



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on June 25, 2024

Surgeon General Declares Gun Violence a “Public Health Crisis”

Surgeon General Vivek Murthy issued a [“first-of-its-kind” report on Tuesday](#), declaring that criminal gun violence is now a “health” issue. Accordingly, Murthy rolled out the usual litany of anti-gun, anti-Second Amendment moves to remove firearms from the citizenry.

The NRA issued an immediate response, opposing the framing of gun violence as a public-health issue: “This is the extension of the Biden Administration’s war on law-abiding gun owners,” said the group’s president.

The report was issued within days of the FBI reporting that, between January and March this year, violent crime decreased by 15 percent, rape and murder decreased by 26 percent, robbery decreased by 18 percent, aggravated assault decreased by 13 percent, and property crime decreased by 15 percent.

Murthy’s report made only a passing reference to the recent declines in violent crime: “The number of firearm-related homicides decreased by 20,958 in 2021 to 19,651 in 2022.”

But that wasn’t the message he wanted delivered. Instead, he focused on the increase in “firearm-related injuries” suffered by children between the ages of one and 19 over the past decade:

In 2022, 48,204 total people [in the United States] died from firearm-related injuries, including suicides [56 percent], homicides [41 percent], and unintentional deaths [accidents]. This is over 8,000 more lives lost than in 2019 and over 16,000 more lives lost than in 2010.

While mental-health issues drive much of these numbers, the real culprit, according to Biden’s top doctor, is the “lethality, availability, and access” to firearms. Accordingly, their lethality must be reduced by passing laws limiting magazine capacity. Their availability must be reduced by turning every gun owner in the United States into a potential gun dealer to be regulated by the ATF. And accessibility is to be reduced by declaring more public places as “gun free” zones.

This is perhaps the most chilling of his “advice” from his 40-page report:

Implement universal background checks and expand purchaser licensing laws.



AP Images
Vivek Murthy



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Universal background checks would expand on current federal law (which requires any person engaged in the business of dealing firearms to obtain a license and conduct background checks) to include mandatory background checks for all firearm purchases, including private sales and transferring/gifting firearms.

Firearm purchaser licensing, or permit-to-purchase laws, vary by jurisdiction but may be further augmented by enhancing minimum age requirements for all firearm purchases and requiring additional steps to physically possess a firearm, such as safety training requirements and/or a built-in waiting period between the purchase and the possession of a firearm.

He also advises stronger “safe storage” laws, separating the firearm from ammunition at home, and more states passing “red flag” laws.

None of this, of course, will affect criminal behavior, but it will inhibit the legal right of law-abiding citizens to exercise their rights under the Second Amendment.

Murthy’s concluded:

We don’t have to continue down this path, and we don’t have to subject our children to the ongoing horror of firearm violence in America.

All Americans deserve to live their lives free from firearm violence, as well as from the fear and devastation that it brings. It will take the collective commitment of our nation to turn the tide on firearm violence.



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