

**The Need for Background Checks:
Preventing Criminals and the Dangerously Mentally Ill from Getting Guns
Mr. Joseph Deaser
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Thank you, Chairman Prozanski and members of the Judiciary Committee for the opportunity to speak to you today on the importance of expanded background checks and my strong support for Senate Bill 941. My Name is Joe Deaser, I own The Capital Gun Club in Roseville, California and am committed to having a safe environment for the club members and guests.

As a proud gun store owner, an avid outdoorsman, and a lifetime member of the National Rifle Association, I know that recreational firearm use can be a safe, family-friendly activity that builds community and benefits everyone who takes part. But I also know that with our constitutional right to bear arms comes a responsibility to protect our loved ones and our neighbors from the devastating effects of gun violence.

As a father of two wonderful children and a loving fiancée, I believe that universal background checks are crucial in today's society. Background checks help keep bad people from having guns, period. I can't think of a more ridiculous thing in this world to squabble about. There is absolutely no sane argument against a universal background check that makes any sense to anyone but a criminal. The State of California has recognized this and requires background checks for all firearms sales – even private transactions. Even with this background check requirement, firearms sales continue to be on the rise, which shows that the common-sense requirement for background checks has not discouraged lawful citizens from purchasing firearms.

Under the present system, individuals can easily avoid a background check by purchasing guns from unlicensed sellers like those they meet over the internet, and basically anywhere else outside of a gun dealer. Criminals know this, and they don't hesitate to take advantage. We know that roughly 40 percent of gun transfers are not subject to a background check under federal law. This means that for these private sales no one is checking the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, an archive of mental health and criminal records that has successfully prevented felons, domestic abusers, and the seriously mentally ill from getting their hands on guns.

This hazardous loophole in our gun laws allows dangerous people to obtain weapons without any obstacles whatsoever.

Why even give them the chance?

In California, every gun sold is subject to a background check. All you have to do is go to a gun dealer and they will conduct the check for you. I would like to talk about this particular point in a

little bit more detail. As a gun dealer, I think it is important for a lot of reasons that background checks be conducted at licensed gun dealers.

- Gun dealers have been doing this for decades. Conducting background checks is easy for us to do because it is something we've been doing for a long time. All of the paperwork, the process, and the actual background check itself would simply be an extension of what we gun dealers already do.
- Because of our experience and training, gun dealers are in the best position to spot possible straw purchases and to stop them before they happen.
- Gun dealers are everywhere, whether it's in California or Oregon or any other state, gun dealers are everywhere. So it's really easy for people to get to a gun dealer and do the check.
- Dealers that conduct background checks for private sales stand to gain new customers and increased revenue through additional sales of popular accessories, ammunition, and safety equipment.

No law-abiding gun owner should oppose background checks as they pose no threat to those of us who enjoy the use of firearms for recreational purposes and personal safety.

After a long career as an engineer and businessman, I founded the Capital Gun Club in Roseville, California to provide the opportunity for members to enjoy the sport of shooting in a safe and controlled environment. We believe that every member who plans to shoot at our facility should take part in a background check and be "live scanned" before they can participate in the club. We do not sell fear at our establishment, nor do we need to – we can guarantee there is no criminal element within our group.

The Capital Gun Club is comprised of a members-only 18 lane indoor shooting range, a full service training facility, and gun store. At The Capital Gun Club we believe that every member who plans to shoot at our facility should take part in a background check and be "live scanned" before they can participate in The Club. This is something we all volunteer to do, it not only helps ensure the safety of our members but also sends the message of safety, fun and family first!

Our Club has become stronger because of our procedures and we have become a real community. All guests, family and friends are subjected to the same rules and regulations as our members. The notion of letting an outsider take part without following our rules would be ridiculous to everyone, and this is how it should be everywhere. Gun ownership is the right of all law-abiding citizens of age in our country, and the Second Amendment is a fundamental building block of American society. But it was not intended to shield those who choose to break our laws, hurt our citizens, and endanger our families.

Perhaps the strongest evidence for universal background checks is that nearly everyone believes they are a good idea. Nearly 90 percent of Americans – including 82 percent of gun owners –

support a background check requirement for all gun sales. As an adamant supporter of gun rights with a professional stake in the game, I could not agree more with the American people.

Our politicians should also agree. As you debate this legislation that would mandate background checks, you must keep in mind this fact: Background checks help keep bad people from getting guns – period. This is why I strongly support Senate Bill 941.

Thank you.