



## ILLINOIS CAMPAIGN to prevent **GUN VIOLENCE**

a project of Legal Community Against Violence

# 2007 VOTER SURVEY ON GUN REGULATIONS

- Unprecedented bipartisan poll of Illinois voters
- Voters overwhelmingly support new measures to stem gun violence and crime

## FACT SHEET

### KEY FINDINGS

#### ILLINOIS VOTERS:

- Support new measures needed to reduce gun violence and crime
- Express overwhelming statewide support for proposals to regulate sales of handguns
- Want to increase responsibility for gun owners to report lost and stolen firearms and ensure safe storage with children in the home
- Consistent with other polling, indicate strong support for bans on military style assault weapons and 50 caliber sniper rifles
- Support all proposed laws, with a majority of the 26% of voters who are gun owners, hunters, and/or NRA members favoring the measures
- Show strong support for proposed policies in all four separately surveyed senate districts

#### GUN CRIME AND VIOLENCE IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM<sup>1,2</sup>

- From 1999 to 2004 guns killed 6,999 Illinois residents.
- In 2004, 994 people died from firearm-related injuries in Illinois, 573 of which were homicides.
- In 2004, African Americans were victims in 43% or 429 of firearm-related deaths in Illinois. Of these deaths, 89% were homicides.
- In 2004, guns were used in 387 suicides in Illinois. 77% of these suicides were committed by white males.
- In Illinois, from 1999-2004, 31 children and youth died from unintentional gunshot wounds.
- In 2004, 143 children aged 0-19 in Illinois were killed by guns. From 1999 to 2004, 1,039 children were killed by guns in Illinois.

#### GOAL OF CAMPAIGN

The Illinois Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence (ICPGV), a project of Legal Community Against Violence, is a research-based, public education campaign to promote meaningful statewide gun policy reform. In collaboration with an advisory team representing law enforcement, the medical and public health communities, faith-based organizations, local and state policymakers and advocacy groups, the goal of ICPGV is to inform the public and media on the facts about gun violence and the importance of prevention policies.

#### METHODOLOGY

Overbrook Research (R) and Lake Research Partners (D) completed 603 telephone surveys with Illinois registered voters from a random sample of Illinois residential phone numbers. The resulting sample matches the regional distribution of the electorate and has the following demographics: 47% male, 53% female; 77% Caucasian, 13% African American, 3% Hispanic, 1% Asian, 1% Other and 6% Not known; 49% Democrats, 39% Republicans and 7% Independents.

In addition to the statewide phone survey, 300 voters were interviewed in four Illinois state senate districts: 21, 23, 28, 43. District residents were identified by matching census tract/block group numbers to telephone records listed within those geographic locations.

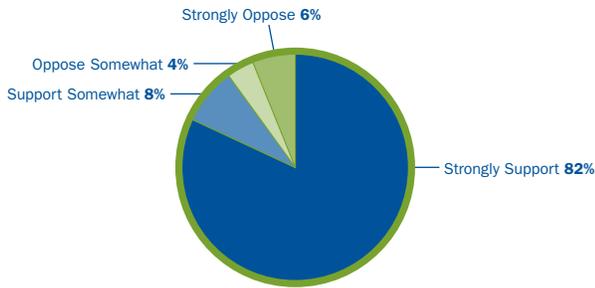
The sampling error for the statewide survey is +/-4%, at a confidence level of 95% and the sampling error for the district interviews is +/-5.7%. The surveys and interviews were conducted between February 17-25, 2007.

For an analysis of the polling results by Overbrook Research and Lake Research Partners for both the statewide survey and individual senate district responses, visit [www.icpgv.org](http://www.icpgv.org).

**KEY HIGHLIGHTS**

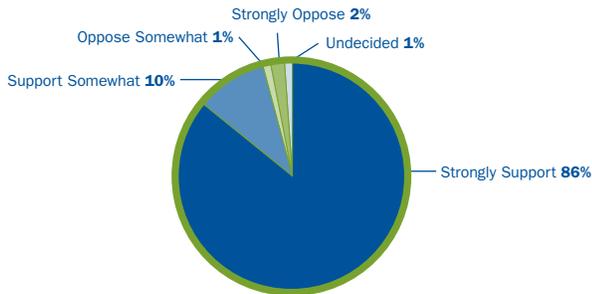
**DO VOTERS WANT INCREASED RESPONSIBILITY FOR GUN OWNERS?**

**Should the state require gun owners to lock their guns if there are children under the age of 18 in the household?**



Eight in 10 voters, 82%—strongly favor requiring gun owners to lock their guns if there are children under the age of 18 in the household. Even 61% of those with firearms behavior<sup>3</sup> strongly support such a measure.

