



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

Senate Majority To Pass Further Measures To Prevent Gun Violence

BRIAN KAVANAGH June 2, 2021

| ISSUE: **GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION, COMMON SENSE GUN REFORM, GUN CONTROL, GUN LAWS, SAFETY**



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(Albany, NY) The Senate Democratic Majority today, during the start of Gun Violence Awareness Month, will advance legislation to prevent gun violence and make New York's

communities safer. The package includes bills to hold those responsible for the marketing and distribution of firearms used in criminal activity, combat the dangers of imitation weapons, expand safety training for gun owners, enact measures to track gun violence data, and fund meaningful research on this crisis. Additionally, this legislation will improve the enforcement and pre-existing laws against firearm sales to individuals with outstanding warrants and creates forceful measures to eliminate the circulation of unfinished receivers and untraceable weapons.

Today's bill package builds on the Senate Democratic Majority's previous [legislation](#) to stand up to the corporate gun lobby and protect New Yorkers from gun violence.

"The Senate Democratic Majority, under my leadership, has prioritized ending gun violence and making our home and streets safer," Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said. "We must do everything we can to eliminate the scourge of violence that has cut too many lives short and devastated too many families. By enacting this important legislation, we take another step closer towards further ending gun violence. I thank the sponsor for putting forth these life-saving provisions and look forward to continuing working on common-sense reforms that will keep our communities safe."

The legislation being passed by the Senate Majority, includes:

- Gun Industry Liability Law: This bill, [S.1048A](#), sponsored by Senator Zellnor Myrie, imposes accountability on those responsible for the illegal or unreasonable sale, manufacture, distribution, importing, or marketing of firearms that creates a public

nuisance and harm to the public.

- Crackdown on Imitation Weapons: This bill, [S.687](#), sponsored by Senator Brad Hoylman, would update the definition of “imitation weapon” to be consistent with New York City Administrative Code and combat the harm incurred by realistic toy guns.
- Release of Gun Violence Data: This bill, [S.1251](#), sponsored by Senator Michael Gianaris, would require the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services to release quarterly reports regarding gun violence data. This measure seeks to track whether guns obtained and used in criminal acts were acquired in states with weaker gun laws than New York’s.
- Establishing the Center for Firearm Violence Research: This bill, [S.2981](#), sponsored by Senator Roxanne J. Persaud, would establish a Center for Firearm Violence Research to better understand the causes and manifestations of gun violence, as well as generate data-driven solutions.
- Outstanding Warrant Restrictions: This bill, [S.5000B](#), sponsored by Senator Brian Kavanagh, would make it an explicit crime to purchase a firearm, knowing there was an active warrant out for your arrest. It would also prohibit the gifting and selling of firearms to an individual if the provider knows that the recipient has an outstanding warrant.
- Jose Webster Untraceable Firearms Act: This bill, [S.14A](#), sponsored by Senator Brad Hoylman, enacts the Jose Webster Untraceable Firearms Act to prohibit the possession of a ghost gun by anyone other than a licensed gunsmith, and prohibit their sale entirely. Additionally, any gunsmith would be required to serialize and register all weapons in their possession.
- Amending the Scott J. Beigel Unfinished Receiver Act: This bill, [S.13A](#), sponsored by Senator Anna Kaplan, amends the penal law of the Scott J. Beigel Unfinished Receiver Act, named for the individual who sacrificed his life in the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High

School shooting in Parkland, Florida. This act would allow the sale of unfinished receivers to be prosecuted in the first and second degree.

- **Mandatory Purchase Waiting Period:** This bill, [S.1235](#), sponsored by Senator Michael Gianaris, would enact a ten day waiting period for the purchase of all firearms, and would charge any violation as a class A misdemeanor.

Bill sponsor and Senate Majority Deputy Leader, Senator Michael Gianaris said, “Gun violence is an epidemic the State Senate is committed to addressing head on. These bills would curb gun violence and enhance the safety of all New Yorkers. I am proud to see the inclusion in this legislative package of my bills enacting a mandatory 10-day waiting period for the purchase of a firearm and combating the iron pipeline by disclosing the origin of firearms used in crimes.”

