

The Efficacy of the 2nd Amendment and Its Implications in Modern-Day America

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ABSTRACT

The Second Amendment is one of the most controversial and polarizing amendments in American history, cementing deep cultural divides between the Democratic and Republican parties. As of recent times, many people have questioned the modern efficacy and usefulness of the Second Amendment, especially due to its role in massive shootings and the sale of assault weapons. No matter what, it is clear that the Second Amendment is not as relevant and useful to our country today as it used to be. For my research, I identify several issues, including the NRA's involvement in turning guns from simple tools into God-given rights on par with free speech in the First Amendment as well as deeply funding politicians and other powerful people to protect their own interests. From this work, I surmise that there are several solutions we can apply in order to fix the issues with the Second Amendment.

INTRODUCTION

In modern times, the Second Amendment has become a controversial topic, with mixed opinions. It has often been a major source of conflict between Democrats and Republicans, especially as gun violence continues to rise in the United States. The Framers of the Constitution, who initially wrote this amendment back in 1791, may not have predicted all of the contemporary fallout of this law. As written, the amendment states that “a well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.”¹ The Second Amendment was likely first created to ensure that citizens would be able to protect themselves from many situations, including a tyrannical government and potentially hostile Native Americans. However, a lot has changed since the 18th century. Traditional militias no longer exist, having been replaced by our national US military. Furthermore, most Americans do not fear federal forces, and even if they were tyrannical, their current technologies are far too advanced for civilians to battle them with personal weapons. Therefore, we must consider the contemporary relevance of this amendment. In this paper, I will explore the contemporary relevance of the Second Amendment by exploring the historical context of the development of this law, overviewing the technological advances over the past century that have changed how this law may be

¹ U.S. Const. amend. II.
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interpreted, and reviewing more recent political changes and court cases that impact how this amendment is carried out today.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

First, it is imperative to remember that the Second Amendment and the Constitution were created after the failed Articles of Confederation. The Articles failed, partially because there was no central power, and all power was left to the states. When the Founding Fathers created the Constitution, they worked to create a three-branch political system with checks and balances to try to mitigate tyranny. The Founding Fathers feared their government would become tyrannical, so they established additional safeguards for the people. The Second Amendment specifically permits civilians to form militias or civilian armies to liberate themselves if a government becomes tyrannical. During this time, it is important to note that the types of weapons civilians could access were very similar to those the government could access.

The Whiskey Rebellion of the 1790s provides a historical example that demonstrates the power of citizen protest when concerned about government tyranny^{2,3}. The government under President George Washington implemented a national whiskey tax in 1791 to help pay off the country's debts after the Revolutionary War. In 1791, the Constitution was still in its infancy, as it had just been ratified three years prior after the Articles of Confederation were deemed a failure. Many farmers in Pennsylvania were angry about this tax and felt it was tyrannical, so they organized a rebellion to protest it. While fewer than ten people supposedly died during this time period, this rebellion still shook the newly formed nation because the federal government was ineffective in quelling it. Washington basically had to raise an army from scratch in order to combat the farmers. The Whiskey Rebellion demonstrated that young America was easily rattled and the citizens truly had a lot of power and could use it to protest policies they disagreed with. Guns spoke higher volumes back then.

Multiple court cases since the Second Amendment was written have influenced its interpretation over the years. The *Marbury vs Madison* (1801) case is one such case⁴. In 1800, Thomas Jefferson defeated John Adams in the presidential election. However, before Jefferson took office, Adams passed the Judiciary Act of 1801, which created new courts, appointed judges, and gave the president the power to appoint judges. Through appointing 16 new Circuit Judges and 42 Justices of Peace, his goal was primarily to infuriate his successor. One of the new appointees was William Marbury, who was appointed Justice of the Peace in the District of Columbia. However, his commission wasn't delivered. Marbury petitioned the Supreme Court to have James Madison deliver his document to him. The Court found that Madison's refusal to deliver was illegal, but did not order Madison to hand over the commission. Instead, they held that the Judiciary Act of 1789, enabling Marbury to bring his claim to the Supreme Court, was

² Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. "The Whiskey Rebellion, 1794." Accessed June 28, 2026. <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/spotlight-primary-source/whiskey-rebellion-1794>.

