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COLORADO GETS 2005 REPORT CARD

Brady Campaign's Annual State Report Cards show Colorado isn't taking right steps to keep guns away from criminals and gets a 'D' for failing to protect kids from the dangers of illegal guns.

For more information, go to:
<http://www.statgunlaws.org/views/tate.php?st=CO>

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE PRESIDENT REAGAN

After being seriously wounded on March 30, 1981, James Brady (Reagan's press secretary) and his wife, Sarah, began their work to prevent firearms from getting into the wrong hands.

Remember, this is a people, not partisan, issue.

Colorado Bill Status

Great legislative victories! The Moms and Colorado Ceasefire are partnering with others to successfully defeat bad bills at the legislature.

HB-1246 would have expanded Colorado's "Make My Day Law" to temporary housing and vehicles. On February 23, the House Judiciary voted to "postpone indefinitely" which killed the bill. Vote was 6-5 with Democrats voting to postpone.

SB-157 would have allowed Concealed Handgun Licensees to forgo background checks at gun shows and in gun stores, weakening Amendment 22. On February 14, the Senate Judiciary voted to "postpone indefinitely". Vote was 5-2 with Senator Mitchell crossing party lines to vote with the Democrats.

Question of the Day

As we went to press, two young girls were shot outside their home in Denver, making the following question so very important!

Why do we continue to put our children at risk to dying from gun violence?

In Chicago, "Firearm homicides are by far the highest and the single largest cause of deaths for African American and Hispanic youth," according to the report by the Children's Memorial Research Center. It examined the number of children from birth to age 19 who were either admitted to trauma centers or who died because of a variety of injuries.

The latest fatalities are Siretha White, 10, and Stakesia Reed, 14. Siretha was killed by gunfire March 11 while at a birthday party at her aunt's home. Stakesia was gunned down March 3 by an assault weapon in her living room while getting ready for school.

Could the answer to our question be an NRA lobbyist's response in the Chicago Tribune to Stakesia's killing, "My reading of this is that you have an individual or individuals bent on murder and mayhem, and the type of firearm they used is irrelevant".

The type of firearm is relevant, responded Thomas Mannard of the Illinois Council Against Gun Violence. "Assault weapons are made for military use and are designed to rapidly spray multiple rounds over a wide area. Police reported that the assault weapon used in the shooting sprayed 29 rounds and hit seven other houses on the block. The fact is that only assault weapons have the ability to fire so many rounds in such a short period of time over a city block".

The federal Assault Weapons Ban was permitted to expire in 2004. It needs to be reinstated and made stronger to keep military style weapons out of our neighborhoods.

Stop Gun Trafficking

The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence has announced a landmark multi-year effort to stem the trafficking of guns from licensed gun dealers into the hands of criminals, kids, and other prohibited purchasers. They plan to do this by strengthening law enforcement tools to crack down on corrupt gun dealers, extending Brady background checks to all gun sales and by stopping large volume gun sales that supply traffickers. They are also supporting the formation of a nationwide coalition of mayors to fight illegal guns. To learn more about this effort, go to www.bradiycampaign.org/action/trafficking/

Why is this important?

The gun that killed Starkesia (see Question of the Day) was illegally purchased on Sept. 13, 2005 at Brandi's gun shop in Camby, Indiana, a suburb southwest of Indianapolis along with the Romanian-made WASR-10 version of the AK-47, the killer also purchased two more Hi-Point pistols--a 9 mm and a .45-caliber, according to sources. Indiana, a state with weak gun laws, is a main supplier of guns used by criminals in Chicago.

Where's Your Head At?

Ever wonder what our elected officials are thinking when they introduce laws? Below are proposed laws that have you scratching your head.

In Wyoming, a Republican Senator a proposed law that would have allowed hunters to carry automatic weapons such as machine guns into the woods and to equip those guns with Godfather-style silencers. But it would still be illegal for hunters to actually use them hunting. Another provision in the law would allow archery hunters to carry guns to protect themselves from grizzly bears. An official with the Wyoming Fish and Game Department said, "We feel pepper spray is more effective. It's easier and safer, and it stops a grizzly bear". The bill was killed.

A bill introduced into the Virginia by a Democratic Representative would have revoked their license or disciplined pediatricians who ask a child's parent about firearms in their home. The legislation was opposed by The Virginia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics because it blocks a common practice of going over a safety checklist during an annual physical. The bill was killed.

A bill introduced in the US House of Representatives by Lamar Smith, a Texas Republican, would make it more difficult for police to track and arrest gun traffickers and dealers who assist them. If this measure had been on the books back in 2002, authorities in Maryland would not have been able to trace the gun used by the D.C. sniper back to a gun store in Washington State. Mayors and police chiefs are against this bill. Action is still pending.

Did You Know?

According to a study released by the Violence Prevention Center, the number of gun dealers in the United States has dropped by 80% in the last ten years from 245,628 to 54,902. The reasons for the decline in gun dealers are linked to three actions: ATF tightened up regulations, the Brady Handgun Violence Protection Act, and the 1994 crime bill which tightened gun regulations.

Provisions in these acts caused the cost of a federal firearms license jumped from \$30 for three years to \$200 for the same duration. Dealers were required to be photographed and fingerprinted, and they had to provide that information to the local police. They also had to comply with local zoning laws and prove they were engaged in the business of selling firearms. These actions have reduced the number of bad gun dealers selling firearms to the criminal market.

But we still have a small percentage of dealers linked to a high percentage of guns traced to crime and the ATF doesn't have the manpower to monitor gun-dealer compliance. This results in less than 5 percent of dealers being inspected every year. To download report: <http://www.vpc.org/studies/dealers.pdf>