

The many questions, solutions of modern gun control

Second Amendment supporter has a change of mind | A life for a gun: Now is the time for laws

It seems like at least once every six months, when you turn on the television or check social media, you find out another deathly shooting has occurred on American soil.

The most recent was the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland, Florida, and just like most shootings that take place in America, it started the debate on gun control all over again.

I'm no different than your average American; I join in on the debate with my family members. Without failure, these debates usually end up in an argument, with my sister telling me that America's laws must change, and myself telling her it's our second amendment right to own guns and any new laws won't change a thing.

I just want to clear the air from the get go - I personally do not own any firearms, but I do believe it is an American right to own them if you so choose. I've stood by this stance for many years, but even I have to admit that the recent massacres have made me start to wonder if gun laws really do need to change.

But can these solutions actually work in America?

The argument I hear the most is that America needs to adopt the strategy of Australia. In April of 1996, 35 people were killed in what is now known as the Port Arthur massacre in Tasmania. According to Katie Beck of BBC News, after the Port Arthur massacre John Howard, the Australian Prime Minister at the time, enacted a law banning all semi-automatic rifles and shotguns. All six Australian states agreed to this law in less than two weeks.

In the past 21 years, nearly a third of Australia's guns have been handed over, and their homicide rates have dropped drastically. In 1996, Australia recorded 69 gun related homicides (not including the Port Arthur massacre), while in 2012 Australia had only



Editor's
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30 gun homicides. This according to Beck's article, "Are Australia's gun laws the solution for the US?"

It seems like a no brainer. Duh, of course America should just implement Australia's gun laws if it dropped gun homicides by over double in 16 years. But if you look at some of the details I'm not sure it is plausible.



Australia's six states agreed to change the law in less than two weeks. Back in 2015, Americans couldn't even agree on the color of "The Dress," so how in the world are we supposed to come together and agree on new gun laws? And that's not even the biggest issue facing changing America's gun laws.

According to Beck's article, the biggest issue facing Americans on changing gun laws compared to Australia is the second amendment. Australia had nothing in place that compares to the U.S.'s second amendment, and that right there is the largest hurdle in changing America's gun laws.

The constitution has been changed 27 times since its inception in 1787. That is a span of 231 years. That is not a lot of change, and the most recent change took place in 1992,

over 26 years ago. To me it just doesn't seem like the second amendment will be changed anytime soon, if ever.

Beck agrees with me in her article that Australia's gun laws would not change America's gun problems. That, however, does not mean I don't believe that change shouldn't still happen.

An in-depth look on the answers to America's gun laws was taken by David A. Graham of The Atlantic in his article, "What's the Solution to Gun Violence in America?" Graham reversed the usual question-and-answer article, and proposed common answers and then questioned if they would actually work or not.

Here are some of the popular solutions he looked at.

> See Guns, page B10

The largest protest in American history took place on Saturday, March 24, dethroning the protests against the Vietnam War in the 60's. March for Our Lives brought in an estimated 1.2 million people across the U.S., with an estimated 800,000 protesters in Washington, D.C., the largest recorded tally for a protest.

March for Our Lives was intended to change the tide in how America views guns and gun control after the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland, Florida, which resulted in 17 deaths. The protest stemmed from a movement launched by student survivors who hope to convince lawmakers to address the issue of gun violence and, in particular, school shootings.

One thing is clear from this; gun control laws have to change in some shape or form,



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whether that is banning assault style rifles or making the steps to obtain a gun more intensive. I believe that a child's right to survive their school day without the fear of being murdered, or any citizen for that matter, outweighs other citizen's rights for an AR-15 with a 30 round magazine.

I believe the reason why "March for Our Lives" is so monumental is that there has never been a movement this massive and strictly dedicated to gun control, putting pressure on Congress to discuss future gun control options.

While the idea of banning every gun in the U.S. is extremely unrealistic at the moment, if we introduce stricter gun control regulations right now, those effects may have a huge impact 10-15 years from now; starting with raising the age to buy a gun to 21.

Other steps and regulations that I think are reasonable and can have an impact are:

- Ban all assault style weapons and high capacity magazines, ban bump stocks, implement universal background checks for all would-be gun owners as well as a professional mental evaluation by a doctor.

> See Laws, page B10