

Denver Accord

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE

Presented by GVPedia



The Denver Accord is a comprehensive gun violence prevention platform, led by GVPedia and supported by more than 40 organizations nationally, designed to guide policymakers' efforts to reduce gun violence in the United States. It combines best practices from across the country with evidence-based research to create a comprehensive and effective set of policies and programs intended to stop the scourge of gun violence.

The Denver Accord includes four guiding principles and nine policy positions that, working in conjunction with each other, will stem the epidemic. This is the first in a series of fact sheets outlining those nine policy positions.

There is no single solution to gun violence in America but it is clear that more guns do not make people safer. It is a multifaceted problem that requires a comprehensive solution.

The Denver Accord Part 5: *Reduce Firearm Lethality*

Regulate existing assault firearms and ban the future sale of assault firearms

The military-style features of an assault weapon increase death and injury by enabling a shooter to quickly spray gunfire over a wide area while maintaining control of the firearm.

- Prohibit future sale and transfer of assault style, semi-automatic firearms.
- Grandfather existing assault style, semi-automatic weapons under the National Firearms Act.
- Prohibit open and concealed carrying of semi-automatic and automatic assault weapons.
- Create a federal gun buyback program.

Reduce Ammunition Lethality

- Prohibit specific types of ammunition designed to substantially increase lethality, including armor piercing rounds, hydro-shock rounds, fragmenting rounds, and hollow points.
- Prohibit the manufacture, sale, transfer, or possession of high-capacity magazines (more than ten rounds in a magazine).
- Develop a national ballistic fingerprinting database.

Ban undetectable/untraceable firearms

Guns manufactured privately by 3D printing processes are not controlled by licensed manufacturers and, therefore, are easily made without serial numbers and in the near future could be made without metal, making them untraceable and undetectable.

- Ban gun components from which a firearm without a serial number can be readily manufactured or otherwise assembled.
- Ban 3D printing of guns by unlicensed manufacturers or dealers.
- Ban distribution of gun blueprints for 3D printers.
- Mandate that all firearms must be visible to security screening devices.

Short-Barreled Rifles

- Revise existing National Firearms Act regulations on short-barreled rifles to include bullpup style firearms.
- Develop policy to limit high caliber handguns because of their increased lethality.

Incentivize market development of modern security features, like smart guns, through mandated public spending.

The [2014 study](#) of shootings between 1982 to 2011 also found that state assault weapon bans were effective at reducing mass shooting fatalities, but not injuries.

A [2018 study](#) of civilian active shooter incidents between 2000 and 2017 found that more people were injured and killed when semi-automatic rifles were used compared to other firearms because assault rifles are easy to use, accept large-capacity magazines, and fire [higher-velocity bullets](#).

The federal assault weapon ban was associated with a [25% decrease in mass shooting deaths](#) and a 40% reduction in fatalities over 10 years compared to the previous decade.

In the decade after the ban expired, mass shooting deaths increased by 347%, even as overall violent crime continued to decrease. Furthermore, the average number of fatalities per shooting fell during the assault weapon ban and rose after it expired.

A [2019 study](#) found that more than 85% of public mass shooting fatalities were caused by assault rifles and mass shooting fatalities were 70% less likely to occur during the federal assault weapons ban (1994 through 2004).

Assault rifles are used far more frequently by people who commit mass shootings than non-mass shootings, however, mass shooting fatalities are a very small percentage of overall murders.

Since the federal assault weapons ban expired in 2004, the share of assault rifles and other high-capacity semi-automatic weapons [recovered at crime scenes](#) increased from 33% to 112%.

The share of [crimes involving assault weapons](#) declined between 17% and 72% during the federal assault weapons ban in the following U.S. cities: Anchorage, Baltimore, Boston, Miami, Milwaukee, and St. Louis.

The share of large-capacity magazine firearms recovered by Richmond, VA police increased from 10.4% in 2008-2009, the final two years of the federal assault weapon ban, to [22%](#).

Between 1990 and 2017, [64% of mass shootings](#) involved high-capacity magazines and shootings involving a high-capacity magazine resulted in 62% more fatalities. States without high-capacity magazine bans experienced more than three times as many mass shooting deaths.

