

**BRADY CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE
UNITED WITH THE MILLION MOM MARCH**

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**WEST VIRGINIA RECEIVES GRADE OF “D”
ON LAWS SHIELDING FAMILIES FROM GUN VIOLENCE**

*State’s grade, released by the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence united with
the Million Mom March, unchanged from a year earlier.*

Announcements mark eighth year grades have been issued.

Washington, D.C. – West Virginia gun laws received a “D” in national ratings of state gun laws issued today because the state’s laws don’t go far enough in protecting children and families from gun violence. The state was awarded a “Sensible Safety Star” for strengthening laws to disarm domestic violence abusers.

In 2002, the most recent year for which data is available, 20 children and teenagers in West Virginia died from gunfire.

Gun violence in West Virginia could increase in 2005 because Congress failed to renew the federal assault weapon ban, which expired last fall, and West Virginia has no state law restricting assault weapons or rapid fire ammunition magazines. West Virginia also does not require background checks at gun shows, does not hold adults responsible for leaving loaded guns around children, does not require child-safety locks to be sold with guns and even forces police to let people carry hidden handguns in public. On a positive note, West Virginia does limit sale and possession of guns for kids.

“West Virginia can improve its grade next year by banning assault weapons and rapid-fire ammunition magazines, requiring background checks at gun shows and holding adults responsible if they leave loaded guns around children,” said Michael Barnes, President of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence united with the Million Mom March.

“I don’t know any parent who’d find a grade of ‘D’ acceptable on a report card,” said Sarah Brady, whose husband Jim was critically wounded in the 1981 assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan. “It’s clear that West Virginia’s leaders have a lot of work to do before families and children are safer from gun violence.”

Nationwide, 31 states received grades of “D” or “F” in this year’s report card. Only six states received an “A.” Not surprisingly, most poorly graded states have suffered child and teen firearm death rates that are significantly higher than those that received an “A” rating.

Since the Brady Campaign began grading state gun laws eight years ago, the number of young people killed by guns nationwide has dropped from an average of 16 per day to eight (based on the most recent available data). During the same period, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported a 48 percent reduction in the firearms death rate per 100,000 children and teens. Despite these improvements the CDC reports that there are still, on average, more than 40 children and teens killed or injured by firearms in this country every single day.

West Virginia Report Card: 2005
Overall Grade: D

Does this state have a __?	Juvenile Possession Law	Juvenile Sale/ Transfer Law	Child Access Prevention Law	Gun Safety Locks and Safer Design Standards	Allow Cities To Regulate Guns (Non-Preempt)	Secondary "Private" Sales Background Checks	Carrying Concealed Weapons Law	OVERALL GRADE
West Virginia	YES, must be 18 for all firearms A-	YES, must be 18 for all firearms A-	NONE F	NONE F	NO E	NO F	No police discretion, training required, reciprocity D-	D

DEMERIT: Prohibits lawsuits against gun industry.

SENSIBLE SAFETY CHAIR: *Enacted law to disarm domestic violence abusers.

GRADING CRITERIA

Each state was carefully rated on seven types of legislation that protect children from gun violence, with extra credit or demerits awarded for additional relevant legislation.

- Juvenile Possession of Guns – Is it illegal for a child to possess a gun without supervision?
- Sale/Transfer of Guns to Juveniles – Is it illegal to sell a gun to a child?
- Safe Storage and Gun Owner Accountability – Are gun owners held responsible for leaving loaded guns easily accessible to children?
- Childproof Guns and Gun Design Safety – Are guns required to have child-safety locks, loaded-chamber indicators and other childproof designs? Are there restrictions on unsafe Saturday night specials?
- Preemption – Do cities and counties have authority to enact local gun laws?
- Secondary "Private" Gun Sale Background Checks – Are background checks required at gun shows and between "private" parties?
- Carrying Concealed Weapons (CCW) – Is it legal to carry concealed handguns in public?

For specific reports for all 50 states, please visit the Brady Campaign web site at www.bradycampaign.org.

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