

I am not going to ask that it be entered into the RECORD, but I will include the one-page summary into the RECORD. Here is what you are going to find in this report:

[From GAO Highlights, July 2016]

GUN CONTROL

ANALYZING AVAILABLE DATA COULD HELP IMPROVE BACKGROUND CHECKS INVOLVING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RECORDS

What GAO Found

Most of the 50 states submit domestic violence records—misdemeanor crime of domestic violence (MCDV) convictions and domestic violence protection orders—to the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for use during National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) checks, but states vary in their efforts to identify ("flag") such records that prohibit an individual from obtaining a firearm under federal law. For example, in 2015, 22 states voluntarily participated in a program to identify criminal history records that prohibit individuals from obtaining firearms, which can include domestic violence records. FBI data also show that 47 states identified domestic violence protection orders that prohibit firearm purchases. Since not all domestic violence records that states submit to the FBI meet federal prohibiting criteria, flagging prohibiting records can help expedite NICS checks. The total number of prohibiting domestic violence records that states submit to the FBI is generally unknown because states are not required to flag prohibiting records and there is no automated process to disaggregate such records from other records checked by NICS.

For fiscal years 2006 to 2015, FBI data show that most NICS checks involving domestic violence records that resulted in denials were completed before firearm transfers took place (see table). However, about 6,700 firearms were transferred to individuals with prohibiting domestic violence records, which resulted in the FBI referring these cases to DOJ's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives for firearm retrieval. Under federal law, firearm dealers may (but are not required to) transfer a firearm to an individual if the dealer has not received a response (proceed or denial) from the FBI after 3 business days.

BACKGROUND CHECK DENIALS AND FIREARM TRANSFERS FOR MISDEMEANOR CRIMES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (MCDV) CONVICTIONS AND PROTECTION ORDERS, FISCAL YEARS 2006 TO 2015

Category—MCDV convictions, Total denials—59,000, Within 3 days—41,000, After 3 days—18,000, Firearm transfers—6,221.

Category—Protection Orders, Total denials—30,000, Within 3 days—28,000, After 3 days—2,000, Firearm transfers—559.

FBI data also show that during fiscal year 2015, the FBI completed 90 percent of denials that involved MCDV convictions within 7 business days, which was longer than for any other prohibiting category (e.g., felony convictions). The FBI completed 90 percent of denials that involved domestic violence protection orders in fewer than 3 business days. According to federal and selected state officials GAO contacted, the information needed to determine whether domestic violence records—and in particular MCDV convictions—meet the criteria to prohibit a firearm transfer is not always readily available in NICS databases and can require additional outreach to state agencies to obtain information. DOJ has taken steps to help states make prohibiting information more readily available to NICS—such as through training and grant programs—but does not monitor

the timeliness of checks that result in denials by prohibiting category. Ongoing monitoring could help the FBI determine if specific prohibiting categories present greater challenges in making determinations than other categories and, in turn, the FBI could provide the results to other DOJ entities to help them establish priorities, such as for grants, state outreach, or training.

GAO HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights of GAO-16-483, a report to the Acting Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives.

Why GAO Did This Study

The FBI and designated state and local criminal justice agencies use the FBI's NICS to conduct background checks on individuals seeking to obtain firearms. Persons prohibited by federal law from possessing firearms include individuals who have domestic violence records that meet federal disqualifying criteria. Under federal law, firearm dealers may transfer a firearm to an individual if the FBI has not made a proceed or denial determination within 3 business days.

GAO was asked to review NICS checks involving domestic violence records. This report (1) describes the extent to which states identify domestic violence records that prohibit an individual from obtaining a firearm and (2) evaluates the extent to which NICS checks involving domestic violence records are completed before firearm transfers take place and any related challenges in completing these checks.

GAO reviewed laws and regulations; analyzed FBI data from 2006 through 2015 on domestic violence records that states submitted to the FBI, FBI total checks and denial determinations, and DOJ firearm retrieval actions; and interviewed officials from DOJ and eight states (chosen based on number of domestic violence records submitted to NICS and other factors). State interview results are not generalizable but provide insights on state practices.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that FBI monitor the timeliness of NICS checks to assist DOJ entities in establishing priorities for improving the timeliness of checks. FBI agreed with the recommendation.