³ Zeidan, Adam. "Whiskey Rebellion." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Last modified 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Whiskey-Rebellion>.

⁴ *Marbury v. Madison*, 5 U.S. (1 Cranch) 137 (1803). <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1789-1850/5us137>. Aug 2026

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unconstitutional. This created the concept of Judicial Review, which led the Supreme Court to be the chief interpreter of the Constitution⁵.

The *US vs Cruikshank* (1876) case established that the right to bear arms is not based on the Second Amendment, but rather a pre-existing right⁶. The context in which this was decided is quite troubling: it arose from the Colfax Massacre of 1873, where more than 100 Black citizens who were trying to surrender to White militia members were murdered. While many of the attackers were indicted for murder, they appealed their case to the Supreme Court, which ultimately ruled in their favor. Specifically, they ruled that the Second Amendment only restricted federal action, not state or private action. This ruling limited the ability of the federal government to protect citizen rights, including the right to self-defense, for decades to come.

More recently, the *DC vs Heller* (2008) case has truly impacted the interpretation of the Second Amendment⁷. In this case, the Supreme Court ruled that states could not ban private citizens from owning guns. For context, Dick Heller was a police officer who wanted a functional handgun. He applied for a one-year license, as that was the most you could have at the time, but his application was rejected. He then sued D.C., saying that this decision infringed his Second Amendment right to keep his functional firearm in his home without a license. The Supreme Court ultimately ruled that the Second Amendment protects the right to keep firearms at home for the purpose of self-defense, and that being forced to make it inoperable was unconstitutional⁸.

From these Supreme Court cases, it is clear that the Second Amendment's relevance has continued to shift and be questioned depending on the current political situation. For instance, back in the 1790s, even if citizens had weapons, they could rebel, as demonstrated through the Whiskey Rebellion. However, the government's technology is now so advanced that it would be very difficult to mount a rebellion using weapons available to the public. Given how much technology and weapons have changed since the Second Amendment's creation, its implementation must also be re-evaluated.

GUN VIOLENCE TODAY

Fast forward to today: the American national government can immediately crush protests through excessive force and even death. Just as two examples, American citizens Renee Good and Alex Pretti, who were peacefully protesting Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) involvement in their community in February 2026, were murdered by ICE agents. If the government would use this much

⁵ *Marbury v. Madison*, 5 U.S. (1 Cranch) 137 (1803). <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1789-1850/5us137>.

⁶ *United States v. Cruikshank*, 92 U.S. 542 (1875). <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/92/542/>.

⁷ *District of Columbia v. Heller*, 554 U.S. 570 (2008). <https://www.oyez.org/cases/2007/07-290>.

⁸ *District of Columbia v. Heller*, 554 U.S. 570 (2008). <https://www.oyez.org/cases/2007/07-290>.

force on non-violent protestors today, imagine how they would respond to more violent forms of protest, such as those used during the Whiskey Rebellion.

In addition to government shootings in response to protests, mass shootings have also become increasingly commonplace. Increased access to assault weapons, which can kill more people compared to a non-assault rifle or a handgun, has contributed to the increase in gun-related deaths⁹. One study published in the *Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery* in 2019 showed that more than 85% of mass shooting deaths were caused by assault weapons. Furthermore, there is variation in gun violence by state¹⁰. States with stricter gun laws have lower rates of gun violence; these states also tend to lean Democratic¹¹. Gun control laws are effective in reducing gun violence. For instance, states with stronger handgun control laws have a 67% lower amount of mass shooting victims. 11 states have banned assault weapons altogether, which is the weapon that causes the deadliest mass shootings¹². A study in 2021 showed that the states that banned these weapons have had a significant decrease in mass shootings. These gun control laws are widely supported by the public. A recent study showed that 72% of people overall and even 76% of gun owners think that you should obtain a license from law enforcement before obtaining a gun. Additionally, more than 60% of Americans support an assault weapon ban¹³. From the data above, it is clear that gun violence plagues modern America. Whether it be through school shootings, gang violence, other forms of mass shootings, or anti-protest violence, this issue is deeply ingrained in our contemporary history and culture. Increased gun control laws may reduce gun violence and make this country safer for everyone.

