

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Community Safety, Select
For HB 236

Compiled on: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 3:53 AM

Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

Hearing Date: April 18, 2023 9:00 AM

Colleen M Pence
Self / marketing
San Antonio, TX

Hello. My name is Colleen Pence. I'm a parent and a citizen of San Antonio and I am your constituent. It is LONG past time for our representatives to pass common sense gun safety laws. Texas has the second highest number of school shootings per state. Children and teens are dying in Texas from guns every day. Parents, like me, are scared to send their kids to school but we are also scared for them to go to parks, theaters, football games, parties, churches, anywhere, really. Please do something to stop this senseless violence and killing. I fully support this bill and I hope our representatives will, too.

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Self /marketing
San Antonio, TX

Hello. My name is Colleen Pence. I'm a parent and a citizen of San Antonio and I am your constituent. It is LONG past time for our representatives to pass common sense gun safety laws. Texas has the second highest number of school shootings per state. Children and teens are dying in Texas from guns every day. Parents, like me, are scared to send their kids to school but we are also scared for them to go to parks, theaters, football games, parties, churches, anywhere, really. Please do something to stop this senseless violence and killing. I fully support this bill and I hope our representatives will, too.

Navvab Taylor
Self, architect
Austin, TX

Please support background checks!

MARY ETTA Lang
SELF
CONROE, TX

INFRINGE IS A FINITE WORD WHICH MEANS THAT IT CANNOT BE QUANTIFIED WHICH MEANS MEANS THAT CONGRESS CANNOT SAY THAT I CANNOT GIVE OR SELL MY GUN TO ANYONE WITHOUT RESTRICTIONS. NO MORE INFRINGEMENTS!

Fay Seeman
self
San Antonio, TX

To me this is a no brainer and one that everyone should and can agree on. What harm would come of it. If a gun owner is afraid of a criminal background check in connection with a transfer...then they probably should not own a gun. The insanity needs to stop. These shootings are not being carried out with regular criminals, these are people that live in our neighborhoods, go to our kids schools etc. This is important that it pass

Geroge Clement
self
Austin, TX

Against - It penalizes the law abiding, adding cost and complexity to their sale of their own property.

Gayle Alterman
Self
San Antonio, TX

Let's keep guns in the hands of responsible citizens and out of the hands of criminals. Having a national criminal background check is a logical solution to lower gun violence.

John Bolgiano
Self - Retired
Llano, TX

OPPOSED

We are told Universal Background Checks will be an effective tool to stop straw purchases.

That sounds like a good thing until you read a clear statement from the National Institute of Justice in their 2013 memo indicating they would be ineffective without gun registration.

We are told Universal Background Checks are a way to reduce both crime and suicide.

A recent joint study by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and University of California-Davis contradicts that. The study's comparison of both crime and suicide data from the first ten years of California's experiment with UBC found no significant differences when measured against 32 other control states.

We are told Universal Background Checks will reduce the number of homicides.

Try telling that to someone in Baltimore, MD. I lived there for a good part of my life. Maryland has had UBC for handgun transfers since 1996. The Maryland State Police check the applicant against the NICS system and 16 additional databases. If UBC worked, Baltimore should be one of the safest cities in the nation.

Despite having 300,000 fewer people than either Fort Worth or Austin, the number of homicides in Baltimore is typically 3-4 times that of Fort Worth and 8-9 times that of Austin.

Universal Background Checks don't work there. They won't work here in Texas.

Randall Reeves
Self
Lubbock, TX

All these bills assume the firearm commits the crime. None do anything to prevent any crime. Gun owners are not the threat

Carolyn Hidges

Myself

Dripping Springs, TX

Against...this starts a database for a basic Constitutional right and limits it

Gary Zimmerman

Myself as an LTC Instructor

Lewisville, TX

my name is Gary Zimmerman. I am a LTC instructor for 4 states (Texas, Utah, Illinois, Maryland) and the NRA. I am a FFL, and I have a LTC for 14 states.

I am opposed to the passage of this bill for the following reasons.

I would like to point out what few people seem to understand when it comes to "Universal Background checks"

They are simply UNENFORCEABLE. Why?

1. First you don't know who owns what firearms, how those firearms were obtained, or how many firearms any private individual owns. Many of These firearms have absolutely no paper trail whatsoever ever, and are untraceable because they were obtained prior to 1968, or they were inherited transferred or given away multiple times.

2. Many firearms that I own, and that many others own were inherited and even many of those firearms were obtained before 1968 when background checks became required nationwide at all FFL's. Those firearms have no paperwork trail whatsoever and are untraceable as far as who has owned them.

Because of reasons 1 & 2, aid any firearm is transferred and used in a crime. There will be no way to prosecute anyone for illegal transfer of a firearm.

