

Block Illegal Ownership (BIO) and Fix the FOID Bill Factsheet

⚠️ THE PROBLEM

Mass shootings have devastated Illinois in recent years, including the tragic shooting at the Henry Pratt Company in Aurora on February 15, 2019. Historically, loopholes in state law allowed individuals prohibited from purchasing firearms to obtain guns and use them to injure and kill innocent victims. In 2020, more than 34,000 in Illinois were deemed unsafe to own a gun; yet nearly 80% of those individuals remained armed. Illegal guns drive gun violence across the state, which continues to rise. From 2019–2021, gun deaths increased 32% statewide. In 2020, gun homicides in Chicago increased by 52%, and are on pace to surpass this level in 2021. In a state where gun violence is a leading cause of death for children, blocking the flow of illegal guns is critical to interrupting the cycle of violence.

In response to these tragedies, gun violence prevention organizations, advocates, and lawmakers joined together to introduce bipartisan legislation to close the loopholes in Illinois law.

✅ THE SOLUTION

On June 16, 2021, the Illinois state legislature passed the BIO bill, a bipartisan gun safety bill that expands true universal background checks to all gun sales and provides funding to community mental health initiatives. Governor Pritzker signed the bill into law on August 2, 2021 and most of its provisions went into effect on January 1, 2022.

The new law creates fundamental protections to keep Illinois communities safe from gun violence:

1. Expands background checks to all gun sales beginning January 1, 2024.
2. Mandates record keeping of sales including the make, model, and serial number of the gun by a Federal Firearm License gun dealer (FFL).
3. Directs \$9 million from concealed carry license fees to mental health and trauma support services through community-based programs.
4. Requires the Illinois State Police (ISP) to remove people from people with revoked FOID cards who have not surrendered them.
5. Creates incentives for collecting fingerprints as part of FOID applications or at the time of a firearm purchase.
6. Creates a stolen gun database.
7. Requires ISP to continuously monitor state and federal databases for prohibited gun buyers.
8. Improves processes to secure more funding for National Instant Criminal Background Checks System (NICS) implementation.

HOW DOES THE LAW MAKE ILLINOIS SAFER?

When paired with other violence prevention initiatives across the state, such as increased funding for community-based violence intervention programs, the new law will help reduce violence across Illinois. Research shows that a strong gun licensing system (FOID) combined with background checks on all gun sales can lead to a 40% reduction in gun violence. The BIO bill will close important loopholes in Illinois law that currently make it easy for prohibited owners to have access to guns.

Sources

<https://www.illinois.gov/news/press-release.23654.html>
<https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-met-illinois-guns-foid-cards-revoked-20190520-story.html>
https://dev-one-aim.pantheonsite.io/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/OneAim_CurrentGunLaws_FactSheet_02.pdf