

The Eagle Eye editorial board proposes a set of discussion points

THE EAGLE EYE MANIFESTO

As a student publication, The Eagle Eye works to tell the stories of those who do not have a voice. Today, we are the ones who feel our voice must be elevated. In the wake of the tragedy that occurred at our school on Valentine's Day, our lives have changed beyond what we ever imagined. We, along with our publication, have been transformed. We will remain so for the rest of our lives.

We have a unique platform as not only student journalists, but also as survivors of a mass shooting. We are first-hand witnesses to the kind of devastation that gross incompetence and political inaction can produce. We cannot stand idly by as the country continues to be infected by a plague of gun violence that seeps into community after community and leaves irreparable damage to the hearts and minds of the American people.

That's why The Eagle Eye editorial board has come together and proposed that these following changes must be put in place in our federal and state governments to ensure that mass shootings and gun violence cease to be a staple of American culture. By making some or all of these changes, we hope to see an observable decrease in gun violence in the nation, especially in communities that have had to live with it silently for so

many years. It is time that we take action, no matter what side of the aisle we are on, to prevent the heartbreak we have felt in this community from being felt anywhere else in this country. These may not be the ultimate solutions, and they are certainly not the views of all MSD students, but they provide a launching point from which to start debate and compromise. Without either we will achieve nothing. *Editorial by The Eagle Eye editorial board*

Ban the sale of semi-automatic weapons that fire high velocity rounds to the public

1

Civilians shouldn't have access to the same weapons that soldiers do. That's an extreme exploitation of the Second Amendment. These weapons were

designed for dealing death: not to animals or targets, but to other human beings. These weapons are bought and sold solely as collectibles and have no practical use in society. The

fact that they can be bought by the public does not promote domestic tranquility, but rather puts us in the kind of danger faced by men and women trapped in war zones. This

situation reflects a failure of our government to protect us. It must be corrected to ensure the safety of those guaranteed the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Ban accessories that simulate automatic weapons, like bump stocks

2

High capacity magazines played a huge role in the shooting at our school. In less than seven minutes, 17 people were killed, and 17 others were injured. This is unacceptable. That's why

we believe that bump stocks, high-capacity magazines and similar accessories that simulate the effects of a military-grade automatic weapon should be banned. Bump stocks allow a gun to deploy dozens of bullets

in seconds. In the 2017 shooting in Las Vegas, Nevada, 58 people were killed, and 851 others were injured by gunfire. The gunman's use of bump stocks enabled unimaginable numbers

of people to be hurt while gathered in one of the most iconic cities in America. If it can happen there, it can happen anywhere. That's why action must be taken to remove these accessories from the market.

Establish an electronic database of gun sales and universal background checks

3

We believe that there should be a database that records which guns are sold in the United States, to whom and of what caliber and capacity they are.

Just as the Department of Motor Vehicles has a database of license plates and car owners, the Department of Defense should have a database of gun serial numbers and gun owners.

This data should be paired with infractions of gun laws, past criminal offenses and the status of the gun owner's mental health and physical capability. Together with universal

background checks, this system would help law enforcement stop a potentially dangerous person before they commit a gun-related crime.

Change privacy laws to allow mental healthcare providers to communicate with law enforcement

4

As seen in the tragedy at MSD, the lack of communication between mental healthcare providers and law enforcement enabled a disturbed person with murderous intentions to enter our school and gun down 17

people in cold blood. We must improve this channel of communication. To do so, privacy laws should be amended to allow mental health professionals to alert authorities when their client or patient has explicitly stated that they will

commit an act of violence. That will allow law enforcement to restrict firearm access for people who are a danger to themselves or to others. That could help prevent future tragedies. We are not in favor of allowing mental health

professionals to become a channel by which the authorities exploit the mentally ill; we simply want preventable tragedies to be prevented, especially if the person in question has displayed extreme propensity to violence.

Close gun shows and second-hand sales loopholes

5

Thanks to loopholes, people who otherwise would not be able to buy firearms are able to purchase them at gun shows and second-

hand sales. If we are serious about preventing people from purchasing deadly weapons, we must monitor purchases that take place at gun shows and on

second-hand markets. This is especially urgent as the dangers of mentally unstable and violent individuals armed with firearms continue to rise in recent

years. By eliminating gun show loopholes, communities can be more secure in knowing who has access to deadly weapons.

Allow CDC to make recommendations for gun reform

6

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention should be allowed to conduct research on the dangers of gun violence. Republican-controlled Congresses have historically threatened to cut funding from the CDC unless

research into gun control-related subjects was stopped. The NRA has also accused the CDC, an independent government agency, of being in favor of gun control.

The fact that they are threatened into silence and

complacency regarding gun violence undermines the First Amendment and the right of the American people to be aware of statistics regarding gun violence and gun violence solutions. It is hypocritical to rally people to protect the Second Amendment,

while remaining silent on the ways that blocking research violates our most basic constitutional freedom. With access to peer-reviewed information, citizens can make informed decisions on the efficacy of proposed gun laws.

Raise the age for firearm purchase to 21

7

Within a few months from now, a significant portion of the MSD student body will be 18. We will not be able to drink; we will not be able to rent a car. Most of us will still be living with our parents. We will not

be able to purchase a handgun. And yet, in another state, we will be able to purchase an AR-15.

Why is it that we will be able to legally obtain a weapon that has the ability to fire over 150 rounds and kill 17 people

in about six minutes? That is unacceptable. It is absurd that to buy a handgun, you have to be 21, but a gun of mass destruction and devastation like the AR-15 can be purchased when one is just becoming an adult.

With the exception of those who are serving the United States in the military, the age to obtain any firearm must be raised to 21. Other states, and even the federal government, should follow Florida's lead in this initiative.

Dedicate more funds to mental health research and professionals

8

The federal government and state governments should earmark more funds specifically for mental health services. Those with mental health issues, especially those who express aggressive,

violent, suicidal and/or homicidal thoughts should have the opportunity to receive the help they need regardless of their economic status.

Schools specifically should receive more funds in order to

hire more psychologists and guidance counselors who can aid students suffering from PTSD, depression and other debilitating mental illnesses.

Many of those who commit mass shootings suffer from

these kinds of illnesses. It is essential that more funds be dedicated to mental health research and treatment. However, it is also important not to attach the stigma of violence to mental health patients.

Increase funding for school security

9

We believe that schools should be provided sufficient funds for school security and resource officers to protect and secure the entire campus. As a school of over 3,000 students, teachers and faculty, Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School was only

supplied funds to hire one on-campus armed resource officer by the state.

Without backup, this officer's hesitation proved to be disastrous and allowed for the senseless murder of students and teachers in the 1200 building to continue onto the

second and third floors. Though this idea has been proposed in the past, these funds should not be appropriated from the already scarce funding for public education. In Broward County, \$100 million have been appropriated for safety

through the SMART initiative, but few programs have been put into place. Federal and state governments should find resources to secure the children that attend public schools without taking away from the quality of education at these institutions.