3. There are places in Texas where the closest FFL is 3 or 4 hours away. That's unfair to those who don't live close to do so.

4. There is no way law enforcement can enforce this law, or be able to prosecute anyone for violating this law, unless witnessed directly by a police officer.

5. Finally there are serious questions of the constitutionality of this law.

Tammy Conrad

Self

Round Rock, TX

I support this bill that improves background checks. I also support HB 4472 & 2744. These are ways to make gun ownership safer for everyone. Thank you.

Natalie Roehen

Self, Student

Austin, TX

As a Texan, I've witnessed far too many mass shootings happening in this state due to all-too easy access to firearms, including those that were originally privately-dealt. Had there been some barriers in place to prevent such access to individuals with documented cases of instability and domestic abuse, many lives could have been saved. The least we could do is require background checks on those seeking to deal in private firearm transfers--after all, for a community so intent on recognizing and defending against crime, surely our state's gun community would be most invested in preventing their wares from falling into the wrong hands of people with criminal histories.

Susan Anderson, Dr.
Texas UU Justice Ministry
Benbrook, TX

Gun violence is out of control in our state and country. Closing the gun show loophole and requiring background checks for all gun sales would be one step, among many needed, to curb this violence. Guns should not be in the hands of those who aren't responsible to use them properly. The number of mass shootings in this country is tragic, but can be reduced with

Reed Bilz, Ms
Self
Fort Worth, TX

I am interested in proposed legislation that would limit the proliferation of guns and gun deaths through law and policy. In particular, I urge you to vote FOR HB 236 that would mandate instant background checks for private purchases of firearms.

This bill will provide safety for all Texans. I hope you will vote in SUPPORT of HB 236.

Klaudia Forgacova
Self / operations manager
Fort Worth, TX

Most people, even when including republicans, support background checks on all sales and transfers. It is so common sense that many assume we already have it. But we know by the trauma and deaths created by our lack of this, we don't require background checks on private sales or transfers in TX. Maybe we could have prevented the mass shooting in Odessa if we did. Please support HB 236!

David Bell
Self, retired
Lago Vista, TX

HB236 I support this bill which improves background check system to ensure people who are prohibited from purchasing guns can't do so.

Ginny Gustin
Self
Round Rock, TX

I support this bill

Eileen Wolfard
Self
Lago Vista, TX

We need national criminal background checks to prevent handguns being in the wrong hands to protect the public from those seeking to harm us.

Cindy Fountain, Ms
Self, Retail Merchandiser
Cleburne, TX

I support this bill. The majority of Texans support criminal background checks on ALL gun sales and have for many years. It's time to take positive action for Texans and pass this bill. Thank you.

Wendy McRoberts

Self

Danbury, TX

I support the addition of background checks especially when selling firearms privately. The best way to make sure criminals don't get guns is to not sell criminals a gun.

Loren Simpson

Swlf

Lago Vista, TX

Please pass this bill out of committee.

Katie Fike

self

Austin, TX

Please do whatever is necessary to hear this bill and get it to pass. We need gun reform, we need required background checks for every gun purchase. It must be harder to get these deadly weapons into the hands of people who will use them for harm. I am a Texas resident, and I want my kids to come home from school safely. Please vote to pass this bill.

Lora Anne Ochoa

self, Retired

Lago Vista, TX

I support this bill which improves background check system to ensure people who are prohibited from purchasing guns can't do so. These tools are provided for our safety. Use them to protect us!

Mike Sloane

Self

Bryan, TX

Do not support this bill.

Linda McCullough

Self

Lago vista, TX

All firearms sales should require a national background check. Not doing this should be a criminal offense requiring a large fine and some jail time.

Maureen Voosen

self - architect

Austin, TX

As a public education parent I support HB36 requiring criminal background check improvements. This will not only assist in preventing mass shootings, it will also help to address suicide by firearm prevention. Thank you.

Sarah Kienle, Dr.

myself

McGregor, TX

Please SUPPORT this critical bill that would make Texans - like my family, including my first grade son, safer in schools and the community. We need background checks - it should be harder to get a gun than a drivers license. Gun violence is the leading cause of death of children, and you have the power to make a real difference and save the lives of children. Use your power for good - support this, and other, common sense gun control measures.

Saami Baig
The Harris County Safe Schools Commission
Houston, TX

Please pass this bill. There should be reason as to why private gun dealers get to sell guns without a background check. It is irresponsible and unsafe and if we truly want to tackle gun violence in our society, we need to implement a background check system that secures all gun sales.

Beverly Barshop
Self
San Antonio, TX

Please improve background checks.