Bill sponsor Senator Brad Hoylman said, “I’m proud of the Senate Democratic Conference’s commitment to tackling the gun violence public health crisis through this important package which includes landmark legislation holding gun manufacturers liable for the first time. Senate Majority Leader Andrea-Stewart Cousins and all my Democratic Senate colleagues deserve credit for their continued efforts to combat the scourge of gun violence.”

Bill sponsor Senator Anna M. Kaplan said, “If you can’t pass a background check to get a gun, then you shouldn’t be able to get a gun, period. The unfinished receiver loophole lets anyone get their hands on the parts needed to build an untraceable, unregistered AR-15 without ever going through a background check, and with gun violence surging across the country, now is the time to take action to close dangerous loopholes that needlessly put the safety of New Yorkers at risk.”

Bill sponsor Senator Brian Kavanaugh said, “Each June, Gun Violence Awareness Month gives us a chance to reflect on the trauma and destruction wrought by gun violence—and on the work we can do together to stop it. Thanks in large part to strong gun laws we’ve enacted over the years, New York has one of the lowest rates of gun related deaths in America. At the same time, we know that gun violence is still all too common--and has been growing in the past year--and we grieve every senseless death. I am proud to support this legislative package, including my bill with Assemblymember Amy Paulin to prevent those who have an outstanding warrant for a felony or serious offense from obtaining a gun. The overall package would represent a huge leap forward in our efforts to safeguard the lives and wellbeing of all New Yorkers, and would serve as a model for the nation. I commend Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris, Senator Zellnor Myrie, and all of the bills’ sponsors for their leadership and commitment to stopping gun violence.”

Bill sponsor Senator Zellnor Myrie said, “The Senate’s gun violence prevention package draws a line in the sand- our laws should stand on the side of New Yorkers, not with lawbreakers and bad actors who flood our streets with dangerous weapons. Communities like the ones I represent have been ravaged by a dramatic increase in shootings over the past year. I’m proud to have authored legislation to hold the worst actors in this industry responsible for their irresponsible behavior in the marketplace.”

Bill sponsor Senator Roxanne J. Persaud said, “We’ve been advocating for a fully-funded Gun Violence Research Institute (GVRI) in New York State for several years now. While the scourge of firearm violence is in no way unique to New York, there is a great need for empirical research and evidence-based program development addressing the root causes and variables that make our gun violence epidemic more serious. The evidence is right here in our state, as is the research capacity, we just need the will.”

Senator Jamaal Bailey said, “We have seen an uptick in gun related violence in our country and our state and have worked on legislation to create measures that will curb the occurrence of gun violence. The enactment of a 10 day waiting period for the purchase of firearms, prohibiting those with active arrest warrants from purchasing guns, and banning public ownership of ghost guns ensures that firearms do not enter the hands of those who may use them to fulfill malicious intents. Increasing accountability for those involved in the manufacturing, distributing, importing, and marketing of firearms is an essential part of combatting gun violence. The illegal and unreasonable sale of firearms must be viewed as an endangerment to public safety. Our government must ensure that those involved in negligent behaviors regarding the sale of firearms are held liable. The passage of these bills will lower the occurrence of gun violence in our state and works towards making New York State a place where everyone can feel safe. I would like to thank Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins for her leadership, as well as my colleagues who sponsored the pieces of legislation included in this package.”

Senator Alessandra Biaggi said, “As the epidemic of gun violence continues to take innocent lives from our communities, it is clear we can no longer operate within a society that values the right to own a gun more than the right to live. We must honor all victims and survivors of gun violence by taking bold action and passing effective gun reform legislation. Passing this legislative package is a critical step in ensuring people who should not own a gun, do not have access to one. I thank my colleagues in the Senate and Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins for leading on this issue.”

