



A CRIMINAL'S BEST SHOT AT GETTING A GUN...  
NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE OR WHAT YOU'VE DONE.

# THE BRADY CAMPAIGN STATE SCORECARD

MARCH 2015

State gun laws are heavy drivers of gun violence prevention policy in this country, helping to keep guns out of the hands of prohibited and dangerous people and make our neighborhoods and communities safer. This is because the majority of gun laws enacted in America happen in statehouses across the country, not in the halls of Congress where recent gun reform efforts have stalled since the United States Senate failed to expand Brady background checks on gun sales in April 2013.

**Brady Campaign**  
  
To Prevent Gun Violence

The logo graphic consists of two blue stars on the left, followed by a stylized blue wavy line that resembles a ribbon or a banner.

Since 2013, the momentum for strong and effective gun laws has been at the state level. According to the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, **37 states have passed an unprecedented 99 laws strengthening gun regulations.** Ten states have enacted major overhauls including five states that have expanded background checks to all gun sales.

Gun laws at the state level play a role filling the massive gaps caused by the minimal federal gun laws in the nation. But the result is a patchwork of policies and protections that differ significantly between states. Cross over state lines into a neighboring state and the laws that govern background checks and who can carry a gun and where can look drastically different.

For example, law enforcement officials in California have full discretion when deciding who lawfully is able to carry a gun, while neighboring state Arizona allows its residents to carry a loaded hidden gun without a permit, allows non-residents to get a carry permit through the mail, and does not have expanded background check laws to cover all gun sales. Given these discrepancies in state laws, the Brady Campaign evaluated the laws across all 50 states, ranking them based on a series of 33 gun policies, the state gun death rate, and state crime gun export rate. States can receive a maximum of 100 points.

This scorecard looks at laws that keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people, laws that help stop the supply of crime guns to the streets, and statistics illustrating how individual states contribute to making our national gun violence problem worse.

What this analysis reveals is that many states in America make it far too easy for criminals and

other dangerous people to get guns. Whether it is buying guns, carrying guns, or trafficking guns across state lines, weak guns laws in states, like Arizona, Florida, Wyoming, and Alaska are putting guns in the hands of prohibited purchasers and putting people at risk. States with weak gun laws do not have policies that help secure firearms from domestic abusers, do not require individuals to report lost or stolen guns – as way to curb gun trafficking – and have no penalties to limit straw purchasing.

The good news is that not all states are gun-friendly places for criminals and dangerous people. This scorecard also illustrates how some states continue leading the way on gun violence prevention policies.

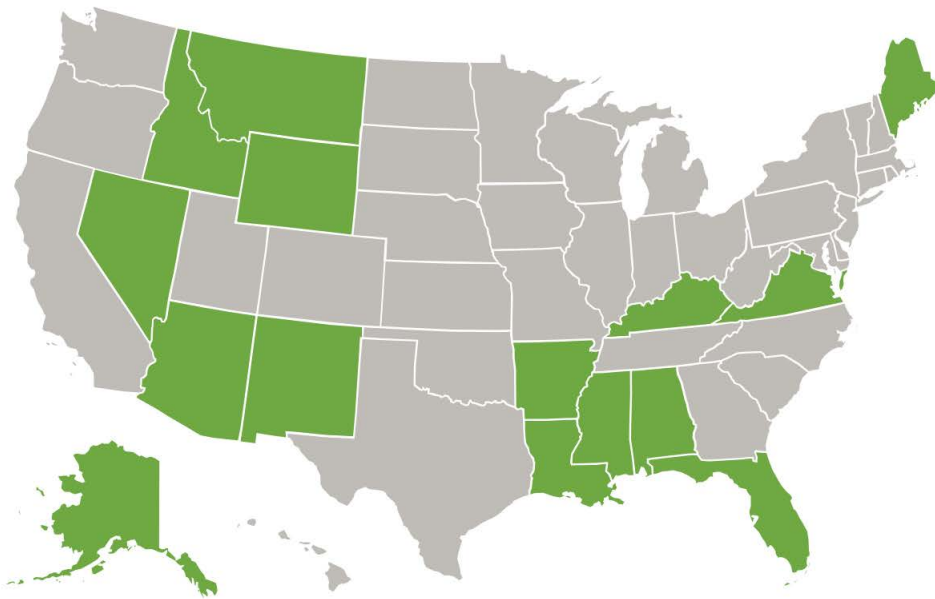
Last year, California passed a “Gun Violence Restraining Order” law to provide new legal tools for families and law enforcement to secure guns from individuals who posed a danger to themselves or others.