Caril Jacoby, Mrs.
self
San Marcos, TX

Against HB 22, Against HB.106, Against HB 220, Against HB 236 , Against HB 298, Against HB 533, Against HB 1007, Against 1138, Against HB 2274, Against HB 3272, Against HB 3435. Against 4472

Jeanne Mixon
Self retired
Pflugerville, TX

I am writing in support of HB 236 which would require a national instant criminal background check in connection with private firearm transfers. To me, this is a matter of preventing both domestic and foreign terrorism. If someone has a criminal history and is banned from owning firearms, that should be investigated before a firearm is transferred to them. This is especially important in preventing domestic violence where a protective court order has been obtained, but it is equally important to keep weapons out of the hands of people who are known to have a violent background. I believe that in a free society such as ours, there exists a social contract enforced by just laws that requires people to respect the rights of others. If someone with a grievance is able to obtain weapons despite a history of violence and commit acts of terrorism in the home, schools or stores, that violates the social contract. I also believe in giving law enforcement the tools they need to combat terrorism both foreign and domestic. Universal background checks is, to me, a bare minimum to at least ensure that the people who have protective orders against them or have been ordered by courts not to obtain weapons are unable to do so. Please consider voting for this important legislation and support our police officers in their efforts to protect us from terrorists. Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Jeana Foxman
Temple Emanu-El
Dallas, TX

On behalf of Temple Emanu-El in Dallas, a Reform Jewish congregation with over 2,700 voting-eligible members, we are writing to comment on legislation being heard by your committee on Tuesday, April 18 2023. Our specific positions on the legislation in front of your committee will follow our explanation of how our religious values and faith grounds our viewpoints.

“You shall not stand idly by while the blood of your neighbor is shed,” the Bible instructs us in Leviticus 19:16. Our neighbors’ blood was shed in Uvalde in May of 2022. Uvalde is not the first instance of mass murder; too many other Texas communities have been shattered by needless gun violence by individuals with assault rifles. In houses of worship, schools, medical offices, and grocery stores, at malls, on city streets, and in homes, families and communities are being shattered by gun violence.

The gun violence is not slowing or stopping, and instead continues to spiral out of control both close to home and across the country. As Jews working side by side with other Texans of many faiths, our shared ethical responsibilities as people of faith hold us all accountable for responding to this needless and heartbreaking violence with swift and meaningful action that will help us repair the world and the communities that have been devastated by gun violence.

We are in support of the following legislation and urge you to move the bills to the floor of the House: HB 22, HB 106, HB 236, HB 298, HB 2744, HB 3534, and HB 4472. We believe this legislation, and other similar proposed legislation, will help reduce gun violence in our state without denying lawful citizens their second amendment rights.

We oppose the following legislation: HB 1894. We believe this bill is detrimental to the safety of our communities, perpetuating the environment that allows gun violence to escalate.

We urge you to do everything in your power to bring bills to the House floor that promote the lifesaving work of gun violence reduction efforts and respond to the sacred obligations of the Bible. Working together, we can reduce the rising rates of mass shootings, suicide by gun shot and death in domestic disputes, and other gun-inflicted homicides.

Respectfully submitted,

The Clergy, Board of Trustees, and Advocacy Committee of Temple Emanu-El Dallas

Sally Anderson
Teacher / Self
Austin, TX

I'm a Texan and a teacher. I am writing because I support measures like this that will help keep our classrooms and communities safe. We should be doing everything we can to ensure our communities are kept safe, that students and teachers can enter classrooms without fear. I implore you to help to take action and support HB 236 and further protect students like mine.

George Brian Vachris, P.E.
self retired
Humble, TX

I oppose this bill as it would create an undue burden on private citizens.

Alison Killian
SELF, SOFTWARE IMPLEMENTATION
Austin, TX

Please vote yes to improve background checks and protect our children from gun violence and more school shootings.

Rebecca Baker
self
San Antonio, TX

As a Christian and a citizen of our state of Texas and the United States, I respectfully beg you to vote in favor of HB236, which would improve background checks on gun purchases (HB236); This is a reasonable safeguard to protect citizens of our state and help prevent gun purchases by those who should not have them, such as felons, mentally ill, those involved with domestic abuse, and young men and women under the age of 21 who don't have the maturity to own weapons.
Thanks so much! Rebecca Baker

Mary Gomez-Rettie
Self
San Antonio, TX

This bill is common sense for keeping guns out of the hands of criminals

FRANCES BRIGGS
North Shore Democrats of Travis County
LAGO VISTA, TX

I support a national instant criminal background check as proposed by Rep. Goodwin.

Melanie Greene
self/tech consultant
AUSTIN, TX

As a 4th generation Texan, gun owner and parent, I am pleading with you to support HB 236 that would require a background check for every gun sale. Gun owners should support this type of bill that makes it just a tiny bit more difficult for dangerous people to get their hands on a firearm.

