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New Yorkers Against Gun Violence and State Legislators Against Illegal Guns Discuss NY SAFE Act, Call for Further Legislative Action to Reduce Gun Violence

New York, NY – New Yorkers Against Gun Violence (NYAGV) and State Legislators Against Illegal Guns (SLAIG) stood in the NYS Capitol today with advocates, victims of gun violence, and concerned New Yorkers to discuss ongoing implementation of the Secure Ammunitions and Firearms Enforcement Act (SAFE Act), and call for further legislative action to reduce gun violence.

The SAFE Act, signed into law last year, included crucial and widely popular provisions like background checks on all gun purchasers, a prohibition on sales of assault rifles with certain characteristics, a ban on high-capacity ammunition magazines, and other measures. Legislators reflected on both the federal court's decision which broadly upheld provisions of the act and on the status of implementation.

In addition, the group discussed the [2014 legislative priorities](#), which are intended to continue New York's role as a national model for gun violence prevention, including:

- **Child Access Prevention:** Requires safe storage using a gun safe, trigger lock, or secure gun cabinet when a gun is not in the immediate possession or control of the owner, to prevent improper access and unintentional shooting, particularly by children.
- **Microstamping:** Requires all semiautomatic handguns sold or delivered in New York to be equipped with a feature that imprints a unique code onto the shell casing every time a gun is fired, to assist in solving crimes and to deter straw purchasers and gun trafficking.
- **One-Gun-a-Month Limit and Waiting Period for Purchases:** Limits buyers to one handgun a month to reduce straw purchases and trafficking, and requires a 10-day waiting period before a buyer takes possession of a firearm in order to give law enforcement officials enough time to perform a background check to help guard against impulsive acts of violence.
- **Protection for Domestic Violence Victims:** Empowers law enforcement officers to remove firearms from the scene of a domestic violence dispute.
- **Ban on .50 Caliber Military-Style Sniper Rifles:** Bans the sale of certain .50 caliber rifles with very high power and long range, in the same manner that the SAFE Act banned sales of assault weapons with certain features.

- **Better Use of Background Checks:** Requires dealers to report to law enforcement when failed background checks reveal that people have attempted to buy guns they are prohibited from owning. Also requires gun dealers' employees to pass background checks before handling weapons.

Leah Gunn Barrett, Executive Director of NYAGV, said, "Thanks to Governor Cuomo's leadership in proposing and a bipartisan state legislature in passing the NY SAFE Act, all New Yorkers are safer today from gun violence. Both state and federal courts have found this common-sense law to be constitutional and it is supported by a wide majority of New Yorkers. There is still more to do to protect our citizens from gun violence, which is why we are supporting Nicholas's Bill to make gun owners responsible for safely storing their weapons, particularly around children."

Assemblymember Brian Kavanagh, Co-Chair of SLAIG-NY, said, "Passage of the SAFE Act proved that we can build a broad coalition of government officials and advocates to take decisive steps to keep New Yorkers safe from gun violence. Our work continues as we move forward with the ambitious agenda we're announcing today."

Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel, Co-Chair of SLAIG-NY, said, "The New York SAFE Act is doing what it was intended to do-reducing the firepower available to criminals and curbing daily incidents of gun violence. The SAFE Act helped give New York State the 4th lowest gun death rate in the nation. Despite this positive outcome, there is still much more work that needs to be done to address the scourge of gun violence in our great state. The sensible gun safety legislation being advanced by State Legislators Against Illegal Guns (SLAIG) and New Yorkers Against Gun Violence are of paramount importance in protecting the safety of the public."

Assemblymember Karim Camara, Chair of the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Legislative Caucus, said, "Gun violence is an issue that disproportionately affects communities of color but it's vital that we remember that it can affect any neighborhood in any city. I am proud that we passed the New York SAFE Act last year. Not only must we protect the progress that was made in 2013, but we must continue to stand up against the gun lobby and fight for more common sense gun legislation in 2014. The gun lobby might be loud and they may spend a lot of money but, despite all their noise and misinformation, we know we have facts and justice on our side."

Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal said, "New Yorkers overwhelmingly support the SAFE Act, because it is a common-sense law that makes us all safer by simply promoting responsible gun ownership and use. Frankly, I am surprised by the intensity of the anti-SAFE Act movement: the law is narrowly tailored to ensure the safety of all New Yorkers by the least restrictive means available, and New York State's law should be a model for other states and the federal government."

