



Ballot Question 3: BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR FIREARMS TALKING POINTS

Closes legal loophole for 40% of Maine firearm sales or transfers not now requiring background checks

Unitarian Universalist Principles:

- *First Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person*
 - *Second Principle: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations*
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Background checks work to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people.

In states that require them for all handgun sales, there are fewer women shot to death by intimate partners, fewer law enforcement officers killed with handguns, less gun trafficking, and fewer gun suicides. Since 1998, background checks have prevented more than 2.4 million felons, domestic abusers, people with severe mental illness, and other dangerous people from getting guns nationwide — including over 5,500 here in Maine.

Background checks will reduce gun violence in Maine.

Maine's gun laws still make it all too easy for dangerous people, including felons, domestic abusers, and people with dangerous mental illness, to get their hands on guns. The evidence is clear: ***Between 2004 and 2013, 132 Maine residents were murdered with guns, and an additional 1,040 killed themselves with firearms. And there is a particularly deadly relationship between guns and domestic violence in Maine: in 42 percent of all gun homicides committed in Maine in 2013, the perpetrator was a former or current intimate partner or family member of the victim.*** Additionally, criminals and gun traffickers exploit Maine laws to buy guns in Maine, and a large number of Maine guns end up in dangerous hands and are used in crimes throughout New England.

Background checks affirm the Maine tradition of responsible gun ownership.

Maine has a strong tradition of responsible gun ownership, and this initiative honors that tradition by allowing reasonable exceptions from the background check requirement — for transfers to family members, while hunting, and for self-defense. Maine needs to become the next state **to close a loophole** in the law that makes it easy to anonymously buy guns online, at a gun show or through classified ads with no background check. **This initiative will close the loophole, so that everyone buying a gun in Maine gets the same criminal background check, no matter where they buy it or who they buy it from.**