

*Crime -
Gun
Trafficking*

New Gun Running Data Shows: Florida, Georgia, Mississippi and Texas Top Nation in Supplying Guns to Out of State Criminals

Firearm Freeways Funnel Southern Guns to Northern, Midwestern States with Tough Gun Laws

Schumer Cites Disturbing Gun Running Patterns in Push for National Gun Laws, tough ENFORCE Bill

Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, and Texas were the source of nearly one in four guns used in out of state crimes committed in 1999, according to a new report issued by Senator Charles E. Schumer (D-NY) entitled "War Between the States," which documents the flow of crime guns between states. War Between the States shows that gun runners funneled thousands of guns from a handful of mostly southern states with weak gun laws to criminals in the Northeast and Midwest where gun laws are much more strict. Schumer also revealed that criminals in states with tough gun laws like New York, New Jersey, Illinois, Michigan, and Massachusetts mostly depend on out of state guns to commit crimes; whereas criminals in states with weak gun laws rely almost exclusively on in-state guns.

"A vast network of gun runners use our highways like firearm freeways to traffic illegal guns to criminals. Their source is states with weak gun laws where straw buyers easily acquire large quantities of guns with no questions asked, and their destination is street criminals in states with tough gun laws," said Schumer.

Using raw data obtained from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Schumer reported that Florida and Georgia were the two leading suppliers of guns used in crimes committed out of state with guns from these states flowing mostly up the Atlantic coast to New York, New Jersey, the District of Columbia, Maryland and New England. Mississippi took the number three spot with most out of state guns spreading to Illinois and Tennessee. Texas was fourth with hundreds of crime guns making their way east to New York and Tennessee, north to Illinois, and west to California.

Together, these four states were the source of 7,494 of a nationwide total of 30,453 out of state crime gun traces -- nearly ten times the 769 out of state crime traces for guns that originated in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Massachusetts.

"Georgia, Florida, Mississippi and Texas are habitual bad actors. Criminals and straw buyers know that these states have a don't ask, don't tell policy toward selling guns and law enforcement is helpless in stopping them," said Schumer. "Lax gun laws in one state translates into murder and mayhem in another. We need to replace our patchwork of state laws with a uniform national law that plugs all of the loopholes that criminals routinely exploit."

Schumer is author of the ENFORCE bill that increases funding for ATF agents, gives law

enforcement greater authority to investigate high crime gun dealers, and requires all guns to file ballistics DNA with law enforcement. Schumer also supports legislation to license and register handguns and limit handgun purchases to one per month.

“When a state like Maryland or California passes tough gun laws, gun traffickers simply move to other states like Texas or Mississippi to acquire a stockpile. Criminals know the business and know where to find the weakest links in the chain,” said Schumer.

In total, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms successfully traced 93,948 crime guns in 1999 back to a retail dealer. 30,543 of these guns – or slightly less than one-third, were used in crimes committed outside of the state where the gun was originally sold. But the number of out of state guns used in crime correlated strongly with the strength or weakness of a state’s gun laws.

For example, two-thirds of the crime guns traced in New York last year came from other states. Over half in Massachusetts, 71% in New Jersey, and 42% in Illinois came from other states. Each of these states require licensing or registration of handguns. By comparison, only 19% of Georgia crime guns, 21% of Florida crime guns, 25% of Mississippi crime guns and 27% of Texas crime guns were traced to stores in other states. Each of these states has no

“This report proves that gun control works because criminals in states with strict gun laws cannot find guns legitimately in their home state. It also shows that where there is a weak spot in the law criminals are ready to exploit it,” said Schumer.

(See attached report)

WAR BETWEEN THE STATES

By Senator Charles E. Schumer

Last year, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms successfully traced 93,948 crime guns back to a retail dealer. Of these successful traces, 30,543 guns, or 32.5%, were traced back to a retail store in a state other than where the crime was committed. This report analyzes the 1999 trace data and, in particular, focuses on the out of state traces.

The analysis shows that:

- a handful of states with weak gun control laws are the source of thousands of guns used by criminals in states with strong gun control laws;
- conversely, very few guns find their way from states with strong gun laws to criminals in states with weak gun laws;
- gun runners have blazed one-way routes between specific states and regions where guns go from dealer, to straw buyer to street criminal. For example, gun runners trafficked 1,685 guns from Florida, Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia traced to crimes