Assemblymember Amy Paulin said, "Last year we led the nation by enacting groundbreaking gun legislation to keep guns out of the hands of convicted felons and potentially dangerous mental health patients, and ban high capacity magazines and assault weapons. We need to continue our efforts to combat gun violence and prevent the future loss of innocent lives by expanding current law to require the safe storage of guns in all households, where children are or may be present. Unlocked guns are a tragedy waiting to happen. Adding this common sense, reasonable requirement to our law will go a long way to protecting our most innocent -- children, and help us prevent unintentional shootings, homicides and accidents."

Senator Michael Gianaris said, “Passing the SAFE Act established New York as a national leader in the fight against gun violence, but there is always more to be done to protect our children and our neighbors from the dangers of illegal guns. In order to continue leading the way on gun safety, we must pass common-sense measures that would require stronger, more effective background checks and waiting periods between gun purchases to reduce straw purchases and illegal gun trafficking. I have fought for these sensible gun safety laws for years, and I will continue to work hand-in-hand with State Legislators Against Illegal Guns and New Yorkers Against Gun Violence to make our streets as safe as they can be.”

Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson said, “The NY SAFE Act of 2013 was unparalleled in terms of its comprehensive measures, and it is imperative that New York State continues passing gun control and safety legislation following in the same path. As members of SLAIG, my colleagues and I will continue our vigilance against senseless gun violence in order to better protect the hardworking people of this state.”

Assemblymember Pat Fahy said, “Last year's passage of the Safe Act was an important step forward for New Yorkers in saying ‘no’ to gun violence. It is imperative that we continue to focus on common sense legislation on gun usage--while protecting the rights of law abiding gun owners and sports enthusiasts--and take a hard look at laws currently on the books to ensure our neighborhoods are safe and residents are protected to the fullest extent possible.”

Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz said, “I am pleased to stand today united with my colleagues and advocates who are here to support the NY SAFE Act and remain committed to making New York a safer place by reducing the amount of illegal guns in this state. The SAFE Act was a great step in that direction, but there is much more we can do to keep our constituents safe and to keep illegal guns out of the hands of would-be criminals. I applaud my fellow SLAIG members for the legislation we stand here today in support of and I look forward to working towards seeing them become law.”

Assembly Health Committee Chair Richard N. Gottfried said, “Gun violence is a public health crisis. New Yorkers understand this, which is why they support the SAFE Act by a 2-1 margin. I'm proud to have co-sponsored this groundbreaking legislation, and that the Legislature is adding over \$3 million in the budget to implement it.”

Assemblyman Marcos A. Crespo, Chair of the Assembly Task Force on New Americans, said, “Each year, according to the federal government, more than 3 million new handguns are legally manufactured and sold in the United States. Today, more than 270 million firearms are owned by Americans. That translates into nearly 90 out of every 100 Americans owning a gun. Early last decade, we became the world's largest exporter of weapons. To end the scourge of gun violence in our society, our nation needs to put aside the billions in profit that allow Americans easy access to guns. Until we do, the biblical saying ‘Those who live by the sword die by the sword’ will continue to ring true.”

Assemblyman David Buchwald said, “Following the tragedy at Sandy Hook, we continue to reflect on the safety of our children and the importance of gun safety measures in New York State. I was pleased to join the legislature in passing the SAFE Act last year, but there's always more to be done to ensure that New York is a safe place to raise a family.”

Assemblymember Luis Sepúlveda said, “The passage of the SAFE Act last year was an important step in bringing sound gun legislation to the state of New York. However, there is still more work to be done to

keep guns out of the hands of criminals. I applaud the efforts of New Yorkers Against Gun Violence and the work they have done to continue this mission.”

Alex Dubroff, the NY Upstate Chapter Leader of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, said, “We applaud Governor Cuomo and the New York State legislators who acted swiftly over a year ago to enact the New York Safe Act, one of the country's most comprehensive gun violence prevention laws. Our New York officials put our families and communities first and took decisive action; action that will save lives and make our children safer. And for that, we can not thank them enough.”

New Yorkers Against Gun Violence is a statewide advocacy group working to reduce gun violence through advocacy and education designed to encourage action, influence public opinion and lead to policy change. With a primary focus on New York State, the organization also advocates at the local and national levels for sensible laws, policies and practices that protect New York State residents from gun violence. www.nyagv.org

State Legislators Against Illegal Guns was established in 2010 to support common-sense state legislation that keeps guns out of the hands of criminals, including background checks for purchasers, efforts to prevent straw sales, and better coordination and technology to trace and detect illegal gun sales.

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