

# DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INCORPORATED

## POLICY STATEMENT

on

## GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

As we look back with pride and celebrate the centennial of the founding of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, we are determined to meet the challenges of our day with the same fortitude that sustained our forebears a century ago. Therefore, we support efforts to reduce and prevent gun violence while recognizing the fundamental right of each citizen to self-protection. The Second Amendment, like every other civil right, is not absolute. The right to own a weapon is circumscribed by legitimate interests of public health and safety. We view gun violence as a mental and physical health issue.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. supports the following measures to prevent and reduce gun violence. They include:

1. **Require universal background checks. We should close the private sale loophole so that, to the greatest extent possible, every gun purchase is subject to a thorough background check. 82% of U.S. gun owners -- including more than 70% of NRA members -- support criminal background checks for all gun sales. Ninety-two percent of all households in the country support universal background checks.**
2. **Ban civilian ownership of assault/military type weapons. The carnage caused by assault/military type weapons outweighs the benefits to civilians, especially considering the available alternatives for self-protection and sportsmanship.**
3. **Persons adjudicated by a court as dangerous to themselves or others should not have access to guns.**
4. **Limit the number of rounds that an ammunition magazine will fire and require a 3-day waiting period prior to gun purchase.**
5. **Create a national registry of gun ownership to aid law enforcement in tracking guns used illegally.**
6. **Study the impact, causes and cures of gun violence, including:**
  - a. **Economic deprivation**
  - b. **Gun safety education**
  - c. **Mental illness**
  - d. **Entertainment that glorifies gratuitous violence**
  - e. **Educational attainment**
  - f. **Geographical influences**

### GUN VIOLENCE FACTS

- The U.S. murder rate is twenty times the rate of similar countries.
- Gun violence in our country takes 12 times the number of lives than in the next 25 wealthiest nations combined. Since 1994, more than 2 million people failed background checks.

- Up to 40% of gun transfers are made without background checks.
- Nearly 80% of those who used a handgun in a crime acquired it without a background check.
- One out of three handguns is kept loaded and unlocked.
- The presence of a gun in the home triples the risk of homicide in the home.
- The presence of a gun in the home increases the risk of suicide fivefold.
- A gun kept in the home is 22 times more likely to be used in an unintentional shooting than to be used to injure or kill in self-defense.
- Fewer than 2% of all men die from homicide. Half of black male deaths between ages 15 and 24 are by homicide. At the same time that homicides soared in Chicago and Detroit in 2012, they reached decades-long or near-record lows in New York and Washington, D.C. The 62 center cities of America's 50 largest metro areas account for 15 percent of the population but 39 percent of gun-related murders, 11 percent of suicides, and 23 percent of total homicides.