



U.S Senate

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Topic A: 2020 Elections (Biden vs. Trump).

Topic B: Gun Control.

Committee overview

The U.S Senate is one of the two houses that make up the legislative branch of the U.S government. Designed in 1789 under *The Constitution*, the Senate started as a group of citizens that worked as a team with the President and the House of Representatives. Functioning to protect the rights and opinions of minorities in a system that was ruled to give greater power to the national government. James Madison, paraphrasing Edmund Randolph, explained in his notes that the Senate's role was "first to protect the people against their rulers [and] secondly to protect the people against the transient impressions into which they themselves might be led." (Madison, 1787).

As of now, the Senate shares power with the House of Representatives; together they share responsibility for all law making within the United States. Each senator is elected by the voters of every State. They elect two senators for six-year terms, although the terms of about one-third of the Senate membership expire every two years. The Senate is structured with two senators from each State that serve in the Congress and have two important duties, which consist of conducting impeachment procedures to high federal officers and approving or denying appointments.

In order to become a senator there are certain qualifications to be filled, which are stated in Article I, Section 3 of the U.S. Constitution. A senator must be at least 30 years old, needs to have been a citizen of the United States for at least 9 years, and, when elected, has to be a resident of the State from which they are chosen. In the 1787 Constitutional Convention, delegates proposed religion and property ownership requirements, but they were not adopted. In addition, the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution forbids any person who has taken an oath swearing to support the Constitution, but later betrayed this oath from serving

in the Senate. The requirements for serving in the Senate are more restrictive than those for serving the House of Representatives because Representatives speak for the people of specific geographic districts, while Senators represent all of the people in their states.

In lawmaking, the Senate is a deliberative and a decision-making body, just like any other legislative institution. The law-making procedures are balanced between the opportunity to deliberate or debate and the need to decide. The Senate's standing rules place greater emphasis on the rights of individual Senators, and therefore, of the minorities within the Senate. Senators cannot take full advantage of their rights under the rules since they are in their immediate interests, therefore, the Senate cannot rely on its standing rules exclusively. Because of this, several practices were developed by which Senators set aside some of their prerogatives to expedite the conduct of its business or to accommodate the needs and interests of its Members. The legislative procedures on the Senate floor reflect a balance between the operation of its rules, the principles they embody, and the pragmatic arrangements to expedite the conduct of business.

Quorum

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <u>Arizona- Mark Kelly</u> | 9. <u>Maryland - Chris Van Hollen</u> |
| 2. <u>California- Dianne Feinstein</u> | 10. <u>Massachusetts - Elizabeth Warren</u> |
| 3. <u>Colorado - Michael Bennet</u> | 11. <u>Michigan - Debbie Stabenow</u> |
| 4. <u>Connecticut - Richard Blumenthal</u> | 12. <u>Minnesota - Amy Klobuchar</u> |
| 5. <u>Florida - Marco Rubio</u> | 13. <u>Missouri - Roy Blunt</u> |
| 6. <u>Georgia - Raphael Warnock</u> | 14. <u>Nevada - Catherine Cortez Masto</u> |
| 7. <u>Illinois - Dick Durbin</u> | 15. <u>New Jersey - Cory Booker</u> |
| 8. <u>Indiana - Todd Young</u> | 16. <u>New Mexico - Martin Heinrich</u> |

17. New York - Kirsten Gillibrand

22. Tennessee - Marsha Blackburn

18. North Carolina - Richard Burr

23. Texas - Ted Cruz

19. Ohio - Rob Portman

24. Virginia - Mark Warner

20. Oregon - Ron Wyden

25. Washington - Maria Cantwell

21. Pennsylvania - Bob Casey Jr.

Topic A: 2020 Elections - Biden vs. Trump

1. Brief Information on the Topic

The 2020 elections will be one of the most controversial in history, with a huge relevance in terms of changes and human rights. When Donald Trump defeated Hilary Clinton by 77 electoral votes in the 2016 elections, according to the Paw Research Center (2019) “48% of the voters said that they were unhappy with the results, one of the most commented reasons was the racism that Trump was being accused of. When George Floyd was killed by a policeman in Minnesota without any reason, Trump gave a speech that was criticized by a lot of supporters of the *Black Lives Matter* movement. However, the group of people in favor of *All Lives Matter*, supported the position of Trump, this caused a great division of ideologies in all the country.

In the 2020 elections, Biden and Trump are competing for the presidential position, and this time the elections are expected to be quite different compared to others, this is mainly due to the pandemic and the streak of ideologies of these two candidates and their followers.

“With the coronavirus pandemic expected to impact public life well into the autumn, the 2020 election is likely to go down in history as one of the most unconventional US presidential races ever held.” (Sabur, 2020).

One of the communities that will be most affected by the results will be immigrants. During Trump's time as president, the immigrants's fear of being separated from their families or being deported has increased, this is due to the strict and usually violent system that Trump implemented. On the other hand, Biden has particularly different points of view on this subject, of which he affirms changing several things, such as ending the project of the wall that Trump started.

