2017 ANNUAL REPORT
“GUN VIOLENCE IS AN AVOIDABLE EPIDEMIC AND IS FAR TOO COMMON IN OUR COUNTRY AND STATE. THE PEOPLE OF WASHINGTON—FROM THE KIDS MARCHING FOR THEIR LIVES, TO THEIR PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS WHO ARE CALLING THEIR ELECTED OFFICIALS—DEMAND ACTION NOW.”

- Renée Hopkins, CEO Alliance for Gun Responsibility
Overall, 2017 was a good year for gun violence prevention progress in Washington State. In May, Governor Inslee signed into law the most substantive gun safety legislation in memory. Law Enforcement and Victim Safety provides police the tools and funding authority to investigate illegal attempts to purchase guns. It also notifies victims when their abuser tries to buy a gun, so they can stay one step ahead and keep themselves and their families safe.

We continued our lifesaving implementation work, culminating in more than $1 million of funding from Seattle and King County in September to create a regional firearms surrender enforcement team. The team recovered more firearms in its three month pilot phase than were recovered in all of 2016.

In October, the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of Washington’s universal background check law and against a lawsuit brought by the gun lobby. Since Initiative 594 took effect in December 2014, there have been at least 29,692 private background checks, which prevented over 200 private sales to prohibited purchasers.

In November, The Alliance Victory Fund helped elect 16 candidates up and down the ballot and across the state, including Mayor Jenny Durkan and Senator Manka Dhingra. This election was the first time we’ve seen so many candidates run—and win—on gun responsibility in Washington and in states across the country.

The balance of power in Olympia shifted when voters elected a gun responsibility candidate in the 45th LD. As a result, we are now witnessing unprecedented movement on our policies in the first weeks of the 2018 legislative session. (See State of the Session.) We will continue the dedicated work of building a gun responsibility majority in Olympia as we look ahead to the 2018 election.

Finally, towards the end of 2017, we endorsed De-Escalate Washington’s Initiative 940, which would require de-escalation and mental health training for all law enforcement in the state. We know this proven policy will help save lives in our communities, especially those most impacted by gun violence. We’re proud to support this initiative as it heads to the legislature, and then most likely, to the ballot.

We were also reminded of the immense challenges of combating the suicide epidemic in our state in our work to strengthen our coalition partnership with veterans. Suicide prevention is a spectrum of interventions, and barring access to firearms in times of crisis has been proven to be a very effective measure. To this end, we will continue the critical implementation of I-1491 and continue to lead on forward-thinking suicide prevention policies in Olympia.

None of what we achieved last year, what we are on track to achieve this year, or what we envision for a future free from gun violence would be possible without you, our extraordinary coalition. Progress is slow, change is slow until finally, it isn’t. We are marching toward that moment every day at the Alliance.
The Alliance for Gun Responsibility works to end the gun violence crisis in our community and to promote a culture of gun ownership that balances rights with responsibilities. Through collaboration with experts, civic leaders, and citizens, we work to find evidenced-base solutions to the crisis of gun violence in our community. We create innovative policy, advocate for changes in laws, and promote community education to reduce gun violence.

Gun responsibility has become a national priority since the tragedy at Sandy Hook, and the Alliance for Gun Responsibility has been a major driver of that change in Washington State and around the nation. In just a few short years, we’ve accomplished the following:

- Leading a statewide coalition of citizens and supporters to pass Initiative 1491, creating Extreme Risk Protection Orders that save lives and prevent tragedies, and Initiative 594, America’s first ballot initiative that closed the background check loophole for gun sales.
- Helping to protect Seattle’s landmark tax on firearm and ammunition sales, which funds critical programs and tools supporting the welfare of the people of Seattle.
- Advocating for, and protecting, stronger gun laws in the Legislature, including Extreme Risk Protection Orders, Child Access Prevention, suicide prevention, and more.
- Funding critical research into the causes and consequences of firearm death and injury.
- Conducting public education campaigns that inform the public on the importance of gun responsibility.

Gun violence is preventable – if we work together to prevent it. The Alliance for Gun Responsibility provides paths to take action that saves lives.

The Alliance for Gun Responsibility includes three separate organizations:

- a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization;
- a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization, the Alliance for Gun Responsibility Foundation.
- a Political Action Committee (PAC) the Alliance for Gun Responsibility Victory Fund.

