

Giffords Law Center: Rittenhouse verdict a perversion of justice, empowers hate-fueled vigilantes

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WASHINGTON, DC — A jury today found Kyle Rittenhouse [not guilty on all charges](#). Rittenhouse was charged with five felonies, including shooting and killing two people, and injuring another. Giffords and Giffords Law Center Executive Directors released the following statement in response to the verdict.

Peter Ambler and Robyn Thomas:

“Today’s verdict is a perversion of justice. Our nation is built on laws—not vigilantism. Murder, racism, and hate-fueled violence should be condemned, not celebrated. Too often, our legal system protects the right of white Americans to take the lives of others, especially people of color. Kyle Rittenhouse wielded his whiteness as a shield and his AR-15 as a weapon in the streets of Kenosha, where police officers thanked the self-styled militia members, including Rittenhouse, and let him walk away after killing two people.

Rittenhouse also benefited from our country’s weak gun laws. The gun lobby argues that everyone will be safer if we all arm ourselves, but this extremist idea is neither supported by most Americans nor any evidence. As the tragic events on that night in August showed, a 17-year-old arming himself with an AR-15 makes no one safer. Rather than roll back gun safety laws, as the gun lobby is pushing the Supreme Court to do, we must strengthen gun laws that protect us all. Laws like minimum age requirements and assault weapon regulations don’t infringe on the Second Amendment—they’re commonsense protections. At the same time, extreme Stand

Your Ground laws that encourage people to shoot first and ask questions later must be repealed.

Today's verdict sends a troubling message that will encourage further vigilante violence and murder. That is not a society in which we are safe or free. Rather than accept this version of America, we recommit to doing everything in our power to make this country safer."