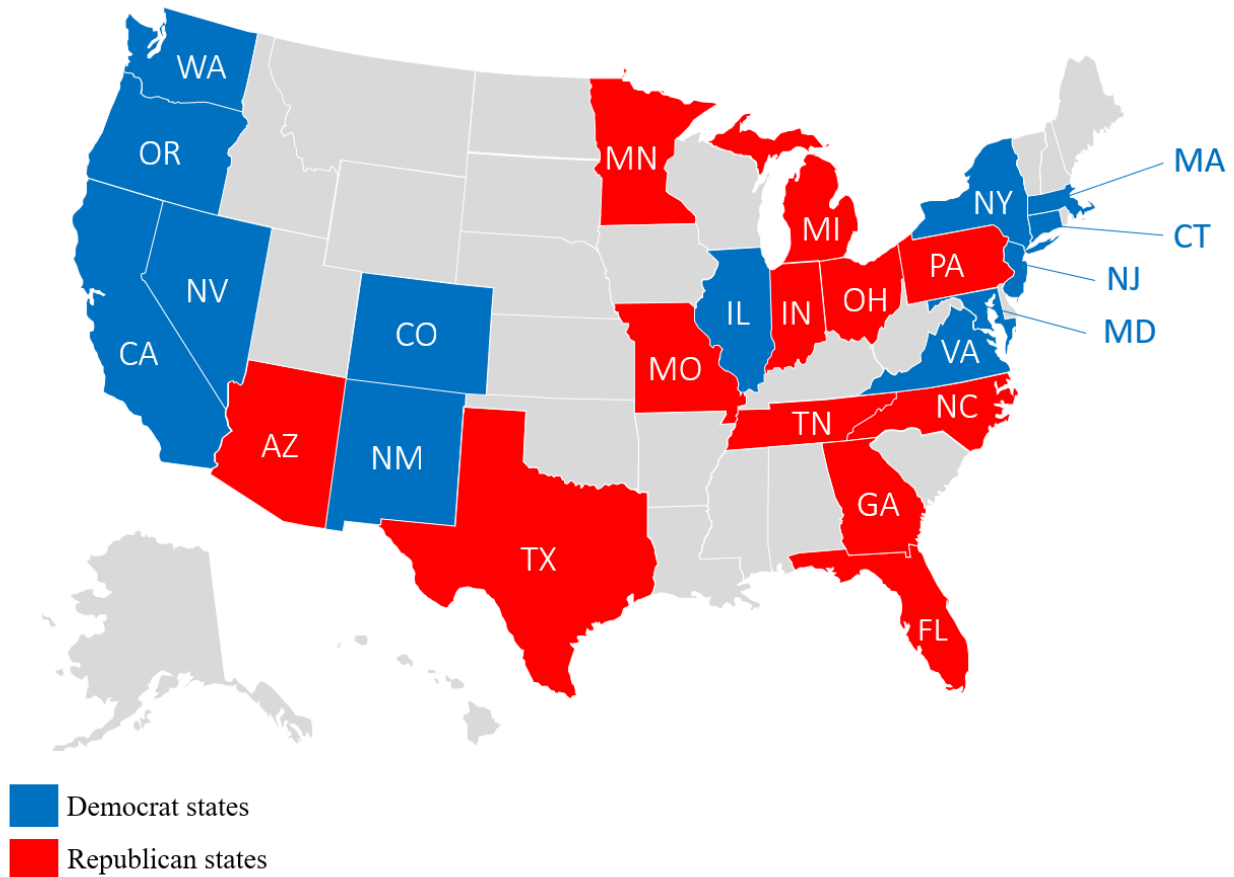
Another important point that people are considering is the fact that Biden was the vice president when Obama was in the presidency. This is causing the people against Obama to not support this candidate because of the similarity. However, one of the principal problems here is that Trump and Biden supporters have totally different goals for their country and ideologies of how to deal with basic human rights.

2. Guiding Questions

- a). How many electoral votes does the delegation have? What is the partisan composition of the delegation?
- b). Which are the candidates' ideologies and how will they influence the United States if elected?
- c). What plans do the candidates have for the US Trade?
- d). What are the candidates' views on immigration?
- e). What have the candidates proposed for public healthcare?
- f). If elected, what will Biden do with the money that will be gained back from withdrawing Trump's tax cuts?
- g). How do the candidates intend to lower the country's impact on climate change? Will Biden rejoin the Paris Climate Accord?
- h). How does each candidate plan to work towards the Sustainable Development Goals?

3. Geographical and Time Frame

States in the quorum and the partisan composition of their state senates:



“The partisan composition of state senates refers to which political party holds the majority of seats in the state senate” (Ballotpedia, n.d.). This map highlights 25 delegations from which the delegates will choose; there are 13 Democrat states and 12 Republican states. The states chosen have the highest electoral votes. For example, California has 55 electoral votes, the highest number out of all 50 states, and is a Democrat state, therefore it is shown in blue.