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES

When the Second Amendment was created, the main type of weapon that both military members and civilians had access to was the musket. Now, that is no longer the case. The American military has access to incredibly powerful weapons, largely thanks to the significant military budget, which is upwards of \$1 trillion this year¹⁴. In fact, the US devotes the largest percentage of its economy to the military compared

⁹ Brady United Against Gun Violence. "What Are Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines?" Accessed June 29, 2026.

<https://www.bradyunited.org/resources/issues/what-are-assault-weapons-and-high-capacity-magazines>.

¹⁰ Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence. "Assault Weapons." Accessed June 29, 2026.

<https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/hardware-ammunition/assault-weapons/>.

¹¹ Brady United Against Gun Violence. "What Are Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines?" Accessed June 29, 2026.

<https://www.bradyunited.org/resources/issues/what-are-assault-weapons-and-high-capacity-magazines>.

¹² Brady United Against Gun Violence. "What Are Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines?" Accessed June 29, 2026.

<https://www.bradyunited.org/resources/issues/what-are-assault-weapons-and-high-capacity-magazines>.

¹³ Brady United Against Gun Violence. "What Are Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines?" Accessed June 29, 2026.

<https://www.bradyunited.org/resources/issues/what-are-assault-weapons-and-high-capacity-magazines>.

¹⁴U.S. Department of the Treasury, Bureau of the Fiscal Service. "Department of Defense (DOD): Spending Profile." USASpending.gov. Fiscal Year 2026. Accessed June 29, 2026.

<https://www.usaspending.gov/agency/departments-of-defense?fy=2026>.

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to other countries with advanced economies¹⁵. This large budget likely funds technologies that may be inaccessible to the general public. The assault weapons available to civilians today likely pale in comparison to the technologies available to the military. In other words, the Second Amendment's intention of allowing civilians to protect themselves from a tyrannical government through maintaining weapons may no longer be applicable.

That said, many civilians do have access to assault weapons. This is largely due to the absence of an active federal ban on assault weapons. Of note, between 1994 and 2004, the Federal Assault Weapons Ban prohibited the sale and possession of many types of assault weapons. Now, assault weapon control is left to the states. Furthermore, the National Rifle Association (NRA) strongly advocates against gun control and for access to assault weapons, which also influences gun control laws.

POLITICAL CHANGES

Political Action Committees (PACS) and "super" political Action Committees (super PACS) are two ways private organizations can influence politics through finances. PACS have existed since the 1940s, and are private, tax-exempt organizations within the United States which pool campaign contributions from members or donors to fund campaigns for or against political candidates, ballot initiatives, or legislations. PACS can donate directly to candidates; however, there is a limit on how much money can be donated. Companies and unions are not allowed to donate directly. After *Citizens United vs FEC* (2013), which permitted the very wealthy to donate large sums of money indirectly to political candidates, super PACS emerged¹⁶. Super PACS, which are officially known as "independent expenditure-only political committee", are special PACS that can raise and spend unlimited sums of money to overtly advocate for or against political candidates, but are strictly prohibited from donating directly to candidate campaigns or coordinating with them.

The NRA was founded in 1871 to "promote and encourage rifle shooting on a scientific basis"¹⁷, but in recent years has had more of an influence on American politics, particularly through their own super PACS. Especially in recent years, the NRA has been working closely with members of the Republican Party to protect access to guns. They have been especially vocal about the right to sell assault weapons freely and have been adamant against any limitations on assault weapons. While the NRA itself is not a PAC or a super PAC, it operates a super PAC called the NRA Political Victory Fund, which allows it to donate thousands of dollars to political candidates it agrees with¹⁸. For example, in the 2016 election

¹⁵ Peter G. Peterson Foundation. "Budget Basics: National Defense." Last modified September 9, 2025. <https://www.pgpf.org/article/budget-explainer-national-defense/>.

¹⁶ *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, 558 U.S. 310 (2010). <https://www.oyez.org/cases/2008/08-205>.

