



AMERICANS SUPPORT STRICTER GUN LAWS

BOSTON—January 24, 2013—A national survey of registered voters by the Emerson College Polling Society (ECPS) released today finds that 55% would support stricter gun laws while only 12% favored less strict gun laws. There was a 2.6 percent margin of error in the ECPS survey.

As law makers propose new gun control measures, the survey suggests that universal background checks on gun buyers are supported by 83% of respondents, and a ban on assault weapons is supported by 60% of the respondents. On other policies under consideration, 58% of those polled favor a ban on magazines holding more than ten rounds of ammunition. On another hotly contested issue, (51%) support a ban on video games that depict gun violence with 29% opposing such legislation.

The most contentious policy among those polled is on the placement of armed guards in schools: 47% support such placement with 36% opposing. There are gender differences on this policy; fifty-five percent (55%) of males support armed guards in schools, with only 39% of women favoring this policy.

Grey VanDeMark, President of the ECPS speculated that GOP law makers ought not to oppose all gun control measures, as the poll found that “Sixty-four percent (64%) of Republicans support universal background checks and 38% of Republicans support a ban on assault weapons.”

According to analyst Kwon Jung notes that “sixty-nine percent (69%) of females want stricter gun laws, while only 41% of men do”.

Within the context of the Newtown, CT shooting, 33% of those polled identified the cause as a lack of mental health facilities, 23% identified the availability of guns, and 18% said that violent themes in media and video games contributed to the shooting.

There was a clear divide between Democrats and Republicans on such issues. 43% of Democrats identified the availability of guns as the primary cause, as compared to 6% of Republicans. 41% of Republicans attributed the mass shootings to the lack of mental health care, while 26% of Democrats agree.

Gun control was not seen by the respondents as the most important issue facing the country however; the deficit (30%) and the need for jobs (30%) were rated more important than gun control (7%)

Other Key Findings:

Sixty - five percent (65%) of respondents were able to correctly define “assault weapon” as automatic or semi-automatic rifles with large capacity magazines designed for military use.

Among those polled, President Obama has a 50 percent favorable rating. House Speaker Boehner has a 27% favorable rating and a 53% unfavorable opinion.

Forty-nine percent (49%) of the overall sample have a favorable view of the National Rifle Association. However, only 17 % of Democrats surveyed view the NRA positively.

Among those surveyed who were identified as members of the NRA, 65% support universal background checks on gun buyers. Forty-five percent (45%) of the participants in the survey own a gun.

Caller ID: Data was collected between Jan.18 and 20, 2013, using an automated data collection system.

The national survey consisted of 1290 registered voters with a margin of error of +/-2.6% with a 95% confidence level. The full survey and results are available at the group's website:

<http://www.emersoncollegepollingsociety.com/>.

About Emerson College Polling Society

Emerson College Polling Society is a student organization at Emerson College dedicated to formulating, administering, and analyzing public opinion polls. The results and analysis of this release are the sole views of Emerson College Polling Society and do not reflect the views of Emerson College as a whole.

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