4. Historical Framework

The presidential campaign this year faces different challenges compared to the one in 2016. The U.S citizens are living in different times, with different needs, worries, and issues heading to

the elections that are to be held November 3, 2020. Some of the events that are yet to be resolved will play a key role on how the elections unfold this year, here are some of these events listed:

- *The Coronavirus Pandemic:* Starting early March of this year, it has represented a big challenge to voters and both presidential parties. Voters fear getting Covid while going out to vote and the solution to this problem was to cast their votes early and by mail. People who have already cast their ballots in are more than 69.5 million Americans which represent half more than the votes casted in the 2016 election.
- *Black Lives Matter protests:* Another challenge that these elections face is the protests against racism which were held all throughout this summer, in response to the brutal murder of George Floyd in the hands of Derek Chauvin, a white police officer, and the way protests change minds and opinions since they have raised awareness of the issues to the voters. “A wave of liberal protesting in a congressional district can increase a Democratic candidate’s vote share by 2% and reduce a GOP candidate’s share by 6%. A wave of conservative protests, like those by the Tea Party in 2010, will on average reduce the Democratic vote share by 2% and increase the Republican share by 6%” (Andrews, 2018).
- *Immigrant voters:* According to the Pew Research Center, this year more than 23 million naturalized Americans are going to be eligible to go out and cast their votes. This number has increased by 193% since 2000. Immigration is also one of the top priorities that the congress and the new President have to resolve, since the policies that have changed with this administration have caused reactions from supporters of the two parties.
- *Mail-in voting:* Mail-in voting was already an option in certain states since before this year, but due to the rise of the Covid cases more and more states have made it available to

vote by mail. During the Covid-19 pandemic states have made new voting laws and procedures for those voting by mail. The support for mail-in voting is bigger on the democrat side rather than the republican side, there is some evidence that Democrats are more likely to vote by mail than Republicans.

- Fake News: Another important factor that is at stake in this election is the regulation of fake news and social media that people and oppositors publish online. Unfortunately people still believe a lot of things that get published. Example of that is the controversy of the 2016 elections in which Hillary Clinton was involved. “Hackers create a fake email account and use it to send spear-phishing emails to more than thirty Clinton staffers, according to investigators. In the emails, the hackers embed a link purporting to direct the recipient to a document titled "hillaryclinton-favorable-rating.xlsx." The link directs the recipients' computers to a website operated by the hackers.” (CNN, 2018).

5. Power Relations and Strategic Alliances

When we talk about the principal actors and the ones that have more influence in the world that are capable of changing 2020 elections' destiny, China and Russia have an important place. The director of US counterintelligence, affirms that these countries were using secret strategies to influence the final decision of the voters. China is against the idea that president Trump will win, and on the other hand, Russia is trying to sabotage Biden.

Iran is also being accused of trying to damage the elections, by spreading fake news and tons of desinformation. It seems like these countries don't want Trump staying in the presidency, owing to the fact that they are scared that the US will continue to oppress Iran in the attempt of

changing the regime. “China, Russia and Iran are among countries seeking to influence the US presidential election this year”. (BBC, 2020).

6. Economic Aspects

The outcome of the elections has always had an impact on the economy of the United States, whichever candidate results as winner, the economy and the commerce will change drastically for the next 4 years. One of the main issues that will play a big role in this election is the recovery from the pandemic. This includes all the jobs lost during the lockdown period, and all the small business owners that are yet to get back on their feet after the closing of markets, malls, shops, etc. Both candidates have mentioned several measurements and proposals. “Trump and the Republicans stand against future shutdowns at all costs. Biden and the Democrats admit closing the economy temporarily could become a necessary evil.” (Van Brimmer, 2020).

Americans' health will also play a big influence in these elections with different proposals and most importantly different points of view between the candidates. “Until a vaccine is made available, the threat of more shutdowns or fear-induced slowdowns as consumers limit activities beyond their homes looms like a summer stormcloud” (VanBrimmer, 2020). American voters are going to be deciding not just the present but the future of how the ongoing pandemic evolves, the candidates have shown not just with their words but by their actions how they see the Covid-19 pandemic to which voters have been already polarized.

7. Legal Aspects

The documents, programs, resolution papers and policies listed down below, are some proclamation during the Covid-19 pandemic, others are in response to the struggles of the

American citizens due to the Covid- 19 pandemic and others are laws and policies that have been around for years giving the elections value and helping preserve the democracy.

1. *Economic Impact Payments*

Starting in March 2020, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) provided Economic Impact Payments of up to \$1,200 per adult for eligible individuals and \$500 per qualifying child under age 17. The payments were reduced for individuals with adjusted gross income (AGI) greater than \$75,000 (\$150,000 for married couples filing a joint return). For a family of four, these Economic Impact Payments provided up to \$3,400 of direct financial relief.

2. *Securing American Elections*

This report was made after the 2016 elections when several Russian bots tried interfering and influencing the election. The report consists of 45 different policies which protect the country from further attacks and detect potential threats by foreign soil. Some of them go through topics like increasing security in the infrastructure, labeling media that is trusted and not biased, regulating online political advertising, establishing international norms to prevent interference. *The Securing American Elections* report is the first white paper published by the Stanford Cyber Policy Center.