Senator Jabari Brisport said, “Last summer a 1-year-old in my neighborhood was shot and killed by a stray bullet; the rest of their life erased in an instant by a single bullet. As the chair of the Children and Families Committee, I have to highlight how many of our boys and our girls have had their lives erased by guns. I’m proud of the work we’ve done to get guns out of

our communities.”

Senator John Brooks said, “By passing these laws we are taking important steps forward in protecting the general public from the devastation of unchecked gun violence. These are common sense safety measures that in no way infringe upon personal freedoms but rather support our common right to live our lives free of the fear of unnecessary violence and mayhem.”

Senator Leroy Comrie said, “My colleagues in the Senate Majority Conference and I are doubling down on our effort to keep guns out of the hands of individuals who seek to harm others and reaffirming that New York State is a national leader in the fight against gun violence. I thank Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins for prioritizing gun violence prevention in our legislative agenda, and I thank my colleagues who sponsored these bills for their continued commitment to the safety of all New Yorkers.”

Senator Jeremy Cooney, said, “My hometown of Rochester is experiencing an unprecedented spike in gun related deaths and the community is calling for action. This is a public health crisis. A crisis that is disproportionately impacting Black and Brown families. The preventative measures the Senate passed move us closer to addressing the unnecessary suffering and long term trauma victims needlessly suffer. I stand with my neighbors and Senate Majority colleagues as we continue our work together to prevent further harm in our communities.”

Senator Andrew Gounardes said, “As we’ve seen cases of gun violence surge across New York City in the recent past, it’s imperative that we take measures to address this growing threat by passing common-sense legislation to prevent tragedy and save lives. These bills will impose accountability on the sale of firearms, establish research methods to generate

solutions to this problem, and restrict purchases for those with warrants. This package is a strong step forward in taking measures to restrict putting guns in the hands of the wrong people, create transparency in the release of data, and bolster our current laws to help end this epidemic and break the cycle of suffering in our city.”

Senator Jim Gaughran said “Weapons of war have no place on our streets. Today's legislation is critical to stopping the flow of illegal weapons into New York and curbing preventable gun violence. No parent should have to worry their child won't come home because of senseless acts of gun violence.”

Senator Pete Harckham said, “New York State leads the nation in gun violence prevention measures, but much more needs to be done to safeguard our residents and get illegal firearms off the street. This package of legislation advanced in the Senate helps address some major concerns, especially the need to prohibit the sale of ‘ghost guns’ and also hold gun manufacturers liable for the unreasonable sale and marketing of firearms.”

Senator Tim Kennedy said, “Gun violence has become a public health crisis, and while there is no quick fix - because that simply doesn’t exist - this package of reforms advanced by the Democratic Conference is a monumental step in the right direction. With Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins at the helm, we are meeting a moment that is long overdue - one that prioritizes accountability, justice, and safety.”

Senator Liz Krueger said, “Gun violence continues to be an unacceptable scourge in our state and our country, one that demands smart, data-driven policy approaches. The bills we are passing today will help us better understand the sources of weapons and the causes of gun violence, and will bolster our efforts to get guns off our streets and hold accountable those who are recklessly promoting violence for profit.”

Senator John Liu said, “We must face the scourge of gun violence not just with measures to restrict access to guns, but with legislation to place responsibility on manufacturers and purveyors of guns and ammunition. This package of groundbreaking legislation will begin to constrict the iron pipeline that runs guns into New York and make our communities safer. Moreover, Senator Myrie’s bill identifying gun industry liability can serve as a national model to place accountability at the start of the iron pipeline.”

Senator Rachel May said, “One morning in April, Syracuse woke to the news that 11-month-old Dior Harris had been shot twice and killed in the backseat of her mother’s car. Her two young cousins were seriously injured in the gunfire. It was just one more tragic instance of the gun violence that has left too many families bereft and the whole community traumatized. A suspect is charged with murder, and with “criminal possession of a firearm.” Most gun violence in our community is committed with illegal weapons trafficked into our state from places where the laws are lax or not enforced. The Gun Industry Liability Law will create an important legal tool for combating illegal sales and trafficking of weapons. Two other bills in this package will allow law enforcement to collect information about gun violence that can lead to effective policies. Our communities, and especially our children, desperately need us to step up and find real solutions to the gun violence epidemic.”