Michael Killalea
Self
Lago Vista, TX

I support this bill which improves background check system to ensure people who are prohibited from purchasing guns can't do so.

Michael Short, Mr.
Self
Brookeland, TX

I am AGAINST this bill.

Jonathan Windsor
Self
Celina, TX

I am against this bill.

Gretchen Pierce
self / stay-at-home mom
Austin, TX

I am a mom with two kids, one who is a kindergartener in public school. I worry every single day that my child goes to school that there will be a shooting. No parent should have to live like this. I urge you to pass this legislation to help prevent deadly attacks on our schools and communities. Improving background checks will save lives and are a necessary component of a "well-regulated militia." Thank you for your time.

Maryann Riordan
Self, Retired
Livingston, TX

I support Rep. Goodwin's bill for national background checks.

Allison Craig, Dr.
Self, college professor
Fort Worth, TX

Please vote FOR this life-saving legislation that closes loopholes potentially allowing violent offenders, including those who have committed child and spousal abuse, to privately obtain firearms.

Maritza Wong, Mrs.
Self - Stay at home mom
Manvel, TX

I support this bill. It is a common sense measure that will save lives. Thank you.

Amanda El Khoury
Self
SAN ANTONIO, TX

Please let's work together and hear one another on this sensitive topic

Breann Bruton
Self
Austin, TX

I support this bill and ask the honorable committee to act with urgency to pass reasonable gun safety measures

Elizabeth Steele
Clinical Social Worker
HOUSTON, TX

Please insure basic safety checks with criminal background checks with private firearm transfers, and consequences for non compliance.

Elva Mendoza

self; public health social worker

Austin, TX

HB 236: SUPPORT. The vast majority of Texans support this life-saving initiative to close the deadly background check loophole. Domestic abusers, mass murderers, and other criminals have circumvented background check laws for years by purchasing firearms through private sellers. The Midland/Odessa mass shooter obtained his weapon through a private sale. Responsible gun owners can do their part to stop gun violence and trafficking by taking the fast and easy step of running a background check when they wish to sell firearms to anyone other than immediate family. This is no burden; 99% of Americans live within 10 miles of a federally licensed dealer. It's the least we can do to help keep guns out of the wrong hands. And data from other states show that closing background check loopholes is associated with a 10% decrease in gun homicides. This law will quite literally save lives. PLEASE support this bill, which has broad bipartisan support in our state.

Rachel Dicker

self

Austin, TX

I fully support this bill. Something needs to be done about gun violence.

Kristin McFarland

Self

Austin, TX

Please pass this common sense gun reform bill to keep Texans, especially our children safer.

Lisa Phillips

self

Houston, TX

All firearm transfers should have the same rules. Criminal background checks and red flag laws are designed to keep citizens safe from those who should not have access. By allowing private firearm transfers via gun shows or other types of private sales, we are allowing millions of guns to get into the hands of people who should not have access.

Jo Foley

self/none

Henderson, TX

I am AGAINST HB 236. This is just more oversight of law-abiding gun owners. Criminals will not care about any laws. HB 236 wants to take away something that government has not right to oversee. We are guaranteed the right to keep and bear arms. This bill is a record for government to control of Texans through a universal background checking system, more registration and forces us to go through specified channels which cause us MORE MONEY .

I am AGAINST HB 236.

Leah Raley

self/mother

Austin, TX

I am a mother to a kindergartener. I worry every day that I drop her off at school that she might be shot, especially since the murder of 19 children in Ulvade. I urge you to pass HB 236. Background checks are a key component to a "well regulated" militia.

Thank you,

Leah Raley

CLIFTON MCCULLOUGH

myself

LAGO VISTA, TX

As an Army veteran and lifelong firearms owner and shooter, I support this bill.

Delaina Bishop

SELF/Parent

Austin, TX

I HIGHLY SUPPORT this bill. Thank you Representative Goodwin for introducing this bill. We need more red tape for gun purchases. Law abiding responsible gun owners support training, licensing, red flag laws, raising the age, and banning weapons that make loved ones unrecognizable when murdered!

Adam Raley

Self

Austin, TX

I support this bill, we need to take reasonable measures to protect ourselves from gun violence.

Epi Camacho

self

San Antonio, TX

Greetings, I oppose this bill on the basis that the NICS itself would not pass the Bruen test as there was no such background checks in our nations historical tradition of firearm regulation. I have the right to transfer a firearm to a private party that I know is not in anyway federally or state restricted. Whether they are my direct family or neighbor it should be up to me to decide, not the state and definitely not law enforcement. My friends and I trade firearms like some trade baseball cards and an infringement on that freedom is one that I can not stand by and allow. Thank you

Alan Higginbotham

self

Reklaw, TX

I oppose HB 236. It's just another attempt to erode our 2nd Amendment rights. This will do nothing to reduce gun violence. Criminals do not worry about gun laws.