3. *Preservation of the democracy*

Terry Moe wrote in his book *Presidents, Populism, and the Crisis of Democracy* some ways to preserve and protect the democracy of the country and some of the points he gave are the following. Making the Department of Justice and intelligence agencies independent of presidential control. One way to accomplish this would be to have them

run by bipartisan multi-member boards, in the same way that the Federal Communications Commission and the Securities and Exchange Commission are. Dramatically restricting presidential appointments and relying more on career civil servants.

8. Sociocultural Aspects

One of the principal factors that affect the decision of the voters is the huge contrast in terms of ideologies, likewise when talking about Republicans and Democrats, a concept that in every election is present. However, in this election there will be a remarkable difference of ideas in terms of conservatives and liberals, but also generationally speaking. Gen Z will have an essential participation in this election, due to their commitment to change the world. In the other hand when we talk about social groups, the LGBTQ+ community will have an impact by considering the policies that each candidate will execute, such as *The Biden Plan for LGBTQ+ Equality* that promises to protect the community from discrimination. This is having a lot of influence on the future votes.

Furthermore, religion is a factor that has had a lot of influence in the US. This country is mostly made up of Christians, and both Biden and Trump assure to be believers. However, White Christians and Christians of Color have different political opinions despite sharing the same beliefs. Trump is the preferred candidate among White Christians, while Biden is earning the respect of People of Color.

9. Quorum General Position

A. Democrat states

The Democratic Party is generally considered the liberal party. It wants the government to have a larger role in the economy, it supports the progressive tax, and multilateralism. As for social issues, Democrats seek greater freedoms. This political party is most common in the larger cities.

The Democrat states in the quorum are: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Virginia, Washington.

B. Republican states

The Republican Party, unlike the Democratic Party, is a conservative party. It prefers a small government with little to no involvement in the economy, it favours low taxes for everyone despite their individual economic situation, and it acts unilaterally. It does not seek greater freedoms like the Democrats, instead, it opts for traditionalism. Republicans are concentrating in rural areas, according to election maps.

The Republican states in the quorum are: Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas.

10. Sustainable Development Goals

I. Goal 16: Peace, Justice and and Strong Institutions

“Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels” (United Nations, n.d).

Human rights are key in shaping a fair government for all citizens. It is important that the elected candidate protects human rights in this time of health and economic crisis, so better

solutions are built for the emergency of today and the recovery of tomorrow. Responses that are shaped around human rights have better outcomes.

The citizens must be sure that the candidate they are voting for works toward promoting the rule of law and ensuring equal access to justice for all (16.3), developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions (16.6), and promoting and enforcing non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development (16.A).

II. Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being

“Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” (United Nations, n.d).

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken the world by storm, causing suffering, worsening poverty, and destabilizing the economy. As mentioned before, this election will be vastly different from all previous elections due to this global health crisis. Achieving this goal will require a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society response; the U.S. government will need to invest in critical 21st century public services and healthcare, and U.S. citizens must show responsibility by following the guidelines established by the government: quarantining, proper use of masks, and getting vaccinated. The elected candidate must work towards ensuring affordable and achievable healthcare for all.

III. Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

“Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” (United Nations, n.d).

COVID-19 has disrupted workers’ lives and endangered the economy. It created an unprecedented human crisis that is hitting the poorest hardest, and leaving millions of people deprived and unemployed. The U.S. government, along with the elected candidate, must follow the framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19 created by the UN,

which includes protecting health systems, providing social protection and basic services, protecting and creating jobs, making macroeconomic policies work for the most vulnerable, promoting cohesion, and investing money and time into community-led resilience and response systems.

Topic B: Gun Control

1. Brief Information on the Topic

“Gun control refers to any legal measure intended to prevent or restrict the possession or use of guns, particularly firearms.” (Dugnan. B, n.d.). In a historical perception, this concept refers to the norms and laws that involve the use of guns in a specific country. Many of the most influential have total control on weapons, however, this issue is usually very controversial in politics, since there are those who consider this necessary for security and safeness.

The principal place where this concept is more controversial is in the United States, where the possession of guns is strictly secured in the Constitution, despite this, this country usually has a lot of problems with murders and shootings. The United States is undoubtedly a place where one of their main issues is the high number of homicides they deal with. Among citizens there is a lot of contrast of thoughts about this topic. The ones that view it like a human right, so they can defend themselves from dangerous criminals and the ones who affirm that the country will lose less lives and be more secure if the use of guns was forbidden.

These last years the United States has suffered one of the longest and most terrible periods of gun violence, every day 316 people are shot, and in a year 115,551 people. *Switzerland-based Small Arms Survey* affirms that this country has about 46 percent of the world’s civilian-owned

guns, however they have some laws that limit the use of guns, for example, they have guns that are forbidden from using, and restriction of which ones are allowed by the government.

