

Rep. Hintz: Statement on universal background checks

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MADISON - Today, Governor Tony Evers, along with Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes, Attorney General Josh Kaul, and legislative Democrats, introduced legislation to create a universal background check system in Wisconsin. Currently, background checks are only required under federal law for sales conducted by licensed dealers. This legislation closes the loophole for firearms purchased at gun shows and from strangers online. Representative Melissa Sargent (D-Madison) and Senator LaTonya Johnson (D-Milwaukee) introduced this legislation today for co-sponsorship. Assembly Democratic Leader Gordon Hintz (D-Oshkosh) released the following statement:

“The public has an expectation that government should do everything possible to reduce the likelihood of gun violence, which has become far too common across the country. Republicans in Washington D.C. and even the President himself, have publicly stated that background checks are necessary to reduce gun violence and promote gun safety. Yet the vast majority of Wisconsinites are currently represented by politicians who won’t even discuss the most basic steps that can be taken to protect the public.

“Democrats believe in safe gun ownership, and understand that our 2nd amendment rights come with a responsibility to reduce gun violence and promote firearm safety. Governor Evers did the right thing by reaching out to Republican leadership to pursue universal background checks in a bipartisan effort moving forward. It’s disappointing, but not surprising, to see Republicans punt yet again when faced with concrete policies to make

our communities safer.”

Last session, Assembly Democrats brought a bill to the floor that would implement universal background checks for all gun purchases, something over 90% of Americans, and 81% of Wisconsinites support. Every single Republican voted against it.