



-STUDY GUIDE-

Y-MUN TRAINING
DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

US SENATE

1. Letter from the Secretary-General

Esteemed delegates of US Senate,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to the 10th edition of Yeditepe Model United Nations Training and Development Conference as the Secretary-General. Organized by the oldest Model United Nations Club in Turkey, every year we try to use our knowledge to provide our participants with an exceptional MUN experience.

Being aware of the current issues that our world is facing, Y-MUN 2017 will simulate 16 different committees. Most of the committees aim to give our participants a demonstration of the world's most urgent problems while some special committees will take you to the past to simulate some crucial events. With our brilliant Academic Team, we are working to provide you the finest academic experience.

In US Senate the delegates will focus on a very current issue that United States are facing, which is the gun violence and the possibility of the changes in the laws that control the regulations. I would like to thank Mr. Ata Mavi and his assistant Mr. Hüsametdin Dođan for their efforts during creating this committee. Lastly, I would like to give my thanks to my Deputy Secretary-General Mr. Uygur Berk Edebalı who supported me greatly during this process and also Mr. Onuralp Acar and his deputies Ms. Dilruba Akçınar and Mr. Ömer Cem Sipahi for their work in creating this amazing conference.

Welcome where the journey begins!

Ege SÜREK
Secretary-General of Y-MUN 2017

2. Letter from the Under-Secretary General

Distinguished delegates,

It is a great pleasure to welcome all of you to the 10th edition of Yeditepe Model United Nations Training and Development Conference as the Under Secretary-General of the US Senate Committee, a conference that took the effort of many intellect and amazing people to prepare and I would like to thank them all, starting with the Secretary General of Y-MUN 2017, Ege Sürek, who's a dear friend and an academic inspiration. Moving on with the Deputy Secretary General, Uygur Berk Edebali my loyal assistant Hüsam Doğan and all of my friends that I've shared unforgettable memories with, thank you for being a part of this conference and helping it become reality.

I, as a person believe that the gun control law is an exemplary issue in the 21st century. Controversial and with strong supporters on both side, this agenda item provides opportunity for 'fruitful debates'. With the ever-increasing shootings all over United States and the terrorism on the rise globally it is really time to ask. "Should everyone be allowed to carry guns? Is our freedom preceding the safety of US Citizens?" Fate of the gun law, which has been debated furiously over time makes it back to the agenda as yet another mass shooting happens within US Borders. Perhaps it is time to make a change.

With that being said, I look forward to seeing all of you at the 10th edition of Y-MUN.

Ata Mavi
Under Secretary-General for US Senate

1. Introduction to the Senate

A higher chamber in the Legislative branch of the federal government is the United States Senate. The United States Senate is the upper chamber in the Legislative branch of the federal government. Considered to be a more influential body than the House of Representatives.

The Senate is comprised of 100 members called senators with two senators for each state no matter the state's populations. Senators represent the state unlike the Representatives which represent certain locations from states.

Each senator serve a six year term that rotates and are elected to their position by their constituents. Terms of the Senators are staggered and every two years, one-third of the seats are up for election. Senators were appointed by state legislatures instead of being elected by the people, this has changed in the year 1913 with the enactment of the Seventeenth Amendment. The Senate goes into session in the north wing of the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C.

The Vice President of the United States chairs the Senate and casts the deciding vote in case of a tie. In the absence of the vice president, president pro tempore from the majority party chairs the Senate. The parties also choose a majority and minority leader who lead the other senators in the session.

In the US Senate Committee of YMUN 2017 we are going to have a real-time simulation of the real Senate and debate on the gun control problem which has risen to the nation's attention many times. Delegates will be expected to take on the roles of Senators like Dianne Feinstein or the charismatic Ted Cruz. To achieve an exact simulation the Republicans will be a majority by one in the committee, it is therefore necessary for delegates to use their political skills to persuade and secure votes in the bill voting's.

2. Introduction to the Agenda Item

In today's United States, many controversial issues have made it to the attention of the Senate one well known issue like this is the Gun Control. As it is expected, there are parties who desire for stricter gun control laws and parties who support the opposite and believe there should be looser firearm laws. Arguments and points have been made by both sides.; supporters of gun control believe that stricter laws will cause lesser criminal activity while gun rights supporters promote the use of guns based on the Second Amendment and their wide usage in self-defense and hunting, these parties also believe that owning guns will decrease violence. It should be noted that further research is required to figure out the true effects of owning guns would cause on violence and crime. With no definite result yielded from the studies this issue remains to be controversial. An argument that the right to bear arms is guaranteed under the Second Amendment keeps this debate going, however that is all the Constitution says on this matter. This leaves much open for interpretation and this interpretation is what is so vehemently argued over. Even though the right to carry arms is protected within the Constitution, it is the responsibility of the government to protect the lives of its citizens and limit crime, this begs the question of on which kind of level the government should regulate firearms and what the "right to bear arms" means for gun control laws. While some states like New Orleans were the first government body to make gun control laws, it was the National Firearms Act of 1934, that had the Federal Government involved for the first time. Being the first major firearms law passed, it would not be the last. The Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act in 2005 is the most recent major federal law passed which prevents the firearms manufacturers and licensed dealers from being persecuted when their products were used in crime. Some other laws were passed after the 2005 Act that dealt in commerce and ownership. However, in addition to various federal laws, states still have some regulation over gun control as shown with the recent passing of