The U.S Supreme Court affirms:

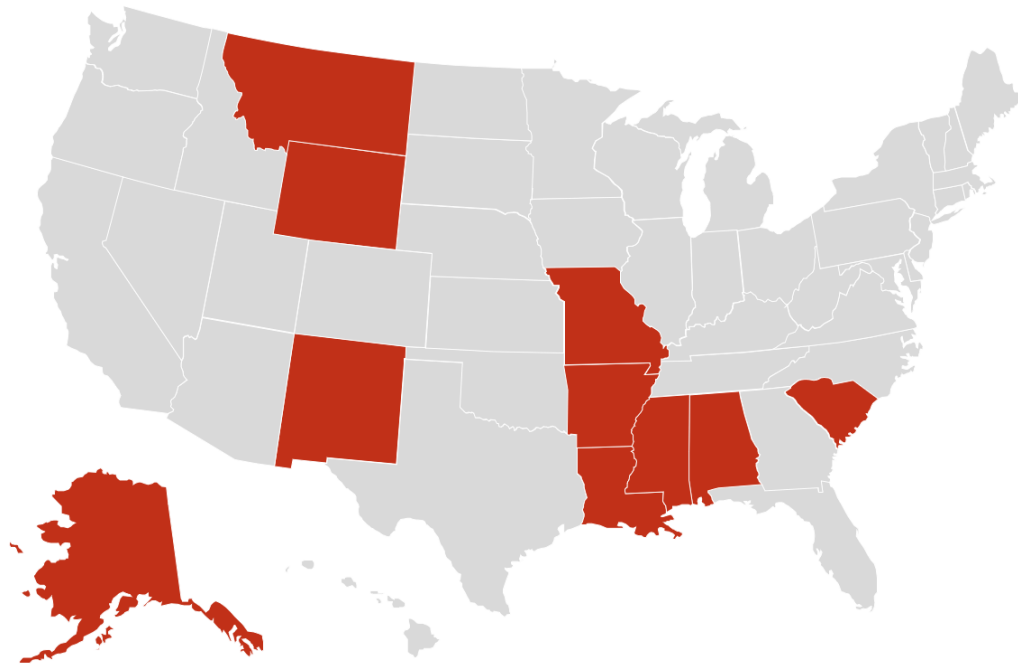
“The Gun Control Act of 1968 prohibits individuals under eighteen years of age, convicted criminals, the mentally disabled, dishonorably discharged military personnel, and others from purchasing firearms. In 1993, the *Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act* mandated background checks for all unlicensed individuals purchasing a firearm from a federally authorized dealer”. (Masters. J, 2021).

2. Guiding questions

- a). What right does the Second Amendment to the Constitution protect? Is this protection necessary?
- b). Does gun control violate the Second Amendment?
- c). Are there countries with as many guns as the U.S. but with less gun violence? If so, do these countries have stricter gun control laws?
- d). How often are guns used for self-defense?
- e). Are gun owners actually able to prevent crimes against them or others?
- f). Do states with strict gun control laws have less gun violence?

3. Geographical and time frame

States with the most gun violence based on the number of gun deaths per capita in 2019:



■ States with the most gun violence

The States with the highest gun ownership rates tend to have the highest gun deaths per capita. Montana has the highest ownership rate: 66.3%, resulting in 22.5 deaths per 100,000. It's followed by Wyoming (66.2% - 18.8 per 100k) and Alaska (64.5 - 24.5 per 100k). These rates include big-city murders, mass shootings, and suicides. Suicides account for the highest number of gun-related deaths in the U.S.

The south is the highest-risk area for firearm violence; for example, Florida has seen a 32% increase in gun deaths since 2005, and Louisiana has also had a sharp increase in firearm related deaths.

4. Historical framework

Gun control is to this day a topic which a lot of citizens can relate to. This has been an issue that has passed through different court cases, there have also been tragedies in schools, churches, and public events. In this list are some of the events that have shaped this ongoing problem.

- *The Second Amendment*

The right to keep and bear arms was added to the United States Constitution as part of the Bill of Rights. According to the amendment, these militias were “well regulated”—subject to state requirements concerning training, firearms, and periodic military exercises. Fearing that the federal government would use its standing army to force its will on the states, the authors of the Second Amendment intended to protect the state militias’ right to bear arms.

- *Gun Control Laws*

In the United States it has been legal since June 26, 1934 when *The National Firearms Acts* passed as a part of president Franklin Delano Roosevelt “New Deal Crime.” The NFA imposed taxes on the possession, manufacturing, and transporting of firearms.

- *First Mass Shooting*

September 6, 1949 Howard Unruh a 28 year old World War II veteran shot 16 people in his neighborhood, from those 16 he killed 13, the youngest being a 2 year old and the oldest a 68 year old. “After he was arrested, Unruh told police he felt disrespected by just about everyone in his Camden neighborhood. He found fault with nearly all the local shopkeepers over insults, perceived or real, the reports show” (Zimmer, 2019).

- *Firearms Owner Protection*

In 1986 the Firearm Owners Protection Act was passed by Congress. The law mainly enacted protections for gun owners prohibiting a national registry of dealer records, limiting ATF inspections to once per year (unless there are multiple infractions), softening what is defined as

“engaging in the business” of selling firearms, and allowing licensed dealers to sell firearms at “gun shows” in their state. It also loosened regulations on the sale and transfer of ammunition. (Gray, 2019).

- *Loopholes in Legislation*

Although legislative regulations have had some effect on reducing gun violence in the United States, critics have identified certain loopholes. “Inadequacies within these laws that jeopardize public health and enable many people to obtain guns who may not otherwise meet the legal requirements to do so. For example, private collectors can elude a requirement of the Brady Law by purchasing firearms from an unlicensed seller who does not perform background checks.” (GALE, 2018).

