

Mar 30, 2018 at 8:59 PM

Citizen Engagement Corner

On the Second Amendment and Gun Control

League of Women Voters of Brookline

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.

Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

Undeterred by the March 14th blizzard, Brookline students and parents (on both the 14th and 15th) joined others around the country to demonstrate, showing support for the Parkland Florida students who suffered the most recent mass shooting, and raising awareness around gun control. Many from Brookline participated in the March for our Lives rally in Boston March 24, along with an estimated one million nationwide.

The League of Women Voters of the United States has long had a position on gun control, including supporting a ban on assault weapons. The MA state League supports limitation of the sale and possession of assault weapons and improved and standardized licensing procedures, among other gun safety measures. It is currently a member of the Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence.

Solutions to gun violence are complex. Mass shootings, street crimes, gang violence, suicides ... careful analysis of root causes and key measures or interventions can vary widely. Actions to prevent or minimize these types of incidents may significantly differ. Some of the most frequently discussed are background checks on gun sales, waiting periods between purchase and transfer of guns, gun licensing, banning of assault weapons, and mental health laws and interventions.

Massachusetts has the lowest rate of gun deaths in the country and some of the toughest gun laws. It requires a 1) permit to purchase, 2) an owner license, and 3) a carry permit for handguns; it also prohibits assault weapons, restricts magazine capacity, and requires background checks for private sales. In Brookline, the police department has stringent requirements for residents to get a firearms identification card or a license to carry firearms.

What can each of us do?

- Monitor the status of MA H. 3610, an Act temporarily preventing firearm access for extremely dangerous or suicidal individuals. Let your state legislators know your stance. The bill is under consideration by the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security, which is expected to decide whether to report it out of committee by mid-April.
- Let your U.S. Senators know your position on the Concealed Carry Reciprocity bill, HR38, which would allow someone granted a concealed carry permit in any state to carry concealed guns in any other state, regardless of that state's laws.
- Include questions on gun control in candidate forums and when speaking with your local and state candidates for office.
- Register to vote. Your vote is your voice!

Prepared and submitted by a member of the League of Women Voters of Brookline (LWVB). The League is a nonpartisan organization that encourages informed and active participation in government and that works to influence public policy through education and advocacy.