

Against Gun Control

Gun control/regulations of firearms are policies/laws passed to regulate the use, sale, manufacture, modification, possession or transfer firearms by civilians. In most countries, there are strict rules policies concerning possession of firearms by the civilian population. Sometimes, those for legislation, who prefer to use terms like gun safety, gun violence prevention or illegal guns have politicized the term gun control. Guns are categorized into three types, namely, short guns, handguns, and rifles. As of 2014, there was a population of 319 million people in the U.S. with 371 million firearms being owned by either law enforcement agencies or private citizens (Just Facts, n.d.). Of the 14,249 murders committed in the U.S. in 2014, 68% or 9,675 of the killings were committed using firearms. Such statistics have increased pressure for gun control in the country from pro-gun control crusaders. However, guns should not be controlled because the right to bear arms is enshrined in the Constitution through the Second Amendment whereas holding more guns will prevent deaths.

The Second Amendment guarantees citizens the right to bear arms. There have been numerous attempts to have the law amended to limit gun ownership among civilians. In the case of *Columbia v. Heller* in 2008, the Supreme Court in a split decision of 5-4 ruled that it was a constitutional right to bear arms (Phillips, 2015). However, the decision was only applicable to federal laws but not State laws. A later Supreme Court ruling in 2010 included the right in both federal and State laws. Such a case is one of the numerous cases between the pro-gun control movements versus the anti-gun control groups. Some data from States with stricter gun laws show there were fewer gun deaths, once suicides are removed from the

final data, which accounted for over 60% of gun related deaths, half of the top ten states with lowest gun-death rates have little gun restrictions (Phillips, 2015). For instance, Chicago a State with some of the most restrictive gun laws experienced 2,089 shootings and more than 390 murders in 2014. Evidently, the support for not controlling guns by the law is justified.

More guns would prevent more gun deaths. It is hard to know what would have happened if there were more armed citizens in mass shooting situations. Also, shooters tend to choose soft targets where they know people are not armed; therefore, carrying guns acts as a deterrent to attacks. A survey among inmates found out that most would not attack a civilian if they knew he or she was armed (Phillips, 2015). According to former Republican presidential candidate and respected neurosurgeon, if the teachers in the Oregon shooting was trained and carrying a gun; they may have fought the attacker (Phillips, 2015). The majority of Americans including independents are opposed to stricter gun laws. A Pew research in 2014 showed that for the first time in more than two decades, the opinion had shifted and more were in support of gun laws than gun control (Phillips, 2015). On the issue regarding banning assault rifles and high-capacity ammunition magazines, I feel that it is in the interest of national security not to ban them. For instance, if the US was to be attacked by insurgents and they managed to breach all five branches of the military, it would be up to the civilians to fight and having assault rifles would prove useful.

Contrarily, reducing the number of firearms, thorough background checks, and banning of banning assault rifles and high-capacity

ammunition magazines would decrease gun-related deaths. Firstly, although the U.S. has the highest gun ownership rate of 88.8% in the world, the highest firearm homicide rate is here (Phillips, 2015). Secondly, common sense gun reforms such as universal background checks, which even law-abiding gun owners agree on, should be implemented (Phillips, 2015). According to the presidential candidate Hilary Clinton, no one on a terrorist watch list should be allowed to evade background checks or exploit loopholes by purchasing firearms online or in gun shows (Clinton, 2016). If one is too dangerous to board a plane, such an individual should not be allowed to own a gun. Finally, although many Americans are against banning guns for civilians, a high majority also support thorough background checks for potential gun owners. The sentiment is even backed by a majority of members of the National Rifle Association (NRA). A majority of Americans also supports a ban on assault weapons as well as large-capacity ammunition magazines (Phillips, 2015).

Conclusively, although the pro-gun side makes a good argument about the control of guns, especially the fact about thorough background checks, guns should not be controlled. This is because it is a constitutional right that should never be tampered with under any circumstances. Besides, having guns increases the safety of citizens as they can not only defend themselves but also deter criminals from attacking them by not being soft targets. Finally, most Americans are against banning of firearms due to increased concern over their safety, which makes gun control counterproductive. The Second Amendment guarantees the right to bear arms, thereby giving citizens the justification to carry arms.

References

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