This is often referred to as the “gun show loophole”. A study of gun owners conducted by Northeastern University and Harvard University in 2015 found that illegal purchases accounted for about one-fifth of total gun sales among those surveyed. Additionally, there have been several cases of inconsistent reporting and underfunding for NICS, resulting in lack of substantial data in areas such as mental health and domestic violence. For example: in 2007, a college student shot and killed thirty-two people at Virginia Tech University before turning his weapon on himself. He had previously been ordered to undergo outpatient mental health treatment by a Virginia judge, yet he was not banned from purchasing the semiautomatic pistols used in the shooting under state law.

5. Power relations and strategic alliances

When it comes to alliances and organizations, one of the most notable and famous is the Brady campaign, which fights to reduce gun violence as much as possible. Their main goals are to inform citizens of what it means to have a gun and the responsibility that it takes in their

country. They are not completely against the possession of these weapons, but they defend the idea of total control of them and that not every citizen has the right to have them.

The NRA (National Rifle Association) has been involved in the United Nations due to actions that have been implemented for years. This organization tries to limit the freedoms of the use of guns in the US Second Amendment. “The NRA has been a recognized non-governmental organization in the United Nations since 1996. Our NGO status allows us to closely follow the internal UN debate on firearms issues and to inform our members.” (NRA, n.d.).

6. Economic aspects

Gun control is one of the main issues and also one of the most controversial since it isn't only costing money but human lives; according to *The Washington Post* more than 20,000 Americans were killed by gun violence in 2020, more than any other year in American history. Not only that, but it costs the nation around 280 billion, this has serious economic consequences. During this pandemic that money could be spent on funds to support it.

“This \$280 billion problem represents the lifetime costs associated with gun violence, including three types of costs: immediate costs starting at the time of an incident; subsequent costs such as treatment, long-term physical and mental health care, forgone earnings, criminal justice costs; and cost estimates of quality-of-life lost over a victim's lifespan”. (Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, 2021).

7. Legal aspects

The possession of firearms has been legal in the United States since it was written in the second amendment on *The Constitution*, yet -as previously mentioned- it lacks control over who gets to possess a firearm, background checks on those who request them, and restriction in the circulation of them. The cases listed below were subject of discussion in court; they consist of very specific situations in which the Second Amendment, gun control laws apply.

1. *Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act*

Representative Richard Hudson, Republican from North Carolina, introduced the *Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act* to the House of Representatives in 2015 and again in 2017, at which time it passed the House and was introduced in the Senate. The bill dictates that permission to carry concealed firearms, in any state that allows the practice, would be extended beyond residents to nonresidents as well. The bill has faced significant opposition from gun control advocates.

2. *Obama Administration*

After a mass shooting in San Bernardino, California, the office of Barack Obama made more changes to the law, some of them included “hired more federal agents to process the background checks; sought \$500 million to improve access to mental health care; and pushed for more “smart-gun technology,” which refers to personalized firearms that use technology to prevent a weapon’s unauthorized use.” (Gale, 2018)

3. *Trump Administration*

In 2018, student survivors of a massacre in Parkland, Florida joined by advocates, parents, activists attended CNN and asked the NRA (National Rifle Association) questions regarding the safety of the place they go to learn, after that the group of survivors met with president Trump who suggested arming teachers. After the “march for our lives” took place in Washington D.C advocates for gun control applauded students.

4. Senate's latest attempt at a gun control deal falls apart

The senate was trying to shape a gun control bill, which at the end did not pass, what they were trying to achieve was like others before them. “Two House-passed bills to greatly expand background checks have all but stalled out in the Senate. Despite overwhelming public support for background check proposals, the still-intact legislative filibuster requires Republican support to advance any gun control bill.” (Wu, 2021)

8. Sociocultural aspects

On this topic the main contrast of ideologies is generally influenced by Conservative and Liberal thoughts. In the case of the U.S., most of the Republicans agree with the Constitution laws about guns, and the Democrats usually have concerns about it. The possession of guns has been present along the history of the U.S. for years, this has caused it to become a really normalized law in the Constitution, however, recently it has become one of the most controversial topics and wants to be changed by a group of the citizens that disagree with the restrictions and the issues that this is causing to human lives.

9. Quorum general positions

Arizona: School-safety proposals will be issued, though gun-control legislation seems unlikely. Arizona is among the nation's leaders in open gun laws. It's expected to promote even greater public firepower, not less.

California: The governor's office has declined to comment on his stance on gun control legislation or any push for changes to state law. Improving enforcement of current laws is under

consideration, and bills seeking to update the definition of a banned assault weapon have been introduced.

Colorado: The governor has called for background checks for gun purchases to ensure people with mental health issues get help instead of turning to violence. Examining access to guns by the mentally ill will be taken seriously by the House and Senate.

Connecticut: A ban on large-capacity magazines is favored. Legislation will be pushed to limit access to high-capacity guns, require a permit to buy ammunition and expand the definition of assault weapon.

