



## Episcopal Church Public Policy Network & The Office of Government Relations

### Episcopal Church Policies on Gun Safety and Gun Reform



The Office of Government Relations of the Episcopal Church

*The Office of Government Relations is tasked with representing official Episcopal Church policies voted on and passed by General Convention or Executive Council, the legislative and governing bodies of the Church. Below is a list of policies related to gun safety and gun reform, with links to the full resolution text hosted by [The Archives of The Episcopal Church](#).*

Episcopal Church policies:

- [Support Handgun Purchaser Licensing](#)
- [Implement Laws to Decrease Gun Violence](#), including:
  - Permits to carry concealed weapons and criminal background checks for every gun purchase, including those made at gun shows
  - Except for the use of military and law enforcement agencies, ban the sale, transfer, importation and manufacture of military-style assault weapons and high-capacity magazines
  - Tighten laws against gun trafficking, and increase penalties for those who engage in "straw purchases" of firearms for ineligible persons
  - Ban the importation and manufacture of Full-Auto Conversion kits that convert guns into automatic weapons
  - Prohibit persons from purchasing guns without evidence of gun safety training
  - Promote funding for research into the prevention and causes of gun violence
- [Urge the appropriate departments and agencies of the U.S. government to prohibit the export of handguns](#)
- [Remove handguns and assault weapons from our homes, other residential communities, and vehicles](#)
- [Express Concern About Availability of Handguns and Assault Weapons](#)
- [Urge Restrictions on Sale, Ownership and Use of Firearms](#), including:
  - Increase restrictions on the sale, ownership and use of firearms, particularly "Saturday night specials"
  - That legislation to ban carrying concealed firearms be encouraged
  - Develop regulations to delineate appropriate safety standards for use of firearms
- [Apply the same quality and safety standards to domestically manufactured hand guns that are currently applied to imported hand guns](#)
- [Urge all citizens to support federal, state, and local legislation aimed at controlling the sale and use of hand guns](#)
- [Pass comprehensive gun control and safety legislation, restricting children's access to guns and requiring thorough background checks for new gun purchases](#)
- [Allow community-based mental healthcare providers the same opportunities to access federal funding as are currently allowed to providers of physical healthcare](#)
- [Urge Episcopalians to examine our own cultural attitudes toward violence through efforts in our own congregations and communities, to repent of our own roles in the glorification and trivialization of violence, and to commit ourselves to another way.](#)
- [The Sandy Hook Principles](#)

*The links may be accessed by visiting the website at the top of this page.*



## Episcopal Church Bishops United Against Gun Violence

### About Us

Bishops United Against Gun Violence is a group of more than 80 Episcopal bishops working to curtail the epidemic of gun violence in the United States.

We believe in a God of life in the face of death who calls our church to speak and act decisively against the unholy trinity of poverty,

racism and violence. In the struggle against these evils, our group offers four contributions:

- public liturgy including processions, vigils and prayers services to commemorate the dead and inspire the living
- spiritual support for those living with gun shot wounds, with grief, with fear and with the temptation of hopelessness, and advocacy for broader and easier access to mental health services for those at risk of suicide
- sound teaching for those yearning to bring an ethic of Christian compassion and concern for the common good to bear on debates regarding unjust economic and legal structures, public safety, individual rights and our responsibilities to one another as children of God
- persistent advocacy for common sense gun safety measures that enjoy the support of gun owners and non-gun owners alike, such as
  - handgun purchaser licensing
  - background checks on all gun purchasers
  - restrictions on gun ownership by domestic abusers
  - classification of gun trafficking as a federal crime
  - encouragement for the development of “smart gun” technology
  - federal funding for research into gun violence prevention strategies
  - safe storage of firearm

If the movement to curtail gun violence and promote public safety is to succeed, we must call people of good will together under a common banner. We must create experiences through which grief, fear, rage and despair can be transformed into patient and hopeful resolve. We must ground our arguments in an ethic of shared responsibility, support them with clear logic and credible data, and articulate them with charity to those with whom we disagree. And we must be willing to continue speaking when it seems our words make no difference.

To these urgent tasks, we offer particular gifts of our church—its long experience in crafting moving ritual; its devotion to providing pastoral care to those in duress; its history of reasoning theologically about contemporary concerns; and its willingness to follow Jesus in speaking truth, especially when truth is out of season.