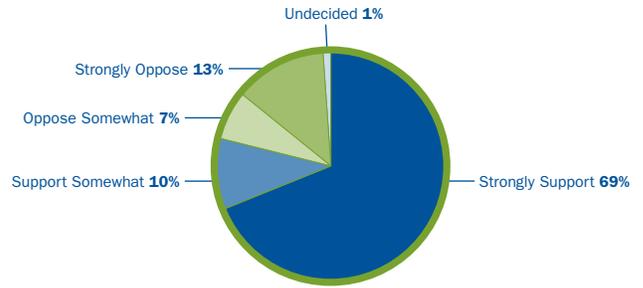
**Should the state require gun owners to inform law enforcement if any of their guns are lost or stolen?**



Most voters, 86%, strongly support requiring gun owners to inform law enforcement if any of their guns are lost or stolen. This proposal showed strong support even among men (81%), Republicans (84%), and those engaging in firearms behavior<sup>3</sup> (79%).

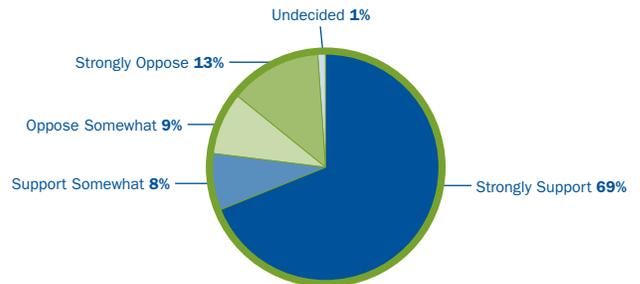
**IS THERE SUPPORT FOR MEASURES TO BAN MILITARY STYLE WEAPONS?**

**Should the state ban the sale and possession of semi-automatic assault weapons?**



Overall 8 in 10 voters favor a law to ban assault weapons, including 63% of Republicans and 3 out of 4 Democrats expressing strong support of a ban. Further, more people with firearms behavior<sup>3</sup> strongly favor the assault weapons ban (44%) than strongly oppose it (31%).

**Should the state ban the sale and possession of military-grade fifty-caliber rifles?**

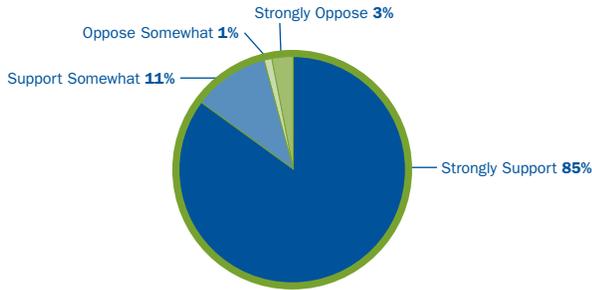


When it comes to supporting a ban on the sale and possession of powerful, military-grade fifty-caliber rifles, 77% of Illinois voters—including 79% of women, 61% of Republicans and 80% of Chicago and Cook County residents—support such a measure.

**KEY HIGHLIGHTS**

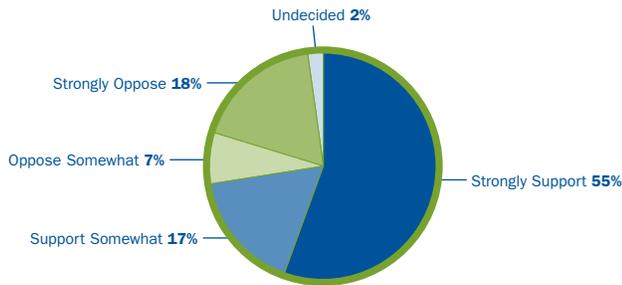
**DO VOTERS SUPPORT REGULATIONS ON HANDGUN SALES?**

**Should the state require a state license for handgun dealers?**



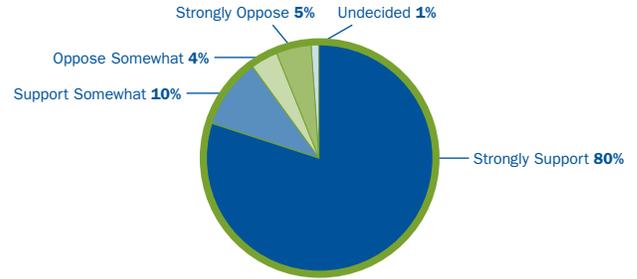
Nearly all, 96%, Illinois voters support laws requiring handgun dealers to obtain a state license, with 8 in 10 Republicans strongly favoring such a measure, and 92% of suburban voters expressing strong support of mandated licensing.