¹⁷ National Rifle Association. "About the NRA." Accessed June 29, 2026. <https://home.nra.org/about-the-nra/>.

¹⁸ The Trace. "Daily Bulletin: The NRA Is Funneling Money Into a Newly Formed Super PAC." August 12, 2020.

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cycle alone, the NRA Political Victory Fund spent more than \$50 million on the presidential and congressional races. Of this, they spent more than \$11 million in direct support of Donald Trump and nearly \$20 million going against Hillary Clinton¹⁹.

The NRA is also strongly suspected of having illegally supported political campaigns. There are multiple active lawsuits suggesting that the NRA may have illegally used 'shell corporations' to spend millions of dollars supporting federal campaigns²⁰, including the 2016 presidential election. In the past few years, there have been more lawsuits filed against the NRA and its leadership. Their former CEO, Wayne LaPierre, was recently charged with corruption and forced to resign and repay more than \$4 million that he had misspent on personal expenses^{21 22}. While the NRA is a significant reason for Republican support of limited gun restrictions, this sentiment is also shared more broadly by Republican voters regardless of their NRA allegiance.

There is corruption within the NRA, which also more broadly reflects corruption in the ongoing sales of assault weapons, as the NRA also profits from the continued sales of these weapons. Should assault weapons be banned, the NRA will have less power, which likely contributes to their strong advocacy against the ban of assault weapons. The NRA's ability to twist politics to maximize profit misconstrues the Second Amendment.

ACCESS TO WEAPONS

The NRA has influenced policies that have made it easier for civilians to obtain assault weapons. For example, the NRA has supported eliminating the need for a license to carry a concealed firearm. Currently, nearly 30 states allow permitless carry. The NRA has also tried to limit research that could help demonstrate the dangers of assault weapon control. For instance, they lobbied for the 'Dickey Amendment,' which prevented federal funding for gun violence prevention research²³, as well as the 'Tiahrt Amendment,' which restricts how local governments can share data on gun violence²⁴.

Unfortunately, the ease of obtaining weapons has contributed to gun violence in America. Guns are the leading cause of death for US children²⁵. Since the Columbine school shooting, there have been more than

<https://www.thetrace.org/newsletter/daily-bulletin-the-nra-is-funneling-money-into-a-newly-formed-super-pac/>.

19 Kim, Soo Rin. "Which Lawmakers Got the Most NRA Money?" ABC News, February 21, 2018. <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/lawmakers-nra-money/story?id=53230001>.

20 Campaign Legal Center. "Uncovering Illegal Coordination by the NRA." Accessed June 29, 2026. <https://campaignlegal.org/cases-actions/uncovering-illegal-coordination-nra>.

21 Christobek, Kate, and Sharon Otterman. "NRA and Wayne LaPierre Found Liable for Financial Misconduct." *New York Times*, February 23, 2024.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/23/nyregion/lapierre-nra-verdict.html>.

22 Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence. "NRA in Disarray: What You Need to Know." Accessed June 29, 2026.

<https://giffords.org/stories/nra-in-disarray-what-you-need-to-know-blog/>.

23 Samantha Raphelson, "How the NRA Worked to Stifle Gun Violence Research," *NPR*, April 5, 2018, <https://www.npr.org/2018/04/05/599773911/how-the-nra-worked-to-stifle-gun-violence-research>.

24 Everytown, "Repeal Restrictions on Gun Trace Data Archives," n.d., <https://www.everytown.org/solutions/gun-trace-data/>

25 KFF, "KFF Analysis Finds That Firearms Were Involved in 79% of Homicides and 55% of Suicide Deaths in 2022," July 17, 2024, <https://www.kff.org/mental-health/kff-analysis-finds-that-firearms-were-involved-in-79-of-homicides-and-55-of-suicide-deaths-in-2022/>

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400 school shootings in the United States. Many of these shootings, including the most deadly ones, were caused by assault weapons. For example, at Sandy Hook Elementary, the use of an assault weapon led to the murders of 26 people²⁶. At Robb Elementary, the use of an assault weapon resulted in the deaths of 21 people²⁷.