Florida: Schools have been called to reassess safety measures. On the minority Democratic side, the government would be allowed to ban possession of concealed weapons at specific public and government events. On the majority Republican side, Senate President Pro Tempore Garrett Richter said "it's too soon" to say whether significant gun legislation will happen.

Georgia: New gun legislation is not being pushed. There are two new Republican bills: one to allow school administrators to carry firearms upon completion of a basic training course, and another to relax gun restrictions and let owners carry guns in churches and on college campuses.

Illinois: Legislation restricting semiautomatic weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines should be passed this year. Pending: a request by Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan for a federal appeals court to review a lawsuit challenging the state's ban on concealed carry.

Indiana: The Governor has not announced any plans regarding gun laws, but is keenly interested in school safety. Lawmakers have proposed no new laws aimed at limiting or controlling access to guns. Pending: two proposals aimed at improving student safety: providing funding for armed police officers in schools, and allowing properly permitted college students to carry guns on campus for personal protection.

Maryland: The Governor calls for a ban on military-style assault weapons, limits to large ammunition capacity and handgun licensing requirements, which would not apply to shotguns or rifles. Separate bills are in the works that would allow school staff to carry Tasers, or would allow designated school staffers to carry guns.

Massachusetts: Democratic Governor Deval Patrick has pushed for a renewal of the national assault weapons ban. He has proposed legislation that would prohibit gun owners from buying more than one firearm every 30 days. Legislators are considering tougher regulations on storing guns and a bid for better screening processes to keep guns out of the hands of those with mental illnesses.

Michigan: Republican Gov. Rick Snyder vetoed legislation that would have allowed permit holders to carry concealed weapons in schools and other gun-free zones, arguing it did not have an opt-out provision. There is no specific legislation he is backing now. There are no bills pending on this matter.

Minnesota: Democratic Gov. Mark Dayton is willing to consider new gun restrictions, but isn't sure whether such measures would violate the Second Amendment.

Missouri: "Putting loaded weapons in classrooms is quite simply the wrong approach to a serious issue that demands careful analysis and thoughtful solutions." Currently, the school board must approve a person carrying a weapon on school property.

Nevada: Nevada gun laws allow the open carry of firearms without the need for a license or registration. However, people are required to obtain a CCW permit in order to carry a concealed weapon.

New Jersey: New Jersey allows for anyone legally entitled to carry a firearm to keep or carry a firearm in his or her place of business, residence, or other land owned or possessed by him or her

without a permit. To purchase a firearm in New Jersey, you must have a Firearms Purchaser Identification Card.

New Mexico: New Mexico is an "open carry" state, which means that it's legal for most adults to openly carry guns and other deadly weapons in public without a license. But you do need a license to carry a concealed, loaded gun. And certain people aren't allowed to have any firearms.

New York: New York imposes some of the strictest gun laws in the country. It requires New Yorkers applying for a license to carry a concealed handgun in public to show they have "proper cause," or in other words, a special need for self-protection.

North Carolina: North Carolina is a traditional open carry state. However, localities may regulate the carrying of firearms under certain circumstances.

Ohio: Ohio is a shall-issue state, concealed weapons are licensed by a county sheriff. There is no permit, background check or firearms registration required when buying a handgun from a private individual. Open carry is legal in Ohio without a license except in vehicles.

Oregon: Oregon has relatively loose regulations on guns, allowing the open carry of guns and issuing permits for concealed carry. People with open carry licenses are exempt from any local ordinances or restrictions on guns. Background checks are conducted electronically at the point of sale, so there is no waiting period for purchasing a firearm in Oregon.

Pennsylvania: "Shall Issue" policy. No permit is required if you are carrying a firearm in your home or place of business, concealed carry permits are available to residents and non-residents with the minimum age being 21, non-residents must already have a permit to carry in their home state if they want to obtain a Pennsylvania permit, and there are no training requirements to obtain a permit.

Tennessee: Tennessee is a shall-issue state with concealed weapons permits issued at the state level. There is no permit, background check or firearms registration required when buying a handgun from a private individual.

Texas: Texans can carry handguns openly or concealed in public, most state government buildings and businesses don't prohibit them. The state already doesn't require a license to openly carry a long gun, and the open carry of handguns with a permit has been legal since 2016.

Virginia: No state permit is required to otherwise purchase or possess a rifle, shotgun or handgun. Virginia residents may purchase firearms from any licensed Federal Firearms Licensee, even if they are out of state. The open carrying of a handgun in Virginia is lawful. The carrying of any concealed firearm by a person about his person, hidden from common observation, is prohibited.

Washington: There are no state licensing requirements for the possession of rifles, shotguns or handguns. Washington State has no laws requiring a license to purchase a firearm. It has no laws regulating sales or purchases of multiple guns, or regulating gun shows. It is a crime to carry a handgun concealed on the person without a license to carry a concealed weapon, although a person may carry concealed without a license in his or her place of abode or fixed place of business.