Senator Elijah Reichlin-Melnick said, “Gun violence is an epidemic in our communities, and the state government has an obligation to do all that we can to stem the tide of illegal firearms on our streets, and keep legal firearms from getting into the hands of criminals. I have long called for a ban on untraceable “ghost guns” and unfinished receivers that can be turned into assault weapons by anyone in their own home - I am proud to say that the State Senate has taken action today to end the proliferation of these dangerous firearms.”

Senator Gustavo Rivera said, “These bills represent necessary measures our State must

implement in order to address gun violence that continues to leave so many New York families mourning,” said State Senator Gustavo Rivera. “I am proud that the Senate Majority continues to pursue common sense solutions to curtail this nationwide epidemic which costs the lives of thousands of Americans annually.”

Senator Julia Salazar said, “Guns and other weapons of violence have no place in our communities. Unfortunately, gun violence has continued to claim the lives of countless Black and Brown youth in various neighborhoods across our state. Over-policing will not curb gun violence, and it is our responsibility to ensure that there is accountability and resources for our communities so that we can stand up against those that create these harmful environments for our families. This legislative package holds those that manufacture and sell illegal firearms accountable while creating opportunities for us to closely examine gun violence, so that we can better legislate to address this issue. As a legislature, we must continue to do everything in our power to pass legislation that protects our communities so that no family will ever have to experience the pain that comes with losing a loved one to senseless gun violence.”

Senator Luis R. Sepúlveda said, “In my district, and throughout NYC, there has been an unfortunate noticeable increase in shootings. In order to put an end to gun violence, we must pass comprehensive legislation that imposes accountability on gun manufacturers, seeks to understand the causes and effects of gun violence, and provides data-driven solutions. This bill package establishes a Center for Firearm Violence Research, enacts a ten-day waiting period for the purchase of all firearms, and requires the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services to release gun violence data. I am proud to stand with my Senate colleagues and support legislation that addresses gun violence and aims to reduce and prevent gun crimes.”

Senator James Skoufis said, “With each day that passes, we're seeing more and more communities grapple with the devastating impacts of gun violence. New York can't wait for federal lawmakers to make a move to counteract these incidents; we have to take meaningful steps to understand, address, and eliminate our gun violence crisis right now. I am proud of the work my colleagues and I have done to crack down on illegal sellers, use incidence data to guide solutions, and more. There is so much more work to be done, and we will press forward.”

Senator Kevin Thomas said, “Gun violence is a public health crisis in our nation. In recent years, the presence of untraceable ghost guns has threatened the safety and well-being of our communities. I am proud to join my Senate colleagues in passing common-sense legislation to close loopholes in our laws, stop the proliferation of untraceable firearms, and strengthen safeguards like background checks and serial numbers to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous individuals. New York State continues to be a leader in gun safety, and this important legislation will no doubt save lives and keep our communities safe.”

Rebecca Fischer, Executive Director of New Yorkers Against Gun Violence, said, “As gun violence continues to surge across the state of New York, we are grateful to have gun violence prevention champions taking the lead in the State Senate. We applaud our lawmakers for passing bills today that will ensure that untraceable ghost guns are banned, hold bad actors in the gun industry accountable, and address the scourge of illegal guns devastating our communities.”

Nick Suplina, Managing Director for Law and Policy at Everytown for Gun Safety, said, “With the passage of S.1048A through the New York Senate, New York has once again proven themselves to be a national leader, taking a meaningful step toward holding the gun industry accountable for its misconduct and negligence. The gun violence prevention

package passed today will help ensure the safety of New York's communities and continue to set the standard for gun safety across the country. We urge the Assembly to take swift action and send these bills to the Governor's desk."

