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Experts available: House Vote on Universal Background Checks

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This week, the House of Representatives is expected to vote on two bills regarding gun control that would create a universal background checks system. For reporters covering these bills, the following researchers are available to provide expert analysis and commentary.

KRISTIN ANNE GOSS

Duke University



Expert on gun politics and policy, and the evolution of gun-related advocacy over the past decade.

Quote: "On gun laws, the action is all at the state level. That's been the situation for many years and, realistically, isn't gonna change anytime soon. But state and local officials are close to the ground and, below the media radar, are enacting and enforcing laws and otherwise supporting communities living with and dying by gun violence. That's the story."

MICHAEL ROCQUE

Bates College



Expert on race and crime, school discipline, and juvenile justice.

Quote: "It is unclear whether universal background checks influence gun violence. The Rand Corporation, last year, after reviewing high quality studies, found that the evidence is "inconclusive" regarding whether universal background checks reduce violence and homicide. In a study published last year, my colleagues and I found no evidence that such a measure influences the incidence of mass public shootings. However, we did find that requiring permits does reduce these types of shootings and so this measure may be more effective."

MICHAEL SIERRA-ARÉVALO

University of Texas at Austin



Expert on policing, gangs, firearms, social networks, and violence prevention.

Quote: "Universal background checks are widely supported by the American public, including gun owners, Republicans, and even NRA members. It's not a cure all for American gun violence, but expanding background checks to private sales would close the so-called 'gun show loophole' and help prevent prohibited possessors acquiring firearms."