

## Facts vs. opinions with regard to gun violence

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When there's data we can use the data, when there are opinions, let's use mine. That seems to sum up the gun debate to date. Are the following suggested causes of gun violence and suggested solutions opinions or facts? It's due to mental illness, ban assault rifles, arm law abiding citizens, arm school teachers, temporarily remove guns from violent domestic partners, ban large ammunition magazines, owners need to secure their weapons, go to "gun school," etc.

The simple fact is we really don't know exactly what combination of actions will work to prevent gun violence. While the mass killings get the headlines, most gun homicides occur when one, two or three people are killed. *Scientific American* Magazine in Aug. 2019 pointed out our lack of large-scale useful studies to determine what will actually work. The magazine observes that in 1996 after a series of scientific studies indicated that gun ownership led to an increase in gun violence, the National Rifle Association pushed our congress to pass a law prohibiting gun studies. Since that time there have been small, regional gun studies, but none that are large scale or cover all the data available in the U.S. This year the U. S. House of Representatives passed a bill authorizing \$50 million for such a national study. If the Senate approves this, we will have solid data (remember - data driven results), to guide future action. With the proper facts we can certainly find a way to live with the Second Amendment ensuring Americans Right to Bear Arms without having to outfit our wives in body armor to go shopping. We need the facts so we can replace our opinions with data and then take intelligent action.

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