Five states – Washington, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, and New York – have expanded Brady background checks to all gun sales since the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings in December 2012. This means that 1 in 3 Americans now live in states that protect them with expanded background checks. Very soon, the state legislature in Oregon will consider legislation to become the sixth state since 2013 and the eighth state overall to expand background checks on all gun sales.

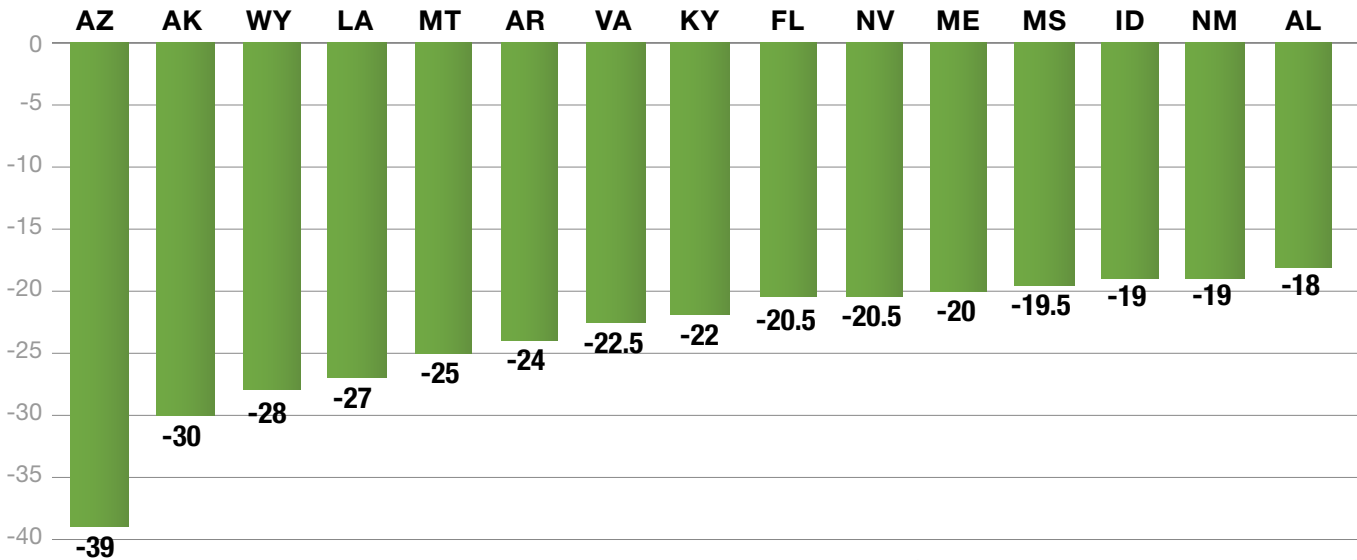
With Congress refusing to act on commonsense solutions, it is critical for all states to lead the charge and pass laws that do more to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and dangerous people, and save lives.

# TOP 15 CRIMINALS' CHOICE STATES

These are the 15 states with the loosest gun laws in the nation making them the best locations for criminals and other dangerous people to easily get guns.