One-third of the 2,627 guns recovered by Baltimore, MD police between January 1, 2017 and April 29, 2018 had magazine capacities of more than 10 rounds. A [2019 report](#) by the Police Executive Research Foundation recommended limiting the capacity of ammunition magazines to ten rounds and banning bump stocks.

High-caliber handguns are [more deadly than small-caliber weapons](#). Caliber refers to the size of a bullet's diameter, which affects both the bullet's force and size of the hole it makes in a human body.

A [2018 study](#) found that Boston, MA shooting victims were 2.3 times more likely to die when shot with medium-caliber handguns than small-caliber handguns. If all shooters had used large-caliber handguns, Boston's homicide rate would have increased 43%.

Ghost guns, which are easily made from a kit, are difficult to trace because they lack serial numbers as well as manufacturer or sales records that law enforcement can use to trace them. [3D printed guns](#) present additional challenges because fingerprints are more difficult to recover on plastic guns, the guns lack serial numbers, and the guns lack security exemplars which are used by security metal detectors to reveal hidden firearms.

Ghost guns are increasingly being recovered from crime scenes. Following the November 2019 shooting at Saugus High School in Santa Clarita, California involving a 16-year-old armed with an unregistered and untraceable handgun, the ATF reported that [one-third of all the firearms](#) seized in Southern California are ghost guns.

Developing a comprehensive national ballistic fingerprinting database would reduce gun violence by assisting law enforcement in solving gun crimes. Since 1999, the ATF's National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) has captured more than [3.3 million pieces of ballistic evidence](#) and confirmed more than 111,000 matches to crime guns.

Conclusions:

- By regulating existing military-style assault weapons under the National Firearms Act, the U.S. could prohibit the manufacture, importation, sale, transfer, open carry, and concealed carry of these firearms.
- Despite suffering from significant limitations, the Federal Assault Weapons Ban of 1994 successfully reduced the number of mass shootings and assault weapons diverted for use in crimes until it expired in 2004.
- High-capacity magazine bans reduce the number of mass shootings and the number of people killed in high-fatality mass shootings, in part because lower capacity weapons it provides an opportunity for someone to fight back while the shooter reloads.
- Assault weapons are typically the weapon of choice for public mass shootings and assault pistols with high capacity magazines are increasingly being recovered at crime scenes.
- Unserialized firearms, commonly referred to as ghost guns, circumvent background checks and are much harder to trace when recovered at a crime scene.
- Developing a comprehensive national ballistic fingerprinting database would reduce gun violence by assisting law enforcement in solving gun crimes.

The Four Principles of the Denver Accord

The authors and contributors to the Denver Accord began by drafting principles to which all signatories agree:

1. Guns do not make us safer.
2. Gun violence in America is a pervasive public health crisis that demands substantial policy solutions and well-funded programs that effectively reduce gun violence.
3. Equitable and just enforcement of gun laws is paramount.
4. Everyone has the right to live free from violence.

Guns do not make us safer. Perhaps the most urgent change we must make is to dispel the myth that guns make us safer. A gun in the home TRIPLES the risk of gun suicide and DOUBLES the risk gun homicide. The United States has 393 million firearms in civilian hands and we have the highest rate of assault deaths and mass shootings than any other OECD country.

Gun violence in America is a pervasive public health crisis that demands substantial policy solutions and well-funded programs that effectively reduce gun violence. More than 100 people are shot in American every day. About two-thirds of those deaths are suicide—almost all are preventable. We cannot afford to continue to ignore gun violence and the toll it has taken on our country.

Equitable and just enforcement of gun laws is paramount. Some communities suffer the ill effects of the gun lobby's dangerous "guns everywhere" agenda more than others. Black and Brown communities that also suffer from increased causal factors, like poverty, experience violence at rates that would be unthinkable in other places. In recent years, however, the emergence of impacted community-led non legislative approaches have flourished and preliminary data is encouraging.

Everyone has the right to live free from violence.

Recommended Reading:

[Diving into the Data on Assault Weapons Bans](#)
[People Kill People. But the Bullets Seem to Matter](#)
[Bullet Control](#)



Learn more about the Denver Accord at www.GVPedia.org.

Citations and Studies for the Denver Accord, Part 5: Reducing Firearm Lethality

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