David Pucino, Senior Staff Attorney for Giffords Law Center, said, "This package of bills further solidifies New York's status as a national leader in gun safety, said "Among other key advances, it will promote accountability in the gun industry by providing a path for civil liability for industry misconduct, something the gun lobby has long opposed. It will also prohibit untraceable ghost guns, helping protect New Yorkers from this fast-rising threat. We commend the Senate for advancing these life-saving bills."

Wendy Szymanski, a volunteer with the New York chapter of Moms Demand Action, said, "Victims who have been harmed by gun violence deserve justice. By passing S.1048A, Senator Myrie and the New York Senate have created a clear path that gives victims the opportunity to hold accountable the gun manufacturers and dealers whose misconduct and irresponsible practices fuel the epidemic of gun violence."

Pastor Gil Monroe, President, 67th Precinct Clergy Council "The GodSquad, said "We are pleased to stand with our lawmakers today as they continue to work to prevent gun violence. Across New York, senseless gun violence has been negatively impacting the quality of life for many residents. There are too many parents, families and neighbors dealing with deep pain and severe trauma. Some report that they experience heightened anxiety and fear whenever they hear sirens in their neighborhoods. Others report restless nights and cycles of depression as they struggle to cope with the sudden loss. Sadly, way too many of the victims are young men and women with a promising future. As an organization of faith leaders, The GodSquad walks alongside many gun violence survivors in our community as they take the long and difficult journey from grief and loss to healing and recovery. We know too well the hidden effects of senseless gun violence and believe that stronger legislation can definitely help to make our communities safer."

Rob Gore, MD, Founder Kings Against Violence Initiative (KAVI), said, "There have been countless lives lost due to gun violence in our state, and across the country, often due to illegal firearms. Many of these victims and survivors are from marginalized communities that are often not heard regarding the importance and sanctity of their lives. We are only as great as our most vulnerable. Introducing legislation that helps protect our citizens by holding gun manufacturers "accountable and responsible" for the illegal sale and distribution of firearms will provide a much needed support and create an additional safety net to insure the protection of our most vulnerable. I commend Senator Myrie and his team

for being diligent and steadfast by creating legislation that will help lead us to a safer New York..”

Kris Brown, Brady President, said, “No one should be above the law, especially not an industry that profits off of contributing to our nation's gun violence epidemic that kills over 100 people every day. From helping to ensure that bad actors in the gun industry can be held accountable and that victims of their negligence have their day in court to prohibiting the possession of untraceable 'ghost guns,' these bills will save lives and keep New Yorkers safe. This package of laws will serve as a model for other states seeking to address gun violence and the gun industry's special protections that contribute to that violence. Brady urges the New York Senate to pass them without delay.”

Camara Jackson, Executive Director, Elite Learners, Inc., said, “According to news reports, over Memorial Day Weekend there were more than a dozen mass shootings across the United States of America. New York City is not excluded from these statistics – as we know, one young man was killed and there are about a dozen victims dealing with the aftermath of shootings over the weekend. While we see and hear about incidences of gun violence in our local communities, there is a wider lens for which this issue must be addressed. Now is the time to implement policy and legislation to help reduce and ultimately eliminate incidences of gun violence.

The Senate Majority's diverse, multi-point legislation is an approach that addresses gun violence data, research, and waiting periods, as well as gun manufacturers. Gun manufacturers have not come to the table to adequately address their responsibility in this crisis or to address the concerns raised by the public about the use of guns and the

devastating impact on countless communities. The New York Senate Majority's gun violence prevention bills are a step in the right direction to do so. The legislation is also an opportunity to shed more light on the complexities of how and where guns are acquired.

On behalf of the communities that Elite Learners, Inc. serves, many of which have been negatively impacted by gun violence, we thank Senator Myrie and the members of the New York State Senate Majority for their bold and timely undertaking to address this public health crisis and their work toward broadening the narrative about personal responsibility as it relates to gun manufacturing, gun possession, and gun use.”

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