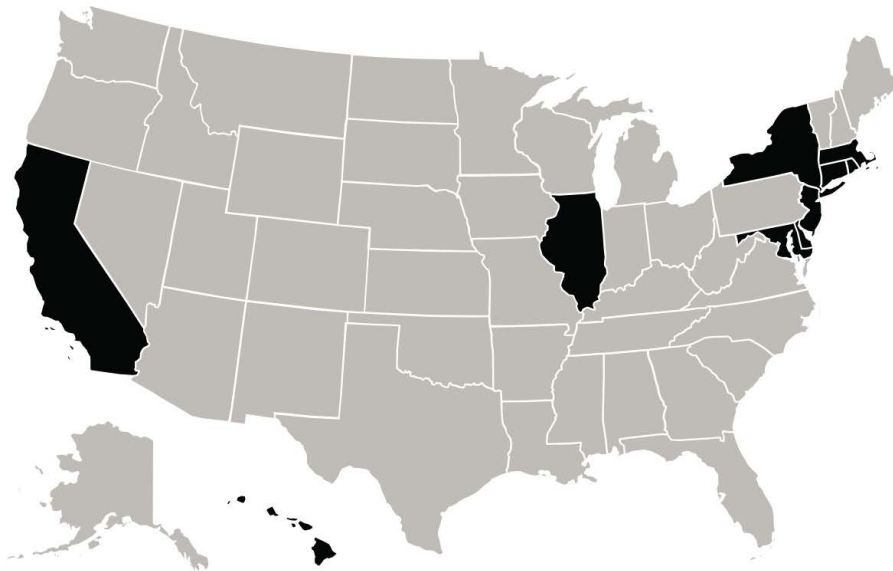
1. Arizona
2. Alaska
3. Wyoming
4. Louisiana
5. Montana
6. Arkansas
7. Virginia
8. Kentucky
9. Florida
10. Nevada
11. Maine
12. Mississippi
13. Idaho
14. New Mexico
15. Alabama



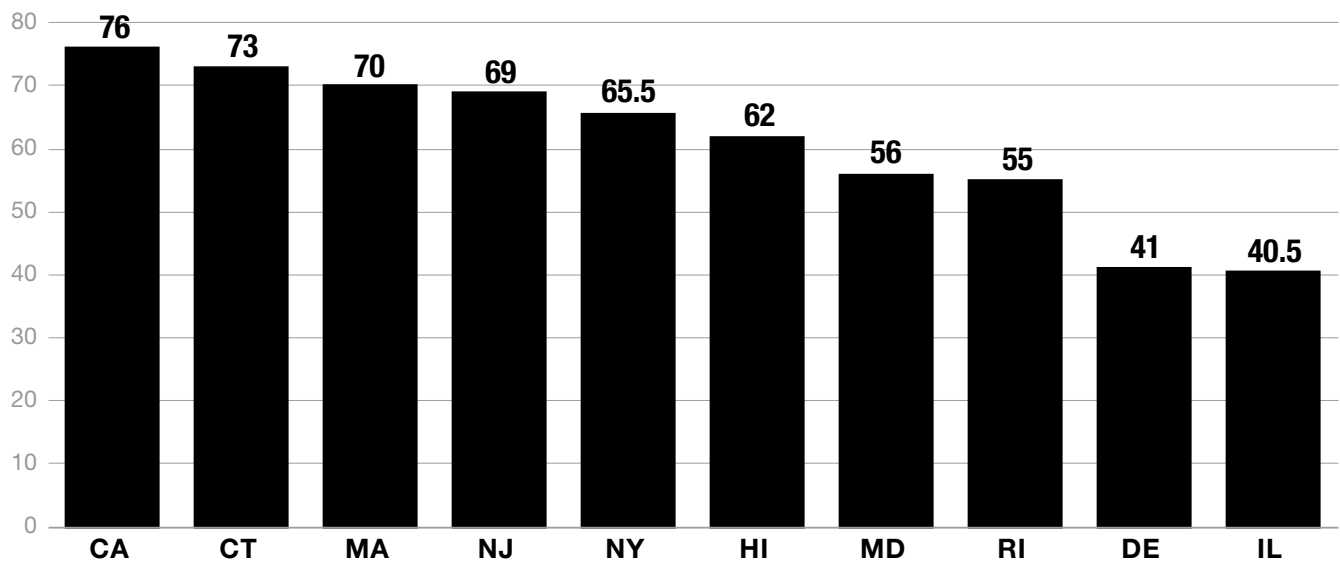
(States can score a maximum of 100 points)

# 10 LEAST FRIENDLY STATES

These are the 10 states in the nation with the strongest gun laws that help keep guns away from criminals and other dangerous people. The laws in these states make it harder for criminals to buy, carry, or traffic guns.



