



INDIANA SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

Statement on Gun Control



Indiana's Sheriffs join our Nation as we mourn the loss of our children at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14th, 2012. In the aftermath of that tragic day, much focus has been directed at issues pertaining to guns and gun control.

While the debate stirs strong feelings across our Nation, Indiana's Sheriffs have taken an oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Indiana. Furthermore, we have sworn to do this according to law and to the best of our ability.

Millions of law abiding Americans lawfully possess and use firearms daily for recreation and protection. We must not forget those most vulnerable and their ability to protect themselves from the miscreants and those focused on harming us. Furthermore, our discourse should not cast a shadow of doubt on these millions of law abiding Americans. Firearms are inanimate objects that have no will of their own. However, they can be exploited by malevolent souls as instruments of violence. We must work tirelessly to see that those who show no respect for the sanctity of life are punished to the fullest abilities of the law. We also believe that the energy of this debate would be better focused on the issues that we agree upon. ***It is critical that we continue to work to keep firearms out of the hands of those who would use them to commit acts of violence against our citizens.***

We must increase our efforts to identify those individuals in advance and better use the system that we have in place now to prevent them from gaining access to firearms. The approach to this multi-faceted problem must be comprehensive in nature. In addition to the vigorous prosecution for those who break the law, we must also focus our efforts on strengthening the safety and security of our school facilities, providing better access to mental health treatment, and enhanced training and resources for those who may be targets of violence.

Indiana's Sheriffs also recognize that no attempt to prevent the violence that occurred at Sandy Hook will be complete unless we find a way to address the culture of violence that negatively impacts today's youth. While these tasks may seem daunting, sheriffs stand ready for the challenge and the opportunity to address these issues.

As Indiana's Constitutional Sheriffs, we remain focused on solutions, but we will not accept any concept that separates law abiding citizens from their 2nd Amendment Rights without due process. The authority of the Office of Sheriff is derived from the Indiana Constitution and those who have entrusted us with our office. Those documents bind us together as a people, both as Hoosiers and as Americans. At a time when those who are governed have less trust in those who govern, it is important that we hold steadfast in this belief and focus our attention not on what divides us, but instead, what keeps us together!

God Bless America and the State of Indiana.