



THE LINK BETWEEN GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND THE HISTORIC DROP IN CRIME

TO: Interested Parties
RE: Public Safety Messaging
DATE: April 2, 2026
FROM: Brady United Against Gun Violence

Everyone in the United States deserves to feel safe in their homes and communities. While we should celebrate the historic drop in violent crime we're experiencing – with 2025 marking potentially the lowest homicide rate in recorded history – we must continue demanding policies that drive these declines.

This memo illustrates how this progress can be attributed to the strengthening of gun violence prevention policies and investments at the state, local, and federal levels, and how recent federal policies threaten progress.

CORE MESSAGE:

Gun crime is falling in America—and that didn't happen by chance. Targeted gun violence prevention policies are helping drive this historic decline. The Trump administration's rollbacks of these policies will reverse this progress and cost lives. The question is simple: Do we build on what's working or roll it back and risk everything?

THE DATA: HISTORIC DROPS IN CRIME

Violent gun crime is going down fast and at scale.

- [2025 could mark](#) the lowest homicide rate since national 1900.
- Murders [dropped](#) nearly 15% in 2024 alone.
- Firearm homicides [are down](#) ~27% since their 2021 peak.
- Gun assaults [declined](#) 22% year-over-year.
- Even major, populated jurisdictions are seeing rare, historically [low homicide levels](#).

REALITY CHECK: THE CRISIS ISN'T OVER

Progress is real—but fragile and uneven.

- Nearly [18,000 people](#) were killed with guns in homicides in 2023.
- Structural inequities and [guns sold by licensed dealers that are trafficked](#) into communities fuel crime and tragedies, and they make gun violence [disproportionately more likely to impact](#) Black and Brown Americans.
- As gun homicides drop, gun-related suicides [increase](#) — reaching a record high in 2023 with death rates increasing [faster](#) for younger than older adults and more for people of color than white people.

WHY CRIME IS DROPPING: POLICIES THAT WORK

These declines are not accidental; they are policy-driven. When we invest in prevention and proven policy, gun violence drops.

The 2021 [American Rescue Plan](#) (ARP) and 2022 [Bipartisan Safer Communities Act](#) (BSCA) largely set the stage for our current gun crime rates. Local and state commitments and actions supercharged federal gun violence prevention efforts and allowed them to be sustained — even when facing future hostile White Houses.

In fact, states and localities made the biggest advancements in policy and investments to secure our historic homicide declines. Where states passed strong gun laws, they had a [70%+ gap](#) in gun death rates to weak gun law states.

Progress is in part due to investment in evidence-based solutions to reduce gun violence, including:

- Resourcing of Black and Brown-led communities' violence intervention (CVI) programs aimed at breaking cycles of violence. Communities with CVI funding saw the largest crime drops.
- Establishing Offices of Gun Violence Prevention in [15 states](#) and at least 36 cities
- Stronger oversight of the gun industry
 - Implementation of ATF's Zero Tolerance policy (now [repealed](#))
 - [Crackdown on ghost guns](#), with major cities seeing recoveries plummet.
 - [Expanded background checks](#) and [closing deadly loopholes](#)
 - State level investment in supply side solutions to preventing gun violence
- Investment in [Extreme Risk Protection Order laws](#) ("red flag" laws)
- Domestic violence protections (closing the "[boyfriend loophole](#)")

BROAD PUBLIC CONSENSUS

This progress reflects shared priorities—not partisan divides.

- [3 in 5 Americans](#) want stricter gun laws that keep people safe
- Americans across political parties, races, and income levels agree:
 - We need to address gun violence.
 - We need accountability for gun crime.
 - We need practical, collaborative solutions that reduce violence.

THE THREAT: POLICY ROLLBACKS UNDER TRUMP

As Trump's gun safety roll backs increase the profits of gun industry CEOs, they also increase access to guns for dangerous individuals and raise crime. The cost of reversal is enormous,

threatening the loss of thousands of lives.

Threats include:

- [Current actions](#) would undo the very [policies](#) driving crime down:
 - Weakening background checks
 - [Defunding](#) community violence intervention programs
 - [Reducing oversight](#) of gun dealers
 - Cutting enforcement against [gun trafficking](#)
 - Restoring gun access to [domestic abusers and violent offenders](#)
- Decreased law enforcement oversight of the gun industry and gun traffickers:
 - Resources [diverted to immigration enforcement](#) and away from [fighting gun crime](#) – despite [immigrants being](#) less likely to commit crime and more likely to work with law enforcement to report crime
 - Fewer gun store inspections, investigations, and prosecutions of gun crime
- Reversing progress could mean:
 - More lives lost
 - Less safe communities
 - Tens of billions of dollars in economic and health costs
- The beneficiaries of rollbacks:
 - [gun industry CEOs](#) whose companies make record profits when murder rates spike as [during the first Trump administration](#)
 - politicians receiving gun industry CEO [contributions](#) and then [block meaningful action](#)

THE PATH FORWARD

We know what works. Now, we must protect and scale it. If the federal government won't step up, states, localities, and gun violence prevention champions must step up to continue our progress.

To sustain and accelerate progress, policymakers at all levels must:

- Invest in community violence intervention
- Pass and enforce gun laws consistently and fairly
- Fully fund and resource gun store oversight and regulation
- Hold gun dealers accountable for negligent and illegal sales
- Keep guns from domestic abusers and violent offenders
- Strengthen background checks and crack down on trafficking and ghost guns
- Regulate and ban weapons of war from our neighborhoods