These sister organizations are governed by separate boards, and manage the organization’s public education, advocacy, and political giving programs, respectively.

Implementing our priorities has been crucial to our success. In 2017, the Alliance for Gun Responsibility’s implementation work was adopted in unprecedented ways as a recognized task of government in Washington State.

Supporting implementation will be a continued focus of the Alliance’s work. However, enormous progress had been made in achieving a cultural change among relevant government officials to ensure that firearm surrender must be considered, where appropriate, as a core function of government. Extreme Risk Protection Orders are already benefiting from this culture change, as jurisdictions throughout Washington are making use of the law, and adopting related process improvements, far more rapidly than was the case following Initiative 594.

King County and the City of Seattle joined together in a funding partnership, providing over $1 million for multiple new positions to assist petitioners in filing Domestic Violence Protection Orders and Extreme Risk Protection Orders, and to secure firearms from individuals subject to those orders.

The United States has more child gun deaths than any other high-income nation.
LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY
We have volunteers from all over the state, from Long Beach to Bellingham to Edison, Olympia, Port Angeles and the Olympic Peninsula. In 2017, our volunteers have logged thousands of calls, written thousands of emails and letters, held dozens of GVP meetings, and turned out hundreds of attendees to advocacy events like lobby days, public forums, town halls and regular clip-boarding locations throughout the year. The successes of our legislative and electoral action plans could not have happened without the dedication and growth of our volunteer base and chapter teams statewide.

ELECTORAL OUTREACH
The Alliance mobilized our robust network of volunteers to Get Out the Vote for key allies in our fight for responsible gun violence prevention legislation. In support of just three of our gun responsibility candidates alone, Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan, Representative Michelle Rylands, and Senator Manka Dhingra, Alliance volunteers knocked on over 1,700 doors and made over 4,100 phone calls. Our volunteers certainly did their part in successfully flipping the state senate! Upon analysis, we found that the voters we targeted in the 45th Legislative District were 2.6 times more likely to vote in the primary than those we did not reach. This proves, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that our dedicated Alliance volunteers make a huge difference in our mission to make our communities safe from gun violence.

COALITION BUILDING
In 2017, the Alliance focused on broadening, deepening, and strengthening our coalition relationships - locally, state-wide, and nationally. As a result, we doubled the engagement of partner organizations, bringing a number of new organizations into our coalition and adding contacts to our network. These include well-respected researchers, sociologists, authors, and law enforcement professionals that are all experts in their field.

TOP 10 PARTNER GROUPS
Survivors
Public Health
GVP
DV Advocates
Progressive Causes
Youth-led orgs
1840 Implementation team
Medical Community
Faith
Mental Health

A CALL TO ACTION
After the Las Vegas shooting, we saw a sea change in how gun violence prevention organizations, elected officials, media and others talked about the need for immediate reform. No longer were the American people willing to settle for messages of “thoughts and prayers.” In fact, there was a public outcry when the gun lobby tried to say it was too soon to talk about taking action. This new call for action has only increased since the tragic Las Vegas shooting and our partner and advocate support is more motivated than ever.

OF AMERICANS WILL KNOW A VICTIM OF GUN VIOLENCE DURING THEIR LIFETIME
LEGISLATIVE SUCCESSES
The 2017 legislative session saw the largest number of bipartisan co-sponsors for gun responsibility legislation than ever before and was headlined by the passage of two priority bills, Senate Bill 5552 (Initiative 594 Clarifications) and House Bill 1501 (Law Enforcement and Victim Safety). The passage of these two bills represents the most significant slate of gun responsibility bills passed in a single session up to that date. In addition, virtually every other piece of Alliance priority legislation gained more ground than it had previously.

CONSTANT PRESENCE
Our legislative success was bolstered by a robust number of testifiers and supporters that packed the Senate and House galleries whenever important legislation was being heard. Our “Constant Presence” strategy saw a record number of volunteers, advocates, partners, and survivors of gun violence join us in Olympia. As in previous years, a compelling and diverse group testified in front of the House Judiciary Committee on hearing day, and behind them were seated row after row of orange-clad supporters. With our unmistakably bright orange scarves and “Gun Responsibility NOW” stickers clearly visible, legislators knew that not only were we present, but that we were watching and following their votes and public actions.