Camilla Ritchey

Self- owner Cibolo Creek Ranch

Bulverde, TX

Please vote for improving criminal background checks for purchasers of guns. I understand there's a huge backlog. This needs to be instant. The citizens of this state aren't safe with the status quo. We have elected you to keep us safe by representing us. Please vote for instant and more comprehensive background checks.

Craig CAMPBELL

SELF RETIRED LAW ENFORCEMENT

AUSTIN, TX

AS A RETIRED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, WE NEED THIS TO PROTECT OFFICERS, THE PUBLIC, AND CHILDREN. Mass shootings indicate that the wrong people are obtaining firearms.

EVE MARGOLIS

self

Austin, TX

Support HB 236

Thomas Sims

self - attorney

Austin, TX

Please pass this bill - we will all feel safer if we ensure that everyone who wishes to purchase a weapon will be subject to a criminal background check. There should be no way a criminal can purchase a firearm without being subjected to a background check.

Carrie Waller

Self - architect

Austin, TX

I support this bill and increased rigor in background checks for gun transfers.

CRAIG CAMPBELL

SELF RETIRED LAW ENFORCEMENT

AUSTIN, TX

SINCE I HAVE RETIRED THE ACCESS TO GUNS HAS EXPANDED SO MUCH THAT TODAY'S OFFICERS ARE IN PERIL BECAUSE OF THE WIDESPREAD DISTRIBUTION OF GUNS TO THE YOUNG, AND UNSTABLE.

Alexander Adell

self

Austin, TX

Criminal background checks should be required to transfer firearms.

Melissa Waelchli

self

Austin, TX

I support this bill. It's past time to do something about the guns.

Elizabeth Wally

self

Dallas, TX

SUPPORT Data shows that this can definitely and has made a difference when added to the safety steps a state takes with guns - and there must be a consequence to be taken seriously. Common sense

Allen Dinsmore

self

Mineola, TX

UNCONSTITUTIONAL!!! End this insane bill and then burn it. Stop attempting to add any more laws to law abiding Texans. We will be the only ones affected by these stupid laws. Thank you!

Cindy Samuelson

Self

Dallas, TX

Writing in strong support--it's past time to take action--there's no easy solution but the TX-legs need to whittle away at the problem of gun violence in our state NOW. This is a good step.

Ashley Matthews

Self

Houston, TX

I am in support of this common-sense gun safety solution.

Norma Hackler

Self

Austin, TX

I am in favor of this bill. A national instant criminal background check for private firearm transfers has been needed for years in order to protect communities, especially when a mass murder is being planned like that in El Paso a few years ago. People do remember.

Doren Fein

self

San Antonio, TX

Thank you for hearing this bill today. Strengthening background checks for more gun purchases would make it harder for ineligible people to obtain guns through legal channels. Private gun purchases or transfers should be subject to robust background checks just like purchases from authorized dealers or sellers. The gunman in the 2019 mass shooting in Odessa failed a background check and was able to purchase the weapon used from a private seller. In 2017, the Sutherland Springs gunman's deadly spree killing 25 innocent humans could have been thwarted had there been a stronger background check system.

In order to purchase a car, you must register it and have it inspected annually and that's just to purchase it. If you want to drive it, you must pass a written test and a behind the wheel driving test in order to obtain a driver's license. Then, you must pay and maintain insurance and obey traffic laws. HB 236 for strengthening background checks would not be an annual burden on gun owners to maintain their standing and ability to own or operate guns, it would only help reduce the chances of guns ending up in the hands of dangerous people.

For responsible gun owners, safety is very important and Texas is not acting in the interest of safety. Responsible gun owners should not have issue with common sense gun safety measures that would affect their day to day lives in exponentially minimal ways.

After the Santa Fe High School shooting, Governor Abbott said it's time to "make sure this tragedy is never repeated ever again." An extremely easy way to follow the Governor's lead is to strengthen background checks.

Julie Marinucci

self - Tax Accountant

Houston, TX

I support this bill. It is commonsense.

Laurie Heller
self, graphic designer
Houston, TX

I support YES votes on HB236. Please please listen to the overwhelming majority of Texans who support this gun safety legislation. We can keep responsible gun ownership protected while increasing safety for everyone by improving background checks

Al Lindsey, M.D.

Moms Demand Action, Texas Gun Sense, Texas Gun Owners for Safety, and Physicians for Social Responsibility, Austin Chapter
Austin, TX

All firearm sales should require a national instant background check. And assault weapons should only be available to active duty military and law enforcement personnel. Period.

Harper Klamian, Ms

self
Pflugerville, TX

Putting requirements in place that would protect every individual from a Single individual purchasing a firearm who should not have access to one does not take the right to bare arms away from society. It makes the purchasing process longer and the society safer as a whole. Anyone who has an issue with that doesn't need to have said firearm.