This is uniquely an American problem. The United States has the highest rate of childhood deaths caused by firearms out of all high-income countries. However, it is not just children who are affected by gun violence. More generally, the US also has the highest rate of firearm homicides compared to other high-income countries²⁸. In other countries, it is more difficult to obtain assault weapons. The NRA frequently uses the example of Switzerland to argue that Americans can have assault weapons. However, multiple policy differences make this comparison poor. Perhaps most importantly, in Switzerland, the vast majority of citizens can only purchase handguns, not assault weapons²⁹. Furthermore, you cannot purchase a firearm if you have prior convictions or any history of drug or alcohol abuse³⁰.

As described earlier, the Second Amendment is less relevant today because of new asymmetries in weapons access between civilians and our government. A modern civilian-led militia would not be able to stand up against the technologies available to the US military.

MORE RECENT COURT RULINGS

Multiple more recent court rulings have changed the contemporary interpretation of the Second Amendment. As discussed earlier, the *DC vs Heller* case (2008) showed that the Supreme Court upheld the idea that the Second Amendment is above regional laws by overruling the District of Columbia's decision to deny citizens the right to own a firearm without a license. Many cases were filed after *DC vs Heller*. Of note, in *McDonald vs Chicago* (2010), the Supreme Court utilized the incorporation doctrine, which holds that the Bill of Rights can be applied to state governments due to the due process clause of the 14th Amendment, to determine that the Second Amendment applies to all states³¹. Specifically, the Supreme Court states in this ruling that, based on their previous rulings and the Second Amendment, citizens have the right to possess a handgun for self-defense purposes:

"In *Heller*, we held that the Second Amendment protects the right to possess a handgun in the home for the purpose of self-defense. Unless considerations of stare decisis counsel otherwise, a provision of the Bill of Rights that protects a right that is fundamental from an American perspective applies equally to the Federal Government and the States. See *Duncan*, 391 U. S., at 149, and n. 14. We therefore hold that the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment

26 KFF, "KFF Analysis Finds That Firearms Were Involved in 79% of Homicides."

27 KFF, "KFF Analysis Finds That Firearms Were Involved in 79% of Homicides."

28 Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, "On Gun Violence, the United States Is an Outlier," October 31, 2023, <https://www.healthdata.org/news-events/insights-blog/acting-data/gun-violence-united-states-outlier>

29 Nikolaos Manuel Hernandez, "Their Cheese Has Holes but Their Gun Policy Doesn't: A Review of the Swiss Gun Policy Compared to the United States," *University of Miami International and Comparative Law Review* 27, no. 1 (2020): 155–93, <https://repository.law.miami.edu/umiclr/vol27/iss1/6>

30 Hernandez, "Their Cheese Has Holes but Their Gun Policy Doesn't," 155.

31 *McDonald v. City of Chicago*, 561 U.S. 742 (2010).

incorporates the Second Amendment right recognized in *Heller*. The judgment of the Court of Appeals is reversed, and the case is remanded for further proceedings.

It is so ordered.”³²

More recently, the *New York State Rifle and Pistol Association (NYSRPA) vs Bruen* (2022) case overturned a New York State law requiring that citizens applying for a concealed carry license show a ‘proper cause’ to obtain a license³³:

“New York’s proper-cause requirement violates the Fourteenth Amendment in that it prevents law-abiding citizens with ordinary self-defense needs from exercising their right to keep and bear arms. We therefore reverse the judgment of the Court of Appeals and remand the case for further proceedings consistent with this opinion.”³⁴

In this court ruling, the Supreme Court deemed that the ability to bear arms in public was a constitutional right. These more recent court rulings show that the current Supreme Court is supportive of all citizens exercising their Second Amendment rights, which may have repercussions down the line regarding gun violence in our country. The fact that this case established a precedent that you do not need a reasonable cause for owning firearms extremely damages the future of gun control, as there will be fewer barriers to prevent people from buying as many different guns as they want. This may lead the way to getting rid of background searches and putting assault rifles in the hands of dangerous people.