Quorum Gun Laws and Regulations

State	Waiting Period?	Univ. BG Checks?	Open Carry	CCW	Castle Doctrine?	Gun Bans?	Capacity Limit?
Arizona	None	None	Yes	Constitutional carry	Stand Your Ground	None	None
California	10 days, up to 30 days pursuant to	Yes – all sales	All firearms not allowed, loaded or unloaded	May issue (residents only)	Stand Your Ground	LCAM, Assault weapons	10 rounds

	DOJ approval						
Colorado	None	Yes – all sales	Yes	Shall issue (residents only)*	Stand Your Ground	LCAM	15 rounds
Connecticut	None	Yes – all sales	Yes for long guns, and handguns (permit required)	May issue	Castle Doctrine only	LCAM, Assault weapons	10 rounds
Florida	3 days or time required to complete background check	None	No	Shall issue	Stand Your Ground	None	None
Georgia	None	None	Yes for long guns, and handguns (permit required)	Shall issue (residents only)*	Stand Your Ground	None	None
Illinois	72 hours	Yes – permit required	No	Shall issue*	Stand Your Ground	None	None
Indiana	None	None	Yes for long guns, Yes for handguns (permit required)	Shall issue*	Stand Your Ground	None	None
Maryland	7 days, on “regulated firearms”	Yes – handguns only	Yes for long guns, and handguns (permit required)	May issue	Castle Doctrine only	LCAM, Assault weapon	10 rounds
Massachusetts	None	Yes – permit required	Yes, with a permit/license	May issue	Castle Doctrine only	LCAM, Assault weapon	10 rounds
Michigan	None	Yes permit required for handguns	Yes	Shall issue (residents only)	Stand Your Ground	None	None

Minnesota	5 business days, up to 7 depending on the circumstances	None	No for rifles and shotguns, Yes for handguns (permit required)	Shall issue*	Castle Doctrine only	“Semi Automatic military-style assault weapon”	None
Missouri	None	None	Yes	Constitutional carry	Stand Your Ground	None	None
Nevada	None	Yes – all sales	Yes	Shall issue	Stand Your Ground	None	None
New Jersey	7 days for all handguns, up to 30 days pursuant to permit processing	Yes – all sales	Yes for long guns (relevant ID required), and handguns (permit required)	May issue	Castle Doctrine only	LCAM, Assault firearms	10 rounds
New Mexico	None	Yes – all sales	Yes	Shall issue	Stand Your Ground	None	None
New York	None, but all handgun owners must obtain license, which can take up to six months	Yes – all sales	Yes for long guns only; New York does not issue licenses for open possession of handguns	May issue	Castle Doctrine only	LCAM, Assault weapons	10 rounds
North Carolina	None, but it may take 14 days to receive a license to purchase a handgun	Yes permit required for handguns only	Yes	Shall issue	Stand Your Ground	None	None
Ohio	None	None	Yes	Shall issue	Stand Your Ground	None	None

					within one's vehicle		
Oregon	None	Yes – all sales	Yes	Shall issue*	Stand Your Ground	None	None
Pennsylvania	None	Yes – handguns only	Yes, except for Philadelphia (permit required)	Shall issue*	Stand Your Ground	None	None
Tennessee	None	None	Yes for long guns (unloaded), Yes for handguns (permit required)	Shall issue	Stand Your Ground	None	None
Texas	None	None	Yes for long guns, and handguns (permit required, only on shoulder or belt holster)	Shall issue	Stand Your Ground	None	None
Virginia	None	Yes – all sales	Yes	Shall issue*	Stand Your Ground	Assault firearm under certain circumstances	None
Washington	10 days on “semi automatic assault rifles”; 10 days to complete background check	Yes – all sales	No, except under specific circumstances	Shall issue	Stand Your Ground	None	None

10. Sustainable development goals

1. Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

“Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels” (United Nations, n.d).

Through target 16.4 on significantly reducing illicit arms flows, the 2030 Agenda explicitly reflects upon the importance of weapon control in promoting peace, security and sustainable development, while placing disarmament and arms control within the scope of development policies. Target 16.1 plans to significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere, which would include gun related deaths in the U.S. Both of these targets are important to be able to achieve a peaceful society who would then work towards developing their community and country sustainably.

2. Goal 5: Gender Equality

“Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” (United Nations, n.d).

Target 5.2 aims to “Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres...” There is a clear degree of reciprocity between this SDG Target and gun control’s objective to reduce human suffering, and to reduce the availability of illicit conventional arms which can be used to facilitate acts of gender based violence. Intimate partner violence is directly linked to gun violence in the U.S. Abusers with firearms are five times more likely to kill their victims, and guns give them a larger power and control dynamic that is then used to coerce and control the victim. While the intersection of guns and partner violence affects all women, it has a disproportionate impact on Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Hispanic women, as well as segments of the LGBTQ community and people with disabilities.

3. Goal 4: Quality Education

“Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” (United Nations, n.d).

This goal seeks equal education for all, including the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence (target 4.7). Schools should be a safe haven from the violence that affects so many Americans. Guns have no place in a school, and still many States lack proper legal protection against firearms in schools. The tragedies that took place at Sandy Hook, Columbine, Virginia Tech, and other schools across the U.S. demonstrate the devastating effect guns have on our school communities. This lack of protection affects students’ safety and learning opportunities.

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