



## Iowa Gun Owners

Iowa's Only No Compromise Gun Rights Organization  
3775 EP True Parkway, #269  
West Des Moines, IA 50265

### Opposition to Universal Background Checks

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**DATE:** January 26, 2021

**TO:** Members of the Iowa House of Representatives and the Iowa State Senate

**FROM:** Aaron Dorr, Chairman of Iowa Gun Owners, on behalf of our members and supporters across Iowa

**RE:** Opposition to House File 128

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#### Overview:

Rep. Bruce Hunter's H.F. 128 (Universal Background Checks or UBCs) is a direct attack on the Second Amendment freedoms of millions of law-abiding Iowans and would make felons out of countless gun owners, while doing nothing to stop criminals. **On behalf of the members of Iowa Gun Owners, I am writing to urge you to oppose this legislation at all points in the legislative process.**

#### Failed Policy:

House File 128 requires a government background check before the sale or transfer of any firearm in the state of Iowa. A violation of H.F. 128 is an aggravated misdemeanor, which carries a two-year jail sentence, making it a felony offense for federal 'prohibited persons' purposes.

While politicians like Bruce Hunter and the members of the House who cosponsored this bill claim their intention is to stop criminals with these background checks, the truth is that UBCs have been repeatedly shown to be worthless at stopping violent crime.

The truth is that almost every single high-profile shooting in the last decade was carried out by a madman who had already passed a background check!

A partial list includes:

The February 14, 2018 Parkland, FL shooting;

The November 5, 2017 Sutherland Springs, TX shooting;

The October 1, 2017 Las Vegas, NV shooting;  
The June 12, 2016 Orlando, FL shooting;  
The December 2, 2015 San Bernardino, CA shooting;  
The October 1, 2015 Roseburg, OR shooting;  
The June 17, 2015 Charleston, SC shooting;  
The April 2, 2014 Fort Hood shooting;  
The September 16, 2013 Washington D.C. Navy Yard shooting;  
The August 5, 2012 Oak Creek, WI shooting;  
The July 20, 2012 Aurora, CO shooting;  
The January 8, 2011 Tucson, AZ shooting;  
The November 5, 2009 Fort Hood shooting.

In the case of the Pulse nightclub shooting listed above, the killer passed a federal background check while buying the firearms used in his killing spree. He passed two more employment background checks. And, he passed another background check when the State of Florida granted him a professional concealed carry permit for his job!

Clearly 'Universal Background Checks' are worthless at stopping criminals.

### **Almost Never Enforced:**

If the purpose of UBC legislation was to stop criminals, it would be logical to assume that when a prohibited person tries to buy a firearm, they would be prosecuted for it. The truth is, UBC legislation is almost never enforced.

A report from the Justice Department Inspector General found that during the eight years of the Obama administration, the federal government prosecuted just .09% of the illegal aliens and felons who tried to buy a firearm even though they were prohibited.

In fact, during his eight years in office, the highest number of people ever prosecuted by the Obama DOJ during any one of those years was 32.

UBC legislation is clearly not about stopping criminals from buying firearms, or 'taking the bad guns off the street.'

### **Creates a List of Gun Owners:**

The reality is that anti-gun politicians like Rep. Hunter want UBC legislation enacted here

in Iowa because by making it a felony to transfer firearms without a NICS check, Hunter will begin the process of getting virtually every gun owner in Iowa into a federal database.

Anti-gun politicians like to scoff at gun owners and say stupid things like 'If you've done nothing wrong, you shouldn't have anything to worry about' in an attempt to make gun owners feel embarrassed for opposing a state or federal gun registry.

But the members of Iowa Gun Owners are proud to say that we are 100% opposed to having our names put into a government database where we can be tracked, traced, and registered like a sex offender just for exercising our Second Amendment rights.

We believe that our Second Amendment rights have nothing to do with hunting or target shooting. These rights, given to us by God and codified in the Second Amendment to the Constitution, are about ensuring the people's ability to defend themselves against a tyrannical federal government. So the LAST THING that we are going to do is agree to legislation that makes it easier for the government to know who owns what type of firearms.

### **Felons Out of Iowans:**

While H.F. 128 wouldn't stop a single violent criminal, it would be very effective at making criminals out of innocent Iowans. Many of our members received their first firearm as a gift from a father or grandfather.

The tradition of passing firearms on to the next generation is about much more than simply handing down a firearm. By doing this, Iowans are also symbolically passing down the responsibility to protect and defend the Second Amendment itself. The idea of needing to obtain government permission to do this is outrageous.

But under H.F. 128, an Iowa grandfather passing a family firearm on to his grandson (along with the responsibility to protect that rifle from gun-grabbing politicians) would be facing felony charges! The fact that this legislation was ever drafted is infuriating to gun owners in Iowa.

Make no mistake, should an amendment be drafted, or new legislation filed that exempts Iowans from UBC legislation in cases involving transfers between family members, Iowa Gun Owners would still be 100% opposed to it for the macro reasons outlined above.

### **Bad Politics:**

H.F. 128 isn't just bad policy, it's bad politics, too.

Since our founding in 2009, the members of Iowa Gun Owners have been very harsh with the careers of politicians who refuse to support pro-gun legislation, let alone vote for out-and-out gun control!

In 2010 alone, dozens of members of the House and Senate were removed from office by IGO members after we exposed their votes against pro-gun legislation.

Senators Rick Mullin, Rich Olive, Bill Heckroth, Staci Appel, Becky Schmitz, and Keith Kreiman, in addition to Representatives McKinnley Bailey, Mark Kuhn, John Beard, Doris Kelley, Gene Ficken, Ray Zirkelbach, Geri Huser, Eric Palmer, Larry Merek, Mike Reasoner, and Paul Shomshor all lost their elections because of their support for gun control in Des Moines.

In 2014, Senator Daryl Beall was removed from office by gun owners in central Iowa, after our organization exposed the gun control bills he had sponsored in the Senate.

In 2016, gun owners shocked the political establishment and threw Senators Mike Gronstal, Steve Sodders, Brian Schoenjahn, Mary Jo Wilhelm, Thomas Courtney, and Chris Brase out of office after Iowa Gun Owners exposed their support for gun control with \$150,000 worth of radio, TV, and digital ads.

And in 2020, after Michael Bloomberg hit Iowa with several million dollars in digital ads with an expressed goal of flipping the legislature, gun owners re-elected the current majorities and defeated anti-gun candidates like Abby Finkenauer, Theresa Greenfield, J.D. Scholten, and Joe Biden. As always, Iowa Gun Owners was there to highlight their records every step of the way, spending close to \$100,000 in radio and digital ads to do it.

It's clear that the voters in Iowa do not appreciate politicians who vote for gun control in Des Moines. And our members will be merciless with any politician who tries to put them into a state or federal registry, like a criminal, for buying a firearm.

## **Conclusion:**

H.F. 128 is bad policy for Iowa that would do nothing to stop criminals but would build a defacto statewide gun registry of every gun owner in the state, while setting innocent gun owners up for felony charges for 'crimes' like passing down firearms to their heirs.

For these reasons and the political/electoral realities that I laid out above, I would strongly urge you to oppose H.F. 128 or any similar legislation -- even if it contains an exemption for firearms transfers between family members.

If I can answer any further questions about this legislation, feel free to call our office at 515-309-7858 or email me at [director@iowagunowners.org](mailto:director@iowagunowners.org).