REBUTTAL OF CONSERVATIVE VIEWPOINTS

Certainly, conservatives have made multiple arguments in support of access to assault weapons as part of their Second Amendment rights. As mentioned earlier, the NRA frequently cites Switzerland to argue that Americans, too, can have assault weapons. However, this is a poor comparison because in Switzerland, most citizens can only purchase handguns, not assault weapons³⁵. Should a Swiss citizen want to purchase a semi-automatic weapon with high-capacity magazines, they ‘must demonstrate legitimate need, such as ‘sports shooting club membership with documented participation or professional hunting credentials’³⁶. Fully automatic firearms cannot be owned by citizens³⁷. Additionally, there are limitations to owning firearms if you have a criminal history³⁸. Finally, the culture of gun ownership is different between Switzerland and the US. In Switzerland, most people consider shooting as something to do for sport, whereas in the United States, many Americans consider shooting as something to do in self-defense³⁹.

32 *McDonald v. City of Chicago*, 561 U.S. 742, 791 (2010)

33 *New York State Rifle & Pistol Ass’n v. Bruen*, 597 U.S. 1 (2022)

34 *Bruen*, 597 U.S. at 63.

35 Hernandez, “Their Cheese Has Holes but Their Gun Policy Doesn’t,” 155

36 Marcus Altenburg, “Switzerland Gun Laws: What Is Allowed and Who Can Buy,” *Goldblum & Partners*, June 12, 2024, <https://goldblum.ch/knowledgebase/switzerland-gun-laws/>

37 Altenburg, “Switzerland Gun Laws.”

38 Hernandez, “Their Cheese Has Holes but Their Gun Policy Doesn’t,” 155.

39 Marc-André Miserez, “Switzerland: Where Five-Year-Olds Can Learn to Shoot,” *SWI swissinfo.ch*, April 6, 2018, <https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/society/gun-gun-switzerland-where-five-year-olds-learn-to-shoot/44018466>

The NRA also blames mental health as the reason for gun violence, often making claims such as, “guns don’t kill people, people do”^{40 41}. However, studies have challenged this viewpoint. One research study compared the prevalence of mental disorders and firearm deaths in the US and comparable countries using the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation Global Health Burden Data. They found that mental disorder prevalence was very similar to countries of similar sociodemographic makeup, while firearm death rates alone were much higher. This suggests that mental health issues alone cannot explain why the gun death rate in America is so much higher⁴².

Gun advocates often argue that the answer should be arming bystanders, such as teachers in the case of school shootings. They argue that teachers may be able to respond more quickly than law enforcement and can protect others⁴³. Multiple states have signed laws permitting armed educators, increasing the amount of guns in schools⁴⁴. While it may be true that arming teachers may result in a quicker initial response, many educators and students are adamantly opposed to this idea for many reasons^{45 46 47}. For one, just because policies have been passed permitting teachers to carry guns does not mean there are training policies in place on the proper use of these guns. As an example, one school that has decided to arm teachers in Ohio provides 24 hours of training total over 3 days⁴⁸. This contrasts with law enforcement officers, who on average receive 800+ hours of training, including on average 160+ hours on weapons training⁴⁹. However, it is impractical to expect teachers to also serve as law enforcement if needed. Additionally, arming teachers may decrease students’ sense of school safety⁵⁰, not to mention having legal risks and liability issues⁵¹. Finally, while there is limited evidence about the efficacy of arming teachers, other researchers have shown that “increased gun access and gun possession are not associated with protection from violence”⁵², which likely also means that arming teachers may not actually protect students more. Instead of arming teachers, educators and politicians should focus on enacting ‘common-sense’ gun laws, which are ‘widely supported, evidence-based policies designed to

40 Jill Filipovic, "The Conservative Philosophy of Tragedy: Guns Don't Kill People, People Kill People," *The Guardian*, December 21, 2012, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/dec/21/guns-conservative-philosophy-tragedy>

41 Manuel Velasquez, "Time to Re-Think a Bad Slogan," *Ethics Spotlight*, Markkula Center for Applied Ethics, Santa Clara University, January 14, 2013, <https://www.scu.edu/ethics-spotlight/the-ethics-of-guns/time-to-re-think-a-bad-slogan/>

42 Archie Bleyer, Stuart E. Siegel, Jaime Estrada, and Charles R. Thomas Jr., "Fallacy of Attributing the U.S. Firearm Mortality Epidemic to Mental Health," *PLOS ONE* 19, no. 8 (2024): e0290138, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0290138>