Amelia Vasquez
Self/Housekeeping
Uvalde, TX

We MUST Protect Our Children!

Annette Martinez, Ms
Self Retired Teacher
Austin, TX

FOR. HB 236 is desperately needed to keep those who seek to circumvent background checks conducted when buying firearms conventionally by buying firearms privately.

Stacy Suits, Constable
Travis County Constable Pct. 3
Austin, TX

I support this bill both as self and as a Constable .

Suzan Cotellesse
Self
Houston, TX

I strongly support HB 2744 which will address prevention of mass shootings perpetrated using military grade firearms rather than turning a blind eye to vested interests and control paranoia.

Sean Kienle
Inflammatix
Mc Gregor, TX

I am in favor of this bill

Kristin Escamilla

Self

Austin, TX

If we need background checks for simple employment, we should require one when a deadly weapon is transferred. Thank you.

Cathy Elmore

Self, retired CPA

Houston, TX

I strongly support HB 236 to make our children, communities and state a safer place. Please vote this bill out of committee and encourage calendars to schedule it for the full house.

Thank you for your service.

Cathy

Drury Stevenson

myself

Kingwood, TX

I am writing to urge the legislature to pass HB 236, which is a commonsense safety regulation that would require background checks for private gun transfers like many other states require. This law will help keep guns out of the hands of criminals, terrorists, and those with severe mental impairments. It does not infringe on anyone's Second Amendment rights, because most gun sales already require background checks (all sales made from licensed firearms dealers), and law-abiding citizens in Texas have had no difficulty in acquire as many firearms as they want even though gun dealers perform background checks. We need safer gun laws in our state to protect innocent children and others from the plague of gun violence. Please pass this bill!

Charlene Shafer

Self, Retired Teacher

Cypress, TX

We definitely need to complete criminal background checks in connection with private firearm transfers. People engaging in transferring firearms without a background check should be held accountable for a criminal offense.

bill kelberlau, CAPT USN Ret

T4T

georgetown, TX

this is absurd! it violates multiple rights of citizens that are protected by the Constitution

Katy White, Background Checks

Self

Rowlett, TX

As a citizen of Texas I support the passage of HB36. Increased instant background checks in private sales or transfers increases the safety of our State. I want to know that those who are buying and selling guns in this state under ANY circumstances are background checked. This prevents criminals and anyone with ill intent from circumventing the background checking process. We MUST pass this legislation, it's basic. 80% of Texans want it. Every single mother I know loses sleep at night over how unsafe our kids and communities currently are due to easy access to guns.

Kathy Ponce

self

Maypearl, TX

I strongly oppose this bill

Harold Waters

self

Houston, TX

This is excessive and imposes unnecessary burdens on the citizens of this state. Please do not vote for this bill.

Diane McMichael

Self

Austin, TX

Please support. This will keep Texans safer.

Lauren Gambill, Dr.

Texas Pediatric Society

Austin, TX

Chair Guillen, Vice Chair Johnson, and Committee Members,

My name is Dr. Lauren Gambill and I am a pediatrician here in Austin. I am testifying today on behalf of the more than 4,800 pediatrician members of the Texas Pediatric Society (TPS), the Texas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 236 and thank you Representative Goodwin for authoring this bill.

Gun violence is a public health crisis in our country, most notably for our kids. You've undoubtedly heard this before, but pediatricians will keep repeating it until it is no longer true -- gun violence is the leading cause of death in children in the United States [1]. And unfortunately our state is at the forefront of these tragedies. Texas had the second highest number of school shootings between 1970 and 2019 [2]. And, this number does not include the tragedy in Uvalde last May.

We can change these statistics. Gun violence can be reduced with strong, evidence-based firearm safety policies. Currently, our state does not legally require a background check for private sales of firearms. But we know that this is a major policy loophole -- nationally, 30% of guns involved in criminal trafficking were obtained through private sales at gun shows [3]. Every year, there are 1.2 million guns listed for online sale that can be purchased without a background check [4]. And on the nation's largest online gun marketplace, nearly 1 in 9 prospective buyers would not pass a background check [4]. HB 236 will strengthen Texas' firearm policy because it specifically eliminates this loophole.

Background checks are effective across multiple community safety metrics. State laws requiring background checks on all gun sales are associated with: lower firearm trafficking, lower firearm homicide rates, and lower firearm suicide rates [4]. According to Johns Hopkins researchers, the state of Missouri's 2007 repeal of a background check requirement was associated with a 25% increase in its gun homicide rate [3].

Furthermore, HB 236 will create safer communities for Texas children. Research demonstrates that the implementation of policy that requires background checks not only decreases access to guns in youth but leads to decreased mortality of kids overall by firearms [5, 6].