Texas' open carry legislation. Since the most recent federal law, legislation has been proposed within the Senate, though it has always been voted down. Much of this legislature was written in the wake of several mass shootings, particularly the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting. One of the reasons that these measures have failed to pass is due to the Republican majority in the Senate which is important as the Republicans are traditionally guns rights activists while Democrats are gun control activist. One example of this is in December 2015 when several gun control amendments were proposed on a bill. One of these amendments would serve to have "expanded background checks for people purchasing firearms at gun shows and on the Internet" while another would block individuals suspected of terrorism from purchasing guns.

3. Possible Solutions

With the question of whether lack of gun control increases violence or not remains controversial this issue remains unsolved. The only concrete bill proposed and put into work to this day remains the Brady Law, which was allowed to be taken down in 2004, rendering gun control to a point of no existence. There have been many attempts in the senate and other branches of the government to increase the effectiveness of gun control however to this day there has been no progressive results. Currently the loopholes in the gun control laws for example the legality of the Bump Stocks in U.S. which is used widely around the world to modify Semi-Automatic firearms into near-automatic firearms. This was the case in the Las Vegas shooting in which Stephen Paddock killed 58 people and wounded over 500 before the authorities could do something. It is wondrous that the bump stocks are still legal since under the 1986 Firearms Owners Protection Act automatic weapons were banned, any instrument that can be used to modify a weapon into the firing mode is technically legal but the loophole

in the law allows it to be sold. Since this issue troubles the Republican view as well it shouldn't prove to require as much effort as the other problems to add this into the bill.



A. Gun Shows-Private Party Sales

Probably the most well-known loophole on gun control is the Gun Show Loophole. By Federal Law, licensed gun dealers must run background checks on all buyers whether the purchase is made in a store or at a gun show. The background check process where the buyer presents their ID to the seller and the seller sends the information to the FBI database only takes a few minutes to complete but this is not an extensive background check which may take up to a few days. However, this contradicts the whole nature of gun shows which is an event to buy guns at the place, therefore firearms are sold to basically anyone at a gun show without extensive background check. Another issue with this is the permit of unlicensed gun dealers into the gun shows. Since the seller is not a licensed gun dealer, he is free to make sales without running a background check.



B. Straw Sales

Straw sales are another loophole in the system where illegal straw purchases, whereby a surrogate buy from a licensed retailer on behalf of another. The process is strictly illegal, yet this is how many Americans unfit to carry a firearm obtain one, according to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. “Virtually every crime gun in the United States starts off as a legal firearm,” With straw purchases happening at gun shows and at the other various gun dealerships it is not surprising that many of the guns used in violent crimes can be traced back to being manufactured legally. A way to combat this would be harsher laws and punishment on individuals who engage in straw purchases.

C. Availability of High Caliber Guns and Modifications.

The widespread availability of assault weapons and high caliber weapons and parts required to make untraceable guns is another loophole which requires attention, such as the sales of silencers and flash hiders. Suppressors are regulated by the National Firearms Act of 1934. There is a somewhat lengthy process to acquire them and a 300\$ tax however it is still widely available and used by proud gun owners, whether it be for hunting or just target practice. The

impact of using suppressors in an attack is drastic however since without properly hearing a gun shot a crowd may not be aware of a shooter, increasing the number of casualties in an attack. It could also prove the police forces a trouble as they may have a hard time locating the shooter which can increase the death toll dramatically as we have seen from the latest Las Vegas shooting where faster response could've prevented the loss of some people's lives.

Flash hidens aren't regulated by any laws and legal in almost all of the states. You may purchase these attachments which hide the muzzle flash of a gun. Like the suppressors flash hidens can make it harder for the police forces to locate the shooter, especially at night times where the muzzle flash is highly relied on to locate a shooter.

D. Stockpiling Firearms.

Another problem that hasn't been addressed highly by the Senate in the past is the stockpiling of firearms. It is estimated that a big portion of the gun owners in US have at least 8 guns in their possession, this number rises up to hundreds where these gun owners have an arsenal at their house to outfit a small army. Some states have laws that prevent the sale of too many guns at once to one individual during a specified time, these states being New Jersey, New York and California, however the rest of the country is an open market with no regulations on this line. Considering that a huge percentage of the gun related violence in America is done using handguns it can prove effective to regulate stockpiling guns in a short amount of time nationwide.

4.Previous actions taken

National Firearms Act of 1934

Prior to the Great Depression, USA had seen very little of organized crime. After the Prohibition act and the rise to the top of the infamous gangsters like Al Capone, these organizations employed brutal tactics and had access to a dangerous arsenal. Sub-Machine guns first used in the trenches of World War I were now held by these gangsters, for example the infamous Chicago Typewriter, Thompson SMG. Weapons like these when wielded by criminals caused higher casualties and sometimes rendered the police force useless which was equipped poorly against the Thompson. The act took place in 1934, regulating the manufacture, sale and usage of automatic weapons.

The Federal Firearms Act of 1938

was an act to regulate commerce in firearms with the growing usage of guns in violence throughout the USA, gun dealers were required to be licensed and keep records of the people they sold guns to, their names and addresses. Gun sale to a person who committed a felony would be prohibited as well.

Gun Control Act of 1968

The Gun Control Act of 1968 - was enacted for the purpose of “keeping firearms out of the hands of those not legally entitled to possess them because of age, criminal background, or incompetence.” The Act regulates imported guns, expands the gun-dealer licensing and record keeping requirements, and places specific limitations on the sale of handguns. The list of persons banned from buying guns is expanded to include persons convicted of any non-business-related felony, persons found to be mentally incompetent, and users of illegal drugs.

The Armed Career Criminal Act

The Armed Career Criminal Act increases penalties for possession of firearms by persons not qualified to own them under the Gun Control Act of 1986.

The Firearms Owners Protection Act (Public Law 99-308) relaxes some restrictions on gun and ammunition sales and establishes mandatory penalties for use of firearms during the commission of a crime.

The Law Enforcement Officers Protection Act (Public Law 99-408) bans possession of "cop killer" bullets capable of penetrating bulletproof clothing.

Brady Law 1994

The Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act imposes a five-day waiting period on the purchase of a handgun and requires that local law enforcement agencies conduct background checks on purchasers of handguns.

The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 prohibited the sale, manufacture, importation, or possession of a number of specific types of assault type weapons for a ten-year period.

However, the law expired on September 13, 2004, after Congress failed to reauthorize it.

5. Timeline of Key Events.

1791

The Bill of Rights, including the Second Amendment -- "A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed." gains final ratification.

1927

The U.S. Congress passes a law banning the mailing of concealable weapons.

1934

The National Firearms Act of 1934, regulating the manufacture, sale and possession of fully automatic firearms like sub-machine guns is approved by Congress.

1938

The Federal Firearms Act of 1938 places the first limitations on selling ordinary firearms.

1968

The Gun Control Act of 1968 was enacted.

1986

The Armed Career Criminal Act was accepted in the Congress.

1990

The Crime Control Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-647) bans manufacturing and importing semiautomatic assault weapons in the U.S. "Gun-free school zones" are established carrying specific penalties for violations.

1994 – THE BRADY LAW AND ASSAULT WEAPON BAN

The Brady law was accepted, setting down the first effective gun control law.

1998 - NOVEMBER 30

Permanent provisions of the Brady Act go into effect. Gun dealers are now required to initiate a pre-sale criminal background check of all gun buyers through the newly created National Instant Criminal Background Check (NICS) computer system.

1999 – APRIL 20

At Columbine High School near Denver, students Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold shoot and kill 12 other students and a teacher, and wounding 24 others before killing themselves. The attack renewed debate on the need for more restrictive gun control laws.

1999 - MAY 20

By a 51-50 vote, with the tie-breaker vote cast by Vice President Al Gore, the U.S. Senate passes a bill requiring trigger locks on all newly manufactured handguns and extending waiting period and background check requirements to sales of firearms at gun shows.

2004 – SEPTEMBER 13

After lengthy and heated debate, Congress allows the 10-year old Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 banning the sale of 19 types of military-style assault weapons to expire.

2008 – JANUARY

In a move supported by both opponents and advocates of gun control laws, President Bush signed the National Instant Criminal Background Check Improvement Act requiring gun buyer background checks to screen for legally declared mentally ill individuals, who are ineligible to buy firearms.

2015 – JULY 29

In an effort to close the so-called “gun show loophole” allowing gun sales conducted without Brady Act background checks, U.S. Rep. Speier, Jackie (D-California) introduced the Fix Gun Checks Act of 2015 (H.R. 3411), to require background checks for all gun sales including sales made over the Internet and at gun shows.

2017 – OCTOBER 4

Less than a week after the Las Vegas shooting, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-California) introduced the “Automatic Gunfire Prevention Act” that would ban the sale and possession of bump stocks and other devices that essentially turn a semiautomatic weapon to fire in fully-automatic mode.

“It shall be unlawful for any person to import, sell, manufacture, transfer or possess, in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce, a trigger crank, a bump-fire device or any part, combination of parts, component, device, attachment or accessory that is designed or functions to accelerate the rate of fire of a semiautomatic rifle but not convert the semi-automatic rifle into a machine gun,” the bill states.

2017 – OCTOBER 5

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-California) introduced the Background Check Completion Act. Sen. Feinstein said would close a current loophole in the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act that allows gun sales to proceed if a background check is not completed after 72 hours, even if the gun buyer is not legally allowed to purchase a gun.

“Current law allows gun sales to proceed after 72 hours — even if background checks aren’t approved. This is dangerous loophole that could allow criminals and those with mental illness to complete their purchase of firearms even though it would be unlawful for them to possess them,” said Feinstein.

The Background Check Completion Act would require that a background check be fully completed before any gun buyer who purchases a gun from a federally-licensed firearms dealer (FFL) can take possession of the gun.

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