

WisDems: Fact sheet highlights how dangerous gun laws backed by Michels and WisGOP will increase violence and undermine law enforcement

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MADISON, Wis. — The Center for American Progress released [a report](#) connecting Republicans' radical legislation to loosen gun safety measures and undermine law enforcement with threats to public safety in Wisconsin.

Without the [leadership](#) of Governor Evers and his veto pen, "Wisconsin gun laws would be even weaker and could have followed the footprints of other states still controlled by Republican trifectas. Many Republican-led states with weaker gun laws are experiencing higher homicide rates than Wisconsin, as [FBI data shows.](#)"

Should Tim Michels be elected governor, Wisconsin will move full steam ahead on extreme and dangerous gun legislation. Michels has admitted that he looked forward to working with the legislature and "[getting those bills right,](#)" that Gov. Evers has vetoed. This includes a bill that would allow loaded firearms on school grounds and another that would recognize concealed carry permits from other states, regardless of whether those states conduct background checks in their permitting processes.

Read more on how Gov. Evers has protected our state with his veto pen below.

Center for American Progress: [Fact Sheet: Dangerous Gun Laws in Wisconsin](#)

During their period of trifecta control from 2011 to 2019, Wisconsin Republicans enacted gun legislation that both increased the presence of guns in communities and made it easier for dangerous people to access firearms. The results have been deadly and are felt to this day, as [violent crime is up](#) across the Badger State. But the sad truth is gun crime in Wisconsin could be far worse. Since he took office in 2019, Gov. Tony Evers (D) has vetoed numerous pieces of dangerous Republican legislation that would have undermined common sense gun safety laws.

Republicans, who still maintain control of the legislature, have blocked all of Gov. Evers' efforts to improve gun safety in the state—despite the surge in violent crime and the [overwhelming popularity](#) of common sense gun policies such as universal background checks and “red flag” laws. They even went as far as [ending the special session](#) that Gov. Evers called to address gun crime in mere seconds.

Republican leaders are set to continue weakening gun laws and prioritizing the gun lobby over Wisconsinites' safety. Without Gov. Evers, they would have passed policies that would have made the already rising rates of gun crime much worse. Electing Democrats who will work to reduce gun violence in Wisconsin has never been more important.

[...]

Republicans in the state legislature would have further undermined law enforcement and weakened gun laws if not for Gov. Evers' veto pen

- In 2021, Gov. Evers [rejected](#) Republican state lawmakers' attempt to prevent any federal bans or restrictions on semi-automatic firearms, assault-style weapons, or large-capacity magazines from being enforced within Wisconsin borders.
- In the 2022 legislative session, the Republican-led legislature [sent three bills](#) to Gov. Evers desk that would have expanded the already permissive and dangerous CCW policy:
 - [A.B. 495](#) would have expanded concealed carry to allow loaded firearms on school grounds, reversing the state's gun-free school zone policy.
 - [A.B. 597](#) would have expanded concealed carry to allow firearms in places of worship, including on school property. This bill also would have significantly weakened the gun-free school zone statute in the state.
 - [A.B. 518](#) would have expanded the state's law to recognize permits from other states, regardless of whether those states conduct background

checks in their permitting processes.

- Republicans also [introduced legislation](#) this year that would have lowered the age for getting a concealed weapons permit from 21 down to 18. [Numerous studies](#) have shown that when young people have access to guns, they commit homicides at high rates and are at an elevated risk of attempting suicide.
- Evers has worked to pass gun safety policies that would make Wisconsin safer:
 - In 2019, Gov. Evers [called a special session](#) for lawmakers to discuss gun crime solutions that Wisconsinites want from their leaders, such as universal background checks and extreme risk laws. Republicans in both legislative chambers [ended the special session within seconds](#) without any debate or consideration of gun violence prevention proposals.
 - In 2021, Gov. Evers [announced a \\$45 million investment](#) of American Rescue Plan funding in violence prevention efforts.
- Without Gov. Evers' veto of Republican legislation to expand gun rights, Wisconsin gun laws would be even weaker and could have followed the footprints of other states still controlled by Republican trifectas. Many Republican-led states with weaker gun laws are experiencing higher homicide rates than Wisconsin, as [FBI data shows](#).

If Republicans win in November, they will plow ahead with proposals to further expand gun rights.

- Despite evidence that the state's already permissible CCW law is responsible for increased rates of violent crime in the Badger State and the fact that [76 percent of Wisconsin residents](#) oppose the idea, [three of the four GOP candidates](#) in the primary race for governor proposed to weaken the law to no longer require any training or permit whatsoever to concealed carry a firearm in public places, including schools.
- Republican gubernatorial candidate Tim Michels has vowed to oppose gun safety measures if he is elected, ignoring the [80 percent of voters](#) who want universal background checks and [extreme risk protection orders](#). He has even gone as far as to [say that domestic abusers](#) should continue to have access to firearms.
 - Michels also [suggested he opposed](#) the recently passed Bipartisan Safety Communities Act, which would, among other provisions, provide states funding to implement extreme risk laws.

Conclusion

Despite increases in violent crime in Wisconsin, Republican legislators are laser-focused on weakening gun safety laws. At the expense of public safety, they have advanced the gun lobby's agenda by expanding access to concealed carry permits and removing mandatory wait times.

In the years following the implementation of these dangerous gun policies, the state has seen rates of violent crime continue to rise. Despite evidence of surging rates of gun violence, Republicans have continued to advance policies that will make guns easier for dangerous people to access and pare back even the mildest gun safety measures. Fortunately, Democratic Gov. Evers has served as a backstop for Wisconsin's gun laws, blocking Republican attempts to weaken them further.