CHAPTER MODEL TEAMS
In 2017, our Chapter Model teams greatly exceeded their overall goals for legislator contact this session, contributing to a far stronger atmosphere in the Capitol advocating for gun responsibility. During this session the Alliance delivered:

- 32,402 overall legislative contacts, bringing
- 387 total constituents to the Legislature, and brought
- 1 or more contact of some type to every legislator’s office
- 1 or more contact from every legislative district in the state

THE IMPORTANCE OF MESSAGING
Communications strategy was integrated into the testifier selection process to ensure message carry-through in spoken and written testimony. It took consistent branding of Law Enforcement and Victim Safety, our key bill, to drive social media engagement and support our Constant Presence approach.

OF U.S. GUN OWNERS ADMIT THAT THEY DO NOT STORE THEIR GUNS SAFELY

54%
PUBLI C EDUCA TI ON

At the Alliance, we believe ending the epidemic of gun violence means examining the intersection of gun violence with mental health, domestic violence, and suicide. We also know that gun violence looks different in different communities and combatting it cannot be a one-sized fits all solution. To that end we’ve committed to a series of public education summits that deep dive into a specific intersectional focus. We implemented a series of workshops to understand how gun violence affects diverse communities and how we can best partner with those communities to fight gun violence.

SUMMIT S

The Alliance for Gun Responsibility Foundation hosted two large-scale public education events in 2017. For our Mental Health & Gun Violence Summit, we brought local and national gun violence prevention experts together with experts in various mental health disciplines to present the latest research on the intersection of mental health and gun violence. We also invited legislators into the mix, hosting a candid discussion about creating effective policy without further stigmatizing those living with mental illness. The Alliance is dedicated to the hard work of de-stigmatization and to supporting effective, data-driven policies and interventions where mental health diagnoses and behavioral risk factors intersect with access to firearms.

“Guns in a Civil Society” was a ground-breaking educational Summit examining our nation’s relationship to guns, specifically the licensure of concealed carry with its inherent biases around “good guys with guns.” Through research presentations of concealed carry practices and perceptions in 1st and 2nd Amendment doctrine, followed by a panel representing expert views on firearms culture and legislation, we explored the understanding that is lacking between forces driving firearm proliferation and those working to reduce gun violence. We worked our way through the liberalization of firearm training and unraveling the bonds of guns and racism, suggesting concrete solutions to the complex interplay of the perceptions and the realities of who owns guns in America and why.

EDUCATI ON 2 ACTION

Throughout 2017, the Alliance expanded our work within some of Washington’s most diverse and impacted communities. Reaching beyond organizations and looking towards schools, faith-based organizations, and community-based groups for further impact and awareness around civic engagement and gun laws. Beginning with our Education to Action workshop development, we partnered with a model program in the state of Virginia, adapting it to the overarching goals of the Alliance. Our workshop program targets young men and women from diverse communities who seek to learn more about how gun violence prevention efforts can be effective in their communities. Once they complete the training, they will serve as ambassadors of a sort to teach the same skills and principles to others in their neighborhoods. Combatting gun violence from an inside the community outward approach helps harness the energy of our youngest civic, political, and social game changers to make a positive impact and keep our schools and public spaces safe.

OFF THE LABEL

As our Foundation Summit series found its footing, it made sense to carve out an identity unique to these impactful workshops. Our Communications and Design staff worked together to deliver elevated branding across all materials for our two summit events in 2017. The end result was a fresh take on traditional Alliance branding that still maintained our traditional design elements.

SINCE COLUMBINE, MORE THAN

208,000

students have experience gun violence at their school

August 1 - Primary election, 7 of 8 AGR endorsed candidates wins!

August 14 - AGR launched our Gun Safety Education Backpack to support the Be SMART campaign
MAKING A POLITICAL IMPACT

ALLIANCE FOR GUN RESPONSIBILITY VICTORY FUND PAC

While the Victory Fund will always stay focused on building gun responsibility majorities in Olympia, we expanded our PAC work to local races, allowing the Alliance to have a more informed conversation with our local elected leaders about the role cities and counties play in helping prevent gun violence. Local governments are also often at the core of implementing the policies we pass and are necessary partners for stronger gun laws. We endorsed in the mayoral contests in Seattle, Everett and Tacoma and endorsed XXX city council races across our state. Our Chapter Leaders were instrumental in the selection of local champions, interviewing candidates and making recommendations to our board.

