney General's Office, said the resource is useful in fighting crime.

“It is an instrumental tool in solving individual investigations, but it also helps identify broader trends and helps law enforcement see what is happening in neighboring jurisdictions,” Braun said.

Polls show crime is on the minds of voters before the election in November. The issue dominated the gubernatorial primary campaign and debates.

Lawmakers agree crime is not unique to Chicago. According to FBI crime statistics, the three most dangerous cities in Illinois per capita are Rockford, Springfield and Aurora.