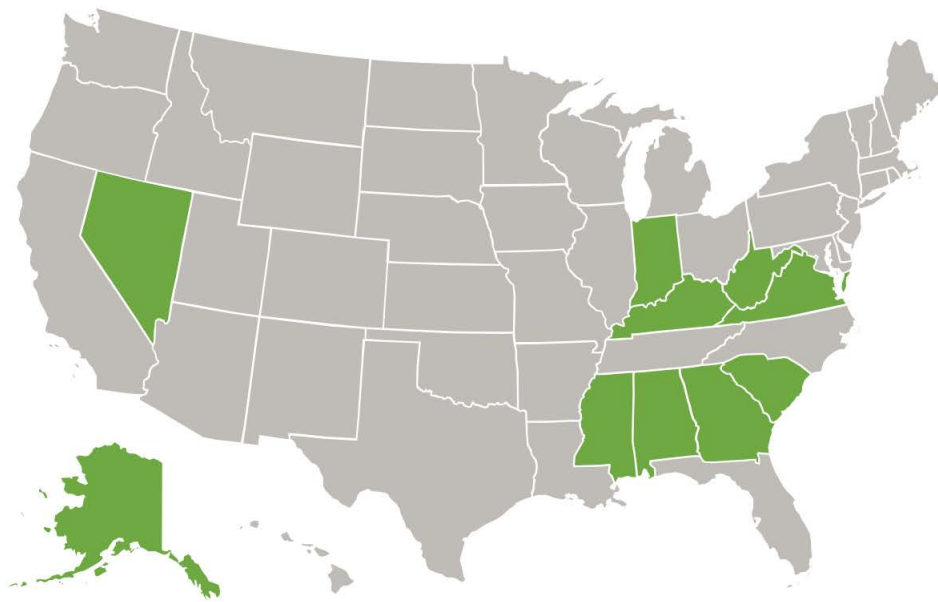
1. California
2. Connecticut
3. Massachusetts
4. New Jersey
5. New York
6. Hawaii
7. Maryland
8. Rhode Island
9. Delaware
10. Illinois



(States can score a maximum of 100 points)

# TRAFFICKERS' TOP 10 STATES

These are the 10 states with the highest crime gun export rates in the country.



1. Mississippi
2. West Virginia
3. Kentucky
4. Alaska
5. Alabama
6. South Carolina
7. Virginia
8. Indiana
9. Nevada
10. Georgia

Trace the Guns: The Link Between Gun Laws and Interstate Gun Trafficking. Mayors Against Illegal Guns. September, 2010.

# 50 STATE RANKINGS AND SCORES

States can receive a maximum of 100 points.

RANKING	STATE	SCORE
1	AZ	-39
2	AK	-30
3	WY	-28
4	LA	-27
5	MT	-25
6	AR	-24
7	VA	-22.5
8	KY	-22
9	FL	-20.5
10	NV	-20.5
11	ME	-20
12	MS	-19.5
13	ID	-19
14	NM	-19
15	AL	-18
16	GA	-18
17	OK	-17
18	VT	-17
19	SC	-16
20	WV	-15
21	IN	-14.5
22	KS	-12
23	TN	-11
24	MO	-9
25	SD	-9

RANKING	STATE	SCORE
26	UT	-8.5
27	NH	-7
28	OH	-5
29	ND	-3
30	TX	-3
31	NC	-2.5
32	OR	0
33	MI	3
34	NE	3
35	WI	6
36	IA	8
37	MN	12.5
38	CO	22
39	PA	23
40	WA	33
41	IL	40.5
42	DE	41
43	RI	55
44	MD	56
45	HI	62
46	NY	65.5
47	NJ	69
48	MA	70
49	CT	73
50	CA	76

# EXPANDED STATE SCORECARD CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

The following provides further descriptions of the policies and laws included in this analysis.