43 Libby Stanford, "'I'm Not Even a Gun Person': A Superintendent's Decision to Arm Teachers," *Education Week*, October 9, 2023, <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/im-not-even-a-gun-person-a-superintendents-decision-to-arm-teachers/2023/10>

44 Isabella R. Basso, "Guns in Schools: The Debate Over Arming Teachers and North Carolina's House Bill 193," *Wake Forest Law Review* (blog), September 2025, <https://www.wakeforestlawreview.com/2025/09/guns-in-schools-the-debate-over-arming-teachers-and-north-carolinas-house-bill-193/>

45 Tim Walker, "Arming Teachers Is Not the Answer," *NEA Today*, National Education Association, February 21, 2018, <https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/arming-teachers-not-answer>

46 Libby Stanford, "'I'm Not Even a Gun Person': A Superintendent's Decision to Arm Teachers," *Education Week*, October 9, 2023, <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/im-not-even-a-gun-person-a-superintendents-decision-to-arm-teachers/2023/10>

47 Everytown Research & Policy, "The Risks of Arming Teachers," September 16, 2022, <https://everytownresearch.org/report/arming-teachers-risks/>

48 Stanford, "'I'm Not Even a Gun Person': A Superintendent's Decision to Arm Teachers."

49 Everytown Research & Policy, *The Risks of Arming Teachers*.

50 <https://everytownresearch.org/report/arming-teachers-risks/>

51 <https://everytownresearch.org/report/arming-teachers-risks/>

52 S. Rajan, Daniel J. Branas, and Charles C. Branas, "Arming Schoolteachers: What Do We Know? Where Do We Go from Here?," *American Journal of Public Health* 108, no. 7 (2018): 860–862, <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2018.304464>

reduce gun violence while respecting Second Amendment rights⁵³. Arming teachers is also a very radical and uniquely American idea. Other countries forbid arming teachers and have implemented other policies to limit gun violence⁵⁴.

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

There have been several proposed solutions to America's gun violence problem, both from Republicans and Democrats. The main argument from the Republicans is, as stated earlier, "guns don't kill, people do." From this ideology, Republicans have formed the solution of having "good guys with guns." For example, if there was a school shooting, there would be teachers formally trained in using firearms who could be there to protect and defend the children. Additionally, there could also be armed bystanders ready to intervene and resolve the situation. Additionally, another one of their solutions would be to create mental health programs for people who want to buy guns. Democrats, on the other, hand, are more "anti gun." Most Democrats want to either outrightly ban assault weapons, or all guns in general, with some believing in heavy restrictions for purchase and carry, similar to Switzerland's gun policies. The Democrats believe that people simply do not need a weapon that shoots 60 bullets in a minute and feel that society cannot be trusted with this immense power. Due to this, in many blue states, guns and especially assault weapons have heavy restrictions or are banned from ownership.

CONCLUSIONS

What started as a fail-safe against tyranny has become a controversial issue that has polarized modern America. With associations with NRA lobbying and supporting the mass deaths of innocent children and adults alike, assault rifles and the right to bear arms are in desperate need of a rework. Several recent court cases, including *DC v. Heller* and *McDonald v. Chicago*, have made it even easier for anyone to initiate a rampage in our great country. Today, pro-gun individuals use the Second Amendment and its subsequent interpretations in those court cases to argue that anyone should be able to obtain guns, including assault rifles, and that mental health problems are the reason that people are dying from gun violence. However, for their original purpose of giving a chance to overthrow tyranny, these weapons are useless, especially when compared with the strength of our current military. It is important to realize that, whether you love it or hate it, the Second Amendment is at the forefront of the great political divide of America today and will continue to harm American citizens trapped in its grasp until we can find a solution to the great plague of gun violence.

53 Everytown Research & Policy, *The Risks of Arming Teachers*.

54 Associated Press, "Global School Security Measures Vary, but No Arming Teachers," *WHYY*, March 4, 2018, <https://whyy.org/articles/global-school-security-measures-vary-no-arming-teachers/>

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