Background checks are a critical component of evidence-based gun legislation. They alone will not solve the current epidemic of gun violence, but they are a critical piece of the multi pronged approach necessary to protect Texan children.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today for HB 236 and thank you for your commitment to keep our most vulnerable Texans safe from preventable firearm injury and death.

Hearing Date: April 18, 2023 9:00 AM

Elizabeth Winterroth, Dr.
self, physician
PFLUGERVILLE, TX

I am writing in favor of HB 236 to expand safe gun storage. As a pediatrician and a mother, I see the physical and emotional toll gun violence takes on our communities. Please do whatever you can to strengthen gun laws and keep us safe.

ken daughtry
Self
Wheeler, TX

STOP THE STUPID.
READ THE SECOND AMENDMENT!

JAMES JORDAN
Self
CARROLLTON, TX

I OPPOSE ALL anti-gun bills that place further burdens on law-abiding gun owners and sportsmen!
In order to improve safety, make stiffer penalties for those who commit gun crimes.

James Baker
Texas Resident
Georgetown, TX

As a Texas Resident I oppose this any bill pertaining to this language.

trevor smith, mr
self - retired
johnson city, TX

please adhere to the second amendement of the constitution and stop trying to subvert said constitution. You were elected to uphold the laws of Texas and support the constitution of th United States - not to impose your personal left wing anti-conservative views on the Texas citizens.

Debbie Carrico
SELF AMERICAN
League City, TX

SAY NO TO THIS BILL

Joan Carney
self
Lago Vista, TX

I support this bill. Background check system needs to be tightened up to ensure people who are prohibited from purchasing guns can't do so.

Michael Wessinger

Patriots

Brenham, TX

This is ungovernable. You can't seriously expect every individual to register privately transferred exchanges.

Tessa Minicozzi

Self

Killeen, TX

This bill needs more clarification. What if someone is inheriting firearms in a will? What happens to the firearms if they do not pass a background check? Can they be transferred to another relative instead? Without more clarification, this sounds like an infringement of the second amendment, and could lead to the government seizure of weapons.

Mark Russell

Self

Houston, TX

I am writing to register my opposition to HB 236.

I strongly oppose HB 236 because it will restrict Second Amendment rights and invade privacy. HB 236 will criminalize the private transfer of firearms between individuals by imposing a universal background check system.

Therefore I respectfully ask the committee members to vote against HB 236.

Thank you.

Kate Weaver

Self

Austin, TX

For the safety of our children, our community.

John Flood II, Mr.

Self

El Paso, TX

Criminals WILL NEVER, under any circumstance, go through a licensed retailer, fill out government forms, submit to a background check, in order to purchase a firearm or firearms.. The ONLY people that will do that will be law-abiding Texas Citizens. Criminals will get their firearms by other (illegal) means. Your bill makes absolutely no sense. What does this bill solve?

So what's next? At the next session are you going to expand this bill to include edged weapons like knives, machetes, swords, etc.? Are you going to have some government official or police officer visit every yard sale or garage sale to monitor the sale of personal items that you deem dangerous. How about pistol or rifle parts or accessories? Where does it stop?

Ian Kress

Myself. Engineer.

Nassau Bay, TX

I am against this bill. This bill would criminalize private firearms sales to another individual, unless the seller involves a FFL for the transfer. It penalizes the law abiding, adding cost and complexity to their sale of their own property. It is also the first step to creating a statewide database of firearms, as all firearm sales would be recorded, tracked, and databased.

Leslie Ausburn
Komet
San Antonio, TX

Do right by our children. Strengthen the background check. Vote yes for this bill.

Kelley Rumps
self/retired
The Woodlands, TX

I oppose this bill.

Mary Taylor, Ms
The majority of Texas citizens-pharmacist
Austin, TX

Please protect us from the rampant gun violence. Improving the background check system would be a good start. I'm for this bill.

Jessica Lamberg
Self
Round Rock, TX

Please support this measure to require a national instant criminal background check. We need to protect our communities from gun violence. Law abiding civilians support this measure and it will help keep our communities safe. Thank you.

Karen miller
Retired
AUSTIN, TX

A good bill for community safety!

Sarah Mills, Dr.
Self
Austin, TX

As a physician and a parent, I highly support this bill. We clearly have a problem with gun violence in the United States, and we need to do more to actually protect our citizens.

Diane Hall, Mrs
Self-financial Advisor
Lampasas, TX

This is to inhibit sales of private property. The government does not have the right to restrict this. You are trying to collect information for a registry, which you do not have the right to impose.

Flynne Rooney
Myself
Houston, TX

We must improve background checks on firearms. It is disgusting you all refuse to even agree on that. As a constituent of this state it should be of the utmost importance for you all to move this bill up the ladder immediately. Background checks can save lives!