SCORECARD POLICY	DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF SCORECARD POLICY
<b>CATEGORY 1: KEEPING GUNS OUT OF THE HANDS OF DANGEROUS PEOPLE</b>	
<b>BACKGROUND CHECKS TO STOP DANGEROUS PEOPLE FROM BUYING GUNS</b>	
<b>Background Checks on All Gun Sales</b>	Under the federal Brady Law, a background check is required for firearm purchases at Federal Firearm Licensees (FFL). The states that score points here have expanded background checks to all gun sales, including those made online and at gun shows. Sales and transfers are completed with the assistance of FFLs. Exemptions exist for intra-family transfers, hunting and sports shooting.
<b>Background Checks on All Handgun Sales</b>	Under the federal Brady Law, a background check is required for firearm purchases at Federal Firearm Licensees (FFL). The states that score points here have expanded background checks to all handgun sales, including those made online and at gun shows.
<b>Background Checks on All Gun Show Sales</b>	Under the federal Brady Law, a background check is required for firearm purchases at Federal Firearm Licensees (FFL). The states that score points here have expanded background checks to all gun show sales.
<b>Verify Legal Purchase Status</b>	States that score points in this category require the firearm purchaser to get a permit to purchase prior to buying a firearm. Unlicensed sellers must check with state authorities to ensure that the buyer's permit to purchase is valid before selling or transferring the firearm.

## OTHER LAWS TO STOP DANGEROUS PEOPLE FROM BUYING AND CARRYING GUNS

<p><b>Carry Laws That Give Law Enforcement Full Discretion</b></p>	<p>For the purposes of issuing concealed carry permits, these states give full discretion to local or state law enforcement to determine whether the applicant has proper qualifications and cause to carry a concealed, loaded handgun in public. These states are often referred to as “may issue” permitting states. These laws give law enforcement officials the ability to ensure that dangerous people, like those with a history of violence and an arrest record, cannot carry loaded hidden guns in public.</p>
<p><b>Carry Laws That Deprive Law Enforcement of Full Discretion</b></p>	<p>For the purposes of issuing concealed carry permits, these states deprive full discretion to local or state law enforcement to determine whether the applicant has proper qualifications and cause to carry a concealed, loaded handgun in public. These states are often referred to as “shall issue” permitting states. These laws deprive law enforcement officials the ability to deny dangerous people, like those with a history of violence and an arrest record, from carrying loaded hidden guns in public.</p>
<p><b>Carry Laws That Allow Non-Residents From Any State to Obtain Permits by Mail (Must only be a U.S. Citizen, can get permit by mail, not need reciprocal agreement from issuing state.)</b></p>	<p>Some states allow non-residents to obtain permit to carry concealed guns in public. The states in this category make it very easy for anyone in the U.S. to get a non-resident permit, sometimes even if they are turned down in their home state for a gun carry permit. Those states scoring points in this category have the following attributes: allows non-residents to acquire gun carry permits; does not require the applicant to be present in the state to apply for the permit; allows the applicant to receive his or her permit through the mail; and allows anyone in the United States to apply.</p>
<p><b>No Permit or Background Check Required to Carry</b></p>	<p>No permit is required to carry a loaded, hidden gun in public. This means no background check or training is required to carry a gun in public and law enforcement would not be able to determine who is legally carrying a firearm in public.</p>
<p><b>Laws Allowing Law Enforcement to Conduct Thorough Screening For Purchase (Permits-All Firearms)</b></p>	<p>A permit is required to purchase a firearm. This typically means there is a thorough background check on the applicant and that some training is required.</p>



