

2021 ALLIANCE FOR GUN RESPONSIBILITY POLICY AGENDA

As the landscape surrounding gun violence prevention continues to evolve it is crucial that we adapt to and address emerging challenges and trends such as COVID-19, renewed calls for equity in political advocacy and policymaking, and a contentious political atmosphere. The Alliance for Gun Responsibility is charging ahead with policy priorities that focus on protecting what we have accomplished while supporting the communities most impacted by gun violence.

Protect Progress and Continue Momentum: The financial, social, and political realities of COVID-19 are such that protecting the progress we have already made is crucial to the future of our success and is our central focus in the 2021 legislative session. Now more than ever, it is essential that we continue to lead the country by strengthening and protecting our effective gun safety laws. This includes closing loopholes and aligning victim protection processes and continuing progress on the first-in-the-nation statewide Office of Firearm Safety and Violence Prevention and the centralization of our background check system.

Keep Communities Safe: Washington's background check system helps ensure firearms do not make it into dangerous hands. However, we do not currently address access to the high-capacity magazines that make semi-automatic weapons extraordinarily deadly. We should keep our communities safe by taking the necessary steps to require background checks on all magazine purchases and prohibit magazines that can carry more than 10 rounds.

Protect Free Speech and Reject Firearm Intimidation: The open carrying of firearms has no place in any politically charged or contentious environment and produces a chilling effect on First Amendment rights to freedom of speech. The presence of firearms during political rallies, demonstrations, protests, and on the Capitol Campus only serves to make a situation more dangerous and a disaster more likely. We have seen the devastating consequences in Kenosha, WI, Olympia, WA, and, more recently, Washington D.C. Open carry enables those who wish to intimidate others in a public space to do so with relative impunity. We must reduce the risk that political violence by firearm becomes reality here in Washington State by placing commonsense limits on the open carry of firearms.

Address Inequity and Biased Policing: Washington has an opportunity to once again set an example for the rest of the nation by passing legislation to hold police and law enforcement accountable and address inequity in the criminal justice system. We should confront every component of the criminal justice system that has a disproportionate impact on black and brown communities, including the ways in which firearms intersect with the criminal justice system's policies and practices here in Washington State.