



NORTH CAROLINIANS AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE

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Legislative Agenda 2009

Child Safety and Protection

Approximately one North Carolina child is killed by a firearm each week and an estimated three more are injured. Over 3/4 of firearms incidents with children will occur in the home or the home of a friend or relative, and 85% of youth suicide firearm deaths are committed with the gun of a family member.

1) **Improve North Carolina Safe Storage Law:** North Carolina's current Safe Storage law (G.S. 14-315.1.) provides no clear standards for safe firearm storage, nor does it apply the law to the home of all gun owners or provide protection to gun owners who store their weapons safely. Strengthening the current law will directly contribute to reducing youth access to firearms which will then reduce accidental shootings, guns on school campuses, school shootings and suicide by firearm attempts.

Youth Violence and Gang Violence Prevention

1) **Pass Anti-School Violence Legislation:** Bullying that goes unaddressed contributes to more severe violence, and is typically the catalyst for school shootings. The U.S. Secret Service has documented that a history of bullying was a factor in most school shootings in recent years. Studies have shown that school violence can be reduced by adopting strong, clear policies against bullying and harassment for all students. Students are often targeted based on their race, religion, disability status, and sexual orientation, among other reasons; legislation must specifically protect these students.

2) **Adequately Fund Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils:** About 25,000 children are served annually by JCPC-funded programs, but funding for local juvenile delinquency prevention services is currently less than the \$23.3m allocated in 2002. Additional funding is needed to keep up with inflation, meet the need for services, allow JCPCs to better monitor and support local programs, and to update the state funding formula. With the rise in youth gangs and youth crime in our communities and schools, properly funded JCPC's are vital to curbing youth injuries and deaths due to gun violence.

Illegal Arms Trafficking

North Carolina has one of the most severe gun trafficking problems in the nation and it has grown worse; the state has gone from being the 7th to the 5th largest supplier of handguns used in crime across the country. NC is an integral part of the "iron pipeline" that sends illegal crime guns to places like New York City in exchange for drugs that come back to our community. In our state, over half of the guns used in crime were acquired illegally. There are four major gun trafficking channels that supply criminals: 1) stolen guns; 2) illegal sales by corrupt licensed dealers; 3) "straw purchases" - purchases made by those who can pass a background check who in turn give or sell the gun(s) to criminals; 4) private sales - sales made by private individuals who are not licensed dealers, and who do not have to conduct a background check to sell guns. NCGV supports legislation that reduces the number of illegal firearms purchased in this state, including limiting bulk weapon purchases and requiring background checks from all vendors at gun shows.

Neighborhood and Public Safety

1) **Clarify the language of the Sport Shooting Range Protection Act:** Clarification is need in the current law regulating shooting ranges to allow for public safety concerns to be considered when evaluating the status of existing public and private shooting ranges. The current law provides no protection for communities from accidental gunfire and unsafe conditions for ranges which have been "grandfathered in" and are typically considered immune to municipal ordinances restricting gun fire. No current state standards exist to evaluate the safety standards of a shooting range.