<b>Laws Allowing Law Enforcement to Conduct Thorough Screening For Purchase (Permits-Handguns Only)</b>	A permit is required to purchase a handgun. This typically means there is a thorough background check on the applicant and that some training is required. Some states allow gun carry permit to be used in place of a permit to purchase.
<b>Fingerprints Recognized as Part of Screening</b>	Fingerprints taken to verify applicant and prevent fraud.
<b>Block Dangerous People from Self-Assembled and 3D-Guns</b>	Requires a person making a self-assembled gun to undergo a background check and requires any guns self-assembled to have a serial number.
<b>LAWS TO IDENTIFY CATEGORIES OF PEOPLE WHO ARE DANGEROUS TO THEMSELVES OR OTHERS AND SHOULD NOT HAVE GUNS</b>	
<b>Violent Misdemeanants</b>	Those convicted of a violent misdemeanor are prevented from purchasing or possessing guns for an amount of time.
<b>Violent Juvenile Offenders</b>	Those convicted of a violent offense as a juvenile are prevented from purchasing or possessing guns for an amount of time when they become adults.
<b>Severely Mentally Ill</b>	Prevents the severely mentally ill from purchasing or possessing guns. These laws go beyond the federal prohibition of adjudicated mentally ill by a court.
<b>Drug and Alcohol Abusers</b>	
• <b>Drug Abusers</b>	Those who habitually abuse illegal drugs are barred from purchasing or possessing guns for a period of time.
• <b>Alcohol Abusers</b>	Those who habitually abuse alcohol are barred from purchasing or possessing guns for a period of time. An example of this would be someone with multiple DUI convictions.
<b>Terrorists</b>	Those on the terrorist watch list cannot purchase firearms.
<b>Domestic and Intimate Abusers</b>	Federal law prohibits certain domestic abusers from purchasing or possessing firearms, and states that score points here have expanded the definition of domestic abuse beyond the federal law to include dating partners and family members.
<b>Under 21 Prohibited Handgun Purchase</b>	States that all require handgun buyers to be a least 21 years of age. This applies to both licensed and unlicensed sales.

## LAWS TO SECURE GUNS FROM DANGEROUS PEOPLE

<b>Records of All Guns Purchased Provided to Law Enforcement so Owners Can Be Identified if They Become Prohibited</b>	Records kept at the state level that allow state or local law enforcement to identify those people who become prohibited from possessing guns after they have purchased one.
<b>Secure Guns from Armed and Prohibited People</b>	Program to identify owners of firearms who become prohibited from possessing guns and secure those guns from the owners.
<b>Secure Firearms from Domestic Abusers</b>	State require or authorize a Court to order that the domestic abuser surrenders his firearms and/or ammunition upon the issuance of a temporary restraining order or other adjudication of domestic abuse.
<b>Legal Tools for Family Members to Prevent Gun Violence (Gun Violence Restraining Order)</b>	Legal tools for family members and/or law enforcement to obtain a court order to temporarily secure firearms of person who may be a danger to him/herself or others and in possession of a firearm.

## CATEGORY 2: STOPPING THE SUPPLY OF CRIME GUNS

### LAWS AND POLICIES TO STOP BAD APPLE GUN DEALERS FROM SUPPLYING CRIMINALS WITH GUNS

<b>State Provide Bad Apple Gun Dealers Some Protection for Supplying Crime Guns (Immunity Laws)</b>	State law provides some legal protection for gun manufacturers and/or gun dealers. ("Bad Apple" gun dealers are those dealers who have a disproportionate amount crime guns traced back to their stores.)
<b>State Empowers State Law Enforcement to Shut Down Bad Apple Dealers (Dealer License)</b>	States require a state license to sell firearms. A condition of the license is to permit state or local law enforcement officials to inspect the licensed gun dealers to ensure accountability, which prevents guns from getting into the hands of dangerous people.
<b>All Sales Videotaped to Catch Straw Purchasing and Gun Trafficking"</b>	States requires gun dealers to videotape sales of all firearms, which prevents gun trafficking and gives law enforcement tools to track down straw purchasers.
<b>Dealer Code of Conduct to Require Safe, Responsible Business Practices</b>	Require firearm dealers to follow responsible business practices that will prevent gun traffickers, straw purchasers, and other dangerous people from acquiring their guns.
<b>Verify Gun Store Inventory Through Dealer Records</b>	Require firearm dealers to keep an up to date inventory of guns obtained and sold, and to provide those records to state authorities upon request.

