

IT'S TOO EASY TO BUY GUNS, A MAJORITY OF AMERICANS SAY

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San Diego law enforcement officials show weapons collected during a gun buyback program, on December 21, 2012. A recent Quinnipiac University poll found that 57 percent of Americans think the United States would be less safe if more residents carried guns.

SAM HODGSON/REUTERS

A majority of Americans—57 percent—say it's "too easy" to buy a gun in the United States, according to a new poll. And nearly half of Americans who live in a household with a gun—45 percent—share the same sentiment, according to a Quinnipiac University national survey released this week.

- 5 The surveyors also found that 93 percent of Republicans, as well as 92 percent of Americans living in households where there is a gun, support criminal background checks on all firearms purchases, which would presumably include transactions at shows and on the internet. Current federal law requires licensed dealers to conduct background checks on all potential buyers. But unlicensed private sellers—those who work online and at gun shows, for example—are not required to observe the same policies. Some leaders and advocates have taken it upon themselves to update longstanding laws to expand background checks at the state level.
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15 The poll's findings about Republican support for background checks is in line with previous surveys. In October 2015, for example, CBS News and *The New York Times* found that 87 percent of Republicans favor background checks for all gun buyers.

20 If more people carried guns, the U.S. would be "less safe," 57 percent of voters said in the survey. Half of those surveyed who live in houses with a gun said they share the same belief. The National Rifle Association and other gun-rights groups long have said that more guns lead to less crime, but in a recent analysis of nearly 40 years' worth of crime data, a Stanford University professor found that states with concealed carry laws actually experience increases in violent crime.

25 And while a total of 54 percent said they are in favor of stricter gun laws, just 27 percent of Republicans agreed. The latter number is a big difference from that found in a Morning Consult/*Politico* poll conducted earlier in June, which said 44 percent of Republicans favor stronger laws.

Meanwhile, 80 percent of Democrats and 54 percent of independents said they support stricter laws, the survey found. [...]