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, this report says that the General Accountability Office has found that between the years 2006 and 2015, 89,000 people have been blocked from purchasing weapons who were not eligible to purchase weapons because of their records.

But the report says that 6,800 others were able to purchase firearms because the 3-day limit expired before they had the chance to complete the background checks. That is what happened to those nine souls at Emanuel AME Church when the gentleman, if I might call him that, who purchased a weapon and murdered those nine people was not eligible to purchase a weapon. He was joined by 6,800 others.

Now, we have heard from people who tell us—and this report says—that this is the biggest contributor to domestic violence. 6,800 people who have been convicted of domestic violence were able to go and purchase guns simply because of this loophole.

We have been asking for years now that the Centers for Disease Control be authorized to go and study this issue to

help better inform us on the impact of gun violence, but this House has passed prohibitive legislation that will not allow funds to be used to do that study.

I don't quite understand. Why is it not proper for the Members of the United States Congress to be equipped with information that will allow us to make better decisions about how to protect the American people?

People who are guilty of domestic violence and have been proven in the courts to be guilty ought to not be allowed to go onto the Internet and purchase a weapon. We have case after case where these weapons were then almost immediately used to injure, maim, and, in some instances, kill wives, spouses, and children because of this loophole.

I would have hoped that after June 17 of last year that we would come to our senses in this body and close this loophole, but tomorrow evening we are going to once again draw attention to this loophole because the American people are deserving of being protected by those of us who are elected to protect them, secure them, and to make sure that they can live out their lives in security.

ALL EDUCATION IS CAREER EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, for far too long there has been a discrepancy in what students are learning in the classroom and what employers say they need in the workplace. The passage of the bipartisan Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in 2014 was an important step for the millions of Americans who are looking for work and for the employers who have job opportunities that remain unfilled due to the skills gap. However, great jobs are still going unfilled. Americans are still missing out on rewarding careers, and many businesses are still suffering.

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act has provided Federal support to State and local career and technical education programs for more than 30 years. H.R. 5587, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, updates the law to reflect today's economic needs and the challenges that students and workers currently face.

In particular, I am pleased that the bill streamlines the number of performance measures for postsecondary programs and aligns them with the performance measures in WIOA, retaining that law's precedent-setting accountability standards that let taxpayers and lawmakers see clearly which programs work and which programs don't. This bipartisan bill goes a long way toward ensuring that individuals who pursue a technical education have the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.

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However, I believe it is time we acknowledge that all education is career education and stop dividing the path to a high school degree into two tracks.

Students pursue education to develop the necessary skills to find a job—preferably a career—in a chosen field. It is the same objective, whether the student is pursuing a medical degree at an Ivy League university or taking automotive performance courses at the local community college.

Unfortunately, there is an unnecessary stigma attached to career and technical education. It is too often referred to as the “other” track, with the incorrect implication that it is the path individuals take if they won’t be able to handle the rigors of college.

In reality, students who pursue CTE complete a diverse curriculum where they learn important skills for succeeding in the workplace, such as problem solving, research, time management, and critical thinking. They are more engaged, perform better, and graduate at higher rates than their college-bound counterparts. We should be celebrating that success and studying how we can translate it across the board.

As long as we have two educational tracks, we have a problem in the way people perceive those who choose career and technical education. We need to shift our perspective away from the idea that every student must attend an expansive and expensive 4-year program to succeed in the workforce. Educational success is about more than just a degree. It is about quantifiable skills that employers need in their employees.

WOLVES IN THE WEST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFazio) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFazio. Mr. Speaker, well, here we are, doing so-called morning-hour debate after a very late evening here in the House doing a pretend bill. We are providing the very similitude of a representative Congress by having endless series of votes on bills that are going nowhere in the appropriations process because the Senate isn’t doing appropriations bills. Everyone knows there will be some gigantic omnibus or continuing resolution year-end deal. Nonetheless, to make it look like we are actually doing something, instead of taking up issues, as mentioned by Mr. CLYBURN earlier, we are holding endless vote series and then debate late at night.

At 1:45 a.m. the gentleman from Washington introduced an amendment to remove all protections for wolves in the United States of America. Now, of course, wolves only occupy a tiny fraction of their range. He did this under strong urging from the cattlemen and some hunting groups. There is only one thing wrong with what he is doing. It is actually going to have a countereffect.