**Should the state limit the number of handguns an individual can purchase to one handgun per month?**



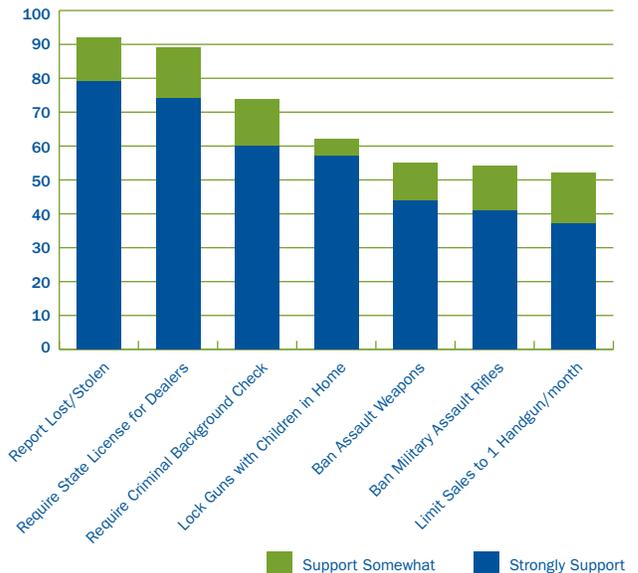
Nearly 3 out of 4 (72%)—including 68% of Republicans and 8 in 10 Cook County voters—favor limiting the number of handguns an individual can purchase to one handgun per month, with a majority (55%) strongly in support of such a measure.

**Should the state require people who buy guns from private individuals to undergo a criminal background check, just like people who buy guns from stores or gun shows have to?**



Eight in 10 voters strongly support mandating background checks before the sale of guns to private individuals. This includes 94% of African Americans, 91% of Chicago voters, 89% of Democrats and 71% of Republicans in strong support of such a measure. Sixty percent of all voters with firearms behavior<sup>3</sup> expressed strong support of this measure.

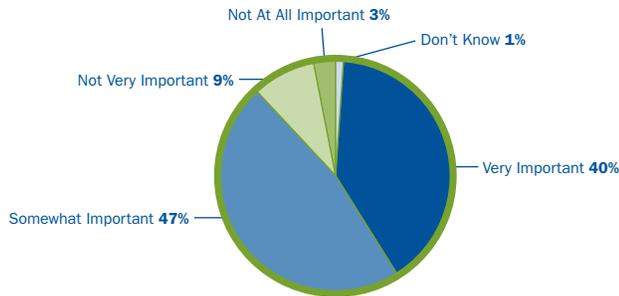
**Illinois voters engaging in firearms behavior<sup>3</sup> strongly support proposed gun regulations to stem gun violence and crime.**



## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

### ARE THESE ISSUES IMPORTANT TO VOTERS?

**How important is a candidate's position on these kinds of gun regulations when you decide how to vote?**



Nearly 9 in 10 voters say that a candidate's stance on gun regulations is important to them in how they vote come election day, with 4 in 10 saying it is very important to them. Only 3% said that a candidate's position on these kinds of gun regulations were not important to them at all when voting.

#### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> 2004 is the most recent year for which state-level data is available.
- <sup>2</sup> National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) Injury Mortality Reports, 1999-2004.
- <sup>3</sup> 26% of voters surveyed are gun owners, members of the NRA, hunters and/or FOID cardholders.
- <sup>4</sup> *Guns in America: Results of a Comprehensive Survey of Gun Ownership and Use*. Washington, DC: Police Foundation, 1996.
- <sup>5</sup> Mark A. Schuster et al., *Firearm Storage Patterns in U.S. Homes with Children*, *American Journal of Public Health*, 2000.
- <sup>6</sup> Violence Policy Center, 2003.
- <sup>7</sup> Americans for Gun Safety Foundation, *Selling Crime: High Crime Gun Stores Fuel Criminals*, 2004.
- <sup>8</sup> Philip Cook and Jens Ludwig, *Guns in America: National Survey on Private Ownership and Use of Firearms*, National Institute of Justice Research in Brief, 1997.
- <sup>9</sup> *Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative*, Crime Gun Trace Reports, 2000.

Legal Community Against Violence (LCAV) is a public interest law center dedicated to preventing gun violence. LCAV focuses on policy reform at the state and local levels and serves public officials and activists working to prevent gun violence. Founded by lawyers in response to the tragic shooting at 101 California Street in San Francisco in 1993, LCAV is the country's only organization devoted exclusively to providing legal assistance in support of gun violence prevention. For more information, please visit [www.lcav.org](http://www.lcav.org).

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Surveys of gun owners suggest that approximately 500,000 guns are stolen each year from private citizens.<sup>4</sup>
- In U.S. homes with children and firearms, 55% were reported to have one or more firearms in an unlocked place, and 43% reported keeping guns without a trigger lock in an unlocked place.<sup>5</sup>
- One-fifth of the law enforcement officers slain in the line of duty between January 1998 and December 2001 were killed with assault weapons.<sup>6</sup>
- Of the 120 highest crime gun dealers in the U.S. between 1996 and 2000, 13 were Illinois dealers – the second highest concentration of any state in the U.S.<sup>7</sup>
- Nationwide, 40% of gun transactions occur through unlicensed sellers and no-questions-asked private deals that require no background checks.<sup>8</sup>
- Of all firearm homicides in 2002 in which the type of gun was known, 77% were committed with handguns.<sup>9</sup>

### GET INVOLVED WITH THE ILLINOIS CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE

- Call 773-885-2726 or email [info@icpgv.org](mailto:info@icpgv.org).
- Sign up for email alerts for updates on new laws at [www.icpgv.org](http://www.icpgv.org).
- Contact your state senator or representative to express your opinions.