Janelle Mendoza
Self, Data Associate
Carrollton, TX

I support requiring background checks for private firearm transfers. Firearms are inherently a large responsibility, and I'd feel safer knowing that due diligence was done to make sure firearm wielders are aware of the responsibility.

Lauren Brentnell, Dr.
Self; Senior Lecturer for higher education
Pflugerville, TX

Common sense gun safety is an important, nonpartisan way to help reduce violence in our communities. Polls and studies from Gallup, Harvard Political Review, and local Texas organizations consistently show broad public support for restriction of guns based on prior history, and it only makes sense to keep guns away from people who are most likely to use them to harm themselves or others. Studies also consistently show that those with criminal histories (in particular, instances of violent crimes including assault, battery, or domestic violence) are most likely to use a gun in a future violent crime, so restrictions would only make our communities safer and contribute to the second amendment goal of "well-regulated" use of weapons.

Craig Farver
Self
La Vernia, TX

I'm totally against this bill. There's a sales form that asks the same questions as buying new. Maintain this document. Criminals lie either way!

Nikki Berry, RN
self/ Retired/Disabled RN
Lago Vista,, TX

Dear Committee Members,

I am Nikki Berry writing in support of HB 236. I am writing for myself, but in honor of and fear for my disabled twin grandbabies. They have Type 1 Spinal Muscle Atrophy, the most severe, genetic, rare form of Muscular Dystrophy. Gray and Adelaide turned 5 in January, which in itself is a major miracle. The life expectancy for these children is less than 2 years, some very much less. Many die after birth before they ever get diagnosed.

And even though it's a fatal diagnosis, Adelaide can't get Medicaid. Her brother did after spending over 3 months in Dell ICU, almost dying multiple times. He came home with a hole in his throat and one in his gut. That's the only reason he qualified, with the same fatal diagnosis. Same parents, same jobs, same money. There will never be enough money for all these kids' needs.

I wish I could be there to testify with their pictures, they are so precious. That was my plan, but I'm not well enough now. Our children were luckily born after the first real treatments and gene therapy were developed, or they would be dead now in most circumstances.

In this moment, I'm thinking back over all the children and adults who've been slaughtered, in just the last month, by these rifles and other guns. I think about the profound grief of their families and circles of influence.

In this moment, I'm visualizing my grandbabies, so excited to be in kindergarten next August. Sitting in their wheelchairs in their cutest clothes, in front of the class. They are incredibly excited and very smart. Having been so sheltered their entire lives due to their conditions, and Covid. They've never even had a birthday party with other children. And NOW, they'll have friends, real friends. Socialization with their peers. They can hardly wait!

In this moment, I'm horrified at the thought. I can see the maniac blasting away into their classroom, obliterating every five or six year old there. Mine will be first. Who will protect MY kids in wheelchairs? Who will protect any disabled kids who will be sitting ducks?

In this moment, as an RN, my heart is racing, and I can not visualize the sickening carnage. All those kids who will need DNA for identification because their bodies are scattered all over the room. But my precious grandbabies, the only ones I will ever have, won't need DNA. Half of their bodies will still be strapped into those wheelchairs.

Beverley McClure
self - retired
San Antonio, TX

HB236, to require background checks on private sale of firearms is one of several important common sense gun reform measures that the strong majority of Texans (86%) want, regardless of party affiliation (82% of Republicans). When we say that it's not guns that kill but people, doesn't it make sense to know who those gun owners are? Private sale is a gaping whole in the effort to keep guns out of the wrong hands.

Elizabeth Cazares
Self
Pflugerville, TX

Please take into consideration how powerful firearms will continue to be in possession of individuals that pose harm and threat to our communities and the importance of requiring all individuals who buy firearms, to including private sales, to require a thorough background check, will reduce horrific massacres and any serious harm that is being made to our children and other innocent people.

Forrest Myane
Self/Nonprofit Executive
San Antonio, TX

There is nothing more critical that the House can do in this session than protecting our children from gun violence. My friends lost their children on May 24th in Uvalde and my child is more likely to die from gun violence than any other cause of death. It's unacceptable that we allow this to continue in our state and country. This bill is a step in the right direction to protect our children.

Claudia Harding
Self-Self/Employed
Manchaca, TX

Hello,

I am a constituent of this great state and am asking that Texas do its part to solve the gun problem here and in the U.S. We are asking for common sense gun laws like:

H.B. 236 which improves background checks for private firearms transfers

Thank you

Kimberly Hammond
Self
Kingwood, TX

I support bills that would improve background checks (HB 236).

Hearing Date: April 18, 2023 9:00 AM

Amanda L'Esperance

Self

Cooper, TX

OPPOSE