We also expanded our footprint during the special elections to the Washington State Legislature by supporting Senate candidate Manka Dhingra. For the first time, the Alliance’s Victory Fund PAC supported a gun responsibility champion with independent expenditure investments. Independent expenditures were separated by firewall from the candidate campaigns we supported, but still allowed the Alliance to communicate directly to voters about where candidates stood on our issues.

In 2017, we used the independent expenditure process to draw a contrast between the gun lobby candidate and the Alliance’s choice in the race for State Senate. Our messaging focused on community safety and preventing gun violence. This work and our support on the hard side helped Dhingra win her election and sent another gun responsibility champion to Olympia.

CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENTS

For the first time, the Alliance created a local candidate questionnaire in 2017 and extended the invitation to local candidate offices around the state—prioritizing local governments that are well suited for expanding our work. The questionnaire, as well as interview process in those races, allowed us to educate candidates about the role local governments can play preventing gun violence.

These candidates wanted to proactively talk about gun violence prevention, and sought our input and expertise on messaging and policy. We worked closely with several candidates and their campaigns to coordinate public-facing gun violence prevention messages. The Victory Fund endorsements were covered in six different stories by news outlets in Seattle, Redmond and Kirkland. All-in-all, 15 out of 21 Alliance endorsed candidates clinched their seats in municipal and state elections in 2017.

KEEPING SCORE:

This was the first time the Alliance for Gun Responsibility scorecard was available on our website for public access throughout the year. We also added a new feature to indicate how a legislator’s grade had changed from the previous year. This was a helpful tool for voters and media, as well as a carrot and stick technique for our accountability campaign.

2017 GUN RESPONSIBILITY LEGISLATIVE SCORECARD

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2017 LEGISLATOR GRADES - legislative leadership is measured based on voting, and in the year we’re including evaluations on priority gun responsibility legislation, bill sponsorship, and support and on overall advocacy.

VOTES AND SPONSORSHIP - includes all reported bills voted on in response to the Lowell community safety and support bills, and against bills which move on state in the wrong direction.

SILLS EVALUATED INCLUDE:

- 0B 344 - hear Benment and America's Safety Act of 2017
- 0B 344 - 08/10 - Bipartisan Check Amendment (support)
- 0B 272 - 08/29 - Bipartisan Fauci Protection Act (support)
- AB 349 - 07/05 - Bipartisan Background Check Reform
- AB 351 - 06/25 - Safe Schools for Washington Public Education
- HB 1007 - 08/04 - Bipartisan Gun Violence Prevention and Victims’ Rights

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY - grades reflect the degree to which legislation introduced for gun responsibility is included, amended, defeated or supported. This includes the work of the Alliance and other gun responsibility organizations.

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY - grades reflect how often legislator supports community, including direct outreach to constituents and community groups.

Alliance for Gun Responsibility political action committee (PAC) endorsed candidates received a personal endorsement letter from the Alliance leadership team, which was included in the Alliance for Gun Responsibility scorecard.

November 2 - Foundation hosts “Guns in a Civil Society” summit

November 4 - 4th anniversary of 594 passage with 59% of the vote
THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

At the Alliance we know that our success is your success. That with each new law, summit, hearing day, rally, and fundraising event, our partners, volunteers, faith community leaders, public health advocates, survivors, donors, and elected officials are the driving force behind making our schools and communities more safe. We are a small, but mighty staff and we do it every day with your support.

During 2017, we saw the successful passage of two pieces of legislation, the election of more gun responsibility champions than ever before, and record attendance at our lobby days in Olympia and Foundation Summit series.

Each year, we reach more passionate advocates like yourselves and we are excited to see where the end of the next year takes us. We know that as long as we have you on our side, we will continue to make progress in this fight.

THANK YOU to the dozens of partner organizations, in Washington State and across the country.
THANK YOU to our hundreds of dedicated and passionate advocates who give their time and share their stories.
THANK YOU to the thousands of donors who make our work possible.

TOGETHER, WE WILL CONTINUE TO PASS LIFESAVING LAWS AND SUPPORT PROGRAMMING TO REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE IN OUR COMMUNITIES.

AMERICANS ARE KILLED WITH GUNS IN AN AVERAGE DAY

96

November 7 - General election: 15 Gun responsibility champions win at the ballot!
November 8 - First anniversary of passage of 1491 with 69% of the vote
GUN VIOLENCE IS PREVENTABLE

2017 GUN RESPONSIBILITY LEGISLATIVE ANNUAL REPORT