The wolf predation on cattle is unbelievably insignificant. 7.8 percent of the losses of cattle are due to disease and weather. Better husbandry would help a lot with the cattlemen. And then, 2.7 percent is due to other predators, principally, coyotes, who the animal damage control and wildlife services people have been trying to extirpate for 70 years. Well, 70 years after they tried to eliminate all the coyotes in America, there are many more coyotes much more widely dispersed across the country, and there are huge packs in the West which do predate on cattle.

Now, why is it a problem if they want to kill off the wolves?

Well, wolves eat and kill coyotes. Here is a predator that does not prefer cattle; it prefers wild game. In fact, wolves do help also with wild game. They aren’t trophy hunters. They aren’t going after the 50-point elk. They are going to go after the slowest and weakest that are out there, or caribou up in Alaska.

They actually improve the health of the herds, but the hunters say: Wait a minute. They are killing some of our elk. We should be killing the elk.

But the hunters are going after the trophies. The wolves aren’t going after the trophies. So you are doing exactly the wrong, stupid thing here.

I think a majority of the American people, as indicated by the 1.2 million comments against delisting the wolf submitted to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, would agree that we want to restore ecosystems and make them more healthy.

Look at Yellowstone. Since the wolves have come back into Yellowstone, the park has changed dramatically for the better. The elk herds don’t just hang around now down in the rivers and eat all of the riparian vegetation and ruin the water quality. They have got to act more like elk and hide out in the forest. If they make themselves into targets, they are going to get eaten. So the health of the park has improved unbelievably due to the presence of wolves.

This is a keystone species in a natural order. And because of this horrible depredation, this 0.9 percent loss due to wolves, compared to almost 10 times that due to bad husbandry practices, the answer is: Kill the wolves.

We have got a 2.7 loss due to coyotes and other predators who actually are targeted by the wolves. The answer is: Kill the wolves.

This is stupid, irrational, unscientific. In fact, there is a study from the University of Washington that found killing wolves actually increased livestock losses.

The gentleman from Washington wants to persist in the myth that somehow, by eliminating wolves, it will help the livestock industry. It is just yet another misbegotten amendment on a fake bill that isn’t going anywhere, but I would still urge my colleagues to vote against it.

1-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow marks the 1-year anniversary of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the so-called Iran nuclear deal.

President Obama made a series of promises to the American people. One was that Iran would cease its illicit nuclear activity. And yet, last week, Mr. Speaker, Germany reported that Iran has increased its illegal proliferation of nuclear technology.

President Obama also promised that the nuclear deal would moderate Iran. In other words, there was a gentle, nice Iran that was waiting to come out, if only we would be more understanding. But in the past year, the Islamic Republic has launched nuclear ballistic missiles in violation of U.N. security resolutions, kidnapped U.S. sailors, shot rockets within 1,500 yards of U.S. Navy ships, and increased their support for terror regimes and terror groups, and remain the world’s largest state sponsor of terrorism.

The President also stated that the U.S. sanctions regime would stay in place against Iran’s terror activity while it was being lifted against the nuclear activity.

But, instead, the U.S. has become Iran’s negotiator in chief on the world stage and has rewarded companies that continue to support the Iranian National Guard Core and is devising ways to give Iran access to the U.S. financial system.

One year after the President agreed to a dangerous nuclear deal, Iran continues to be a major adversary. Congress needs to highlight and spotlight Iran’s malevolent activity. The good news is Congress is doing just that, Mr. Speaker.

I am encouraged that the House will take up three very important pieces of legislation. It will deal with the heavy water bill.

Think about this. Iran gets caught manufacturing heavy water. Rather than calling out the Iranian regime, in clear violation of the nuclear deal, what does the administration do?

The administration says: Well, we are going to help Iran comply with the deal that they have just violated by using United States taxpayer money to buy the heavy water from Iran.

You can’t make this up. It is so absurd. We are only given excuses. We have got to focus in on what else is happening on this issue.

Now, Boeing and Airbus have failed to understand the deep risks that come from doing business with Iran. These aren’t necessarily risks for their bottom line. They are very willing to sell to a terrorist regime. But they are risks to freedom-loving people around the world.

Both Airbus and Boeing want to do what?