

League of Women Voters - Gun Safety Coalition

**Led by Patti Brigham, 1st Vice President, LWV of Florida, Co-Chair,
Florida Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence**

Observer: Kristen French

Conference Call Highlights

National Report from Greg Waples, Center for American Progress:

- Sen. Chris Murphy has submitted a background check bill ([S.2009 - Background Check Expansion Act](#)).
- There is a bump stock bill in House with 7 republican sponsors/cosponsors ([H.R.4168 - Closing the Bump-Stock Loophole Act](#)). Greg does not expect it to be brought to the floor.
- Greg also gave an update on the Texas shooting, the newest information was that Kelley had been denied a concealed carry permit but it is not known why. More details will be forthcoming

Texas Shooting: Patti asked Amy, a Texas LWV member on the call, to give her impressions of the situation on the ground. She and her mother live near the town where the shooting occurred, so she is familiar with the area and the culture there. She mentioned:

- The TX Attorney General's response was to say that people should carry guns to church with them; Amy pointed out that she feels certain that people in the church were carrying guns but this didn't seem to help them.
- Churches in Texas are by default not gun free zones. Churches have to put a notice in the bulletin or a large sign outside the building in order to declare a gun free zone.

Why the conflict? Suicide Prevention and Gun Violence Prevention, Joshua Horowitz, Coalition to Stop Gun Violence

Josh discussed the situation about the cooperation between the National Shooting Sports Foundation and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. This [article](#) was provided for background. Josh reported that the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention has decided that they cannot advocate for taking guns away from suicidal people; this appears to be related to their relationship with the National Shooting Sports Foundation. Josh stated he feels this is a bad call.

Josh also discussed the relationship between mental illness and gun violence, and it is almost entirely found in suicide. He also pointed out that suicidal crises are almost always precipitated by a comorbidity of risk factors, for instance, mental illness with drug/alcohol abuse; bad relationships and drug/alcohol abuse. Firearms contribute to 60% of successful suicide attempts. 90% of attempts with guns are successful. If you survive a suicide attempt, you have a 90% rate of surviving to die of some other means. The CSGV has been active in introducing and promoting legislation that provides for a temporary gun restraining order when an individual is in crisis (I think this is primarily related to suicidal crisis). The legislation they favor allows for family members, who are the people who know the person best, to be allowed to initiate the restraining order, which involves removing guns from the individual in crisis. The idea is that suicidal crises usually last for a relatively short amount of time (minutes to a few days), and that keeping firearms away during that crisis can prevent gun deaths. He mentioned a study in Connecticut conducted by Jeff Swanson.

Josh also said that mental illness actually plays only a very limited role in interpersonal gun violence (violence against others, including mass shootings). He mentioned the Everytown for Gun Safety statistic that perpetrators of domestic violence account for 54% of mass shootings. Other types of violent background also contribute. The CSGV this morning posted an article that speaks to this: [Anger Causes Violence](#).

During the state updates:

- Massachusetts is reported to have passed a bump stock restriction law. It was signed into law by the Lt. Gov.
- Melinda Hamilton asked whether the LWV US has made a decision on taking a position on the SHARE Act. Patti had not heard back and encouraged her to check in with the point person at national.