<b>Security Measures to Prevent Gun Theft from Stores</b>	Require firearm dealers to take responsible steps to keep their inventory secured from theft.
<b>Dealers Report Lost and Stolen Weapons from Stores</b>	Require firearm dealers to report to state authorities any lost or stolen weapons within a reasonable timeframe so that law enforcement can track those firearms.
<b>Law Enforcement Inspections of Gun Dealers (Mandatory)</b>	State or local law enforcement will inspect gun dealers to ensure that they are complying with state laws regulating gun dealers.
<b>Law Enforcement Inspections of Gun Dealers (Allows)</b>	State or local law enforcement can inspect gun dealers to ensure that they are complying with state laws regulating gun dealers.
<b>LAWS AND POLICIES TO STOP GUN TRAFFICKERS</b>	
<b>Laws to Prevent Bulk Purchases of Handguns to Potential Traffickers</b>	Laws to prevent the bulk, large-volume purchases of handguns. Preventing bulk purchases makes it very difficult for gun traffickers to acquire enough firearms to effectively run a gun trafficking scheme. The law still allows responsible, law-abiding gun owners to purchase multiple handguns in a single year should they so choose. These laws are typically referred to as “one-handgun-a-month” laws.
<b>Individuals Must Report Lost or Stolen Guns</b>	Gun owners must report lost or stolen guns to police so that law enforcement can track weapons and return them to lawful owners if found. These laws also take away the excuse from gun traffickers that they simply lost, or had their guns stolen, when in reality they sold them on the illegal market.
<b>Make Straw Purchasing Illegal for Straw Buyer (Penalty for Straw Purchasing)</b>	A strong penalty exists for facilitating a straw purchase. A straw purchase is when someone with a clean record buys a gun for someone else, often times the ultimate buyer is prohibited from purchasing or possessing a firearm.
<b>Dealers Required to Report Sales of Multiple Guns to Law Enforcement to Identify Gun Traffickers</b>	Gun dealers are required to report to state authorities large volume sales of guns. This information can help law enforcement determine those individuals who may be involved in gun trafficking schemes.
<b>Require Background Checks on Gun Store Employees</b>	Laws that require a criminal background check prior to working at a gun dealer.

## CATEGORY 3: MAKING OUR NATIONAL GUN VIOLENCE PROBLEM WORSE SOURCES

<p><b>GUN DEATH RATE</b></p>	<p>State Firearm Death Rates, Ranked by Rate, 2013. A Violence Policy Center analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data.</p> <p>Less than 1.0 gun deaths per 100,000 persons.</p>
<p><b>CRIME GUNS EXPORTED PER 100,000 RESIDENTS</b></p>	<p>Trace the Guns: The Link Between Gun Laws and Interstate Gun Trafficking. Mayors Against Illegal Guns, September, 2010.</p> <p>The 2009 national average crime gun export rate (14.1 crime guns per 100,000 inhabitants) is 25% greater than the 2007 national average crime gun export rate reported in The Movement of Illegal Guns in America (11.3 crime guns per 100,000 inhabitants) because that report relied on ATF data that only identified the top-15 source states for crime guns recovered in a particular state. The 2009 crime gun trace data provided by ATF to Mayors Against Illegal Guns included the number of crime gun exports from the bottom-35 source states, which increased the raw total of crime gun exports reported for each state. As a result, the export rate for each state and the national average export rate increased. (Trace the Guns, 2010.)</p>
<p><b>GUN LAWS AND POLICIES</b></p>	<p>Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence's website was the primary source used for determining points awarded for each state. For more information about the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence please visit <a href="http://smartgunlaws.org">smartgunlaws.org</a>.</p>



Watch and share this video at [CrimAdvisor.com](https://www.CrimAdvisor.com).





Brady Campaign



To Prevent Gun Violence

840 First Street, NE, Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20002  
[www.bradycampaign.org](http://www.bradycampaign.org)  
(202) 370-8100