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Op Ed Assignment

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### **Second Amendment Rights and Gun Control**

Imagine you are a 14 year old child excited for their first day of high school, looking forward for what high school has to offer. You think about your classes, your friends, your new clubs, your new sports, and the new experiences you will live through in the next four years. You become a typical teenager looking forward to growing up and finally having a role in society. This is suddenly stunted as you see the new complications on the news; Columbine, Sandy Hook, Parkland, Santa Fe, and now Highlands Ranch (Qui, 2). You are deterred from wanting to go to school, you may seem unsafe and scared to go pursue a basic education. In today's climate 57% of highschoolers worry about having a school shooting at their own school (Fernandez, 2). Growing up as a student in the United States, these problems have become some sort of norm, we are not surprised when another shooting happens, we just overlook it and hope it doesn't happen again. It is slowly becoming an unconventional norm where all people look past any horrific event that occurs regarding guns and students. With that, many American citizens look past any of the current laws and legislation as the current governmental and political climate has made it difficult to enact any change. Evidently, it is immoral for a 14 year old to fear for their life; we must act upon the thousands of deaths that could have been prevented.

The current gun legislation is very detrimental as it makes it very easy for people to obtain these firearms in a legal manner. In order to obtain a firearm, one must simply go through

a basic background check to prove their identity and to see if there is any history of violence. After this, one attends a one day course on how to use a gun at their local police station. This simple process makes it very easy for people, especially younger people, starting from the age of 15, to get their hands on guns, despite the legal nature of it. (Mass.gov, 5) The process to purchase a firearm is absurdly easy. We must reform this process so more education goes into the process to purchase a firearm. It makes no sense that in order to be able to own a deadly weapon only requires one to attend a one day course to teach them about all of the things they need to know about maintaining, using, and protecting themselves using any firearm. Charlton Heston, previous spokesman of the NRA asserted, “Our gun control laws are so lax that anyone can buy a weapon — the mentally ill, the criminal, the boy too young to bear the responsibility of owning a deadly weapon” (Brooke). The president of the NRA himself asserted to how easy it is to get one’s hands on a deadly weapon. The NRA a proponent for gun ownership admits that these laws are too easy going to allow for all to own any gun they wish to (Brooke). Additionally, these licenses work for a variety of guns, the education that is received in a short day is not enough for one to feel comfortable with using and carrying these deadly weapons. With the lack of education, 161, 000 people suffer from accidental deaths annually (*Aftermath, 1*), and on top of this with the lack of education, people do not know how to safely store their firearms from others as well as from people who should not have their hands on these weapons. With this being said, we must reform the process in which one is able to receive a firearm.

The current gun legislation also allows people to own military grade weapons for self defense. This should not be allowed as people do not need to own these types of deadly, warlike weapons. Assault rifles and weapons cause too much damage and mayhem as they are capable of

killing off as many as 30 people at a time (*CopyBook, I*), therefore they should not be made able to be owned by the general public and only to the military as these weapons should only be used in a warlike scenario. The events in Columbine and Sandy Hook both involved automatic rifles with large magazines that allowed for a large amount of lives to be taken at once. These events took away the lives of almost 100 people combined because of the ownership of these style of guns (Wozniak). Events like these that do exist and will repeat themselves, we must work to reform the gun legislation where certain types of military grade weapons should not be made able to be purchased and owned by the general public as they serve much more harm than they do good.

Much of the pushback behind the gun control debate is based on the Second Amendment. The second amendment states, “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.” The reasoning behind the need for the rights to own arms is not to defend oneself from physical danger, but it is to protect oneself from the corrupt governments that existed during the 18th century. However, the types of weapons that existed during the time were very weak and ineffective in relationship to those of today but, a total gun ban is not being argued, just some restrictions on the types of guns made public and an improvement to the process in which one must go through to receive their gun license.

To prevent future shootings, we as a nation must work together in order to solve this dangerous crisis. Through whatever it takes, we must find a way to reform the current process in order to receive a firearm, and we must draw a line in which guns should be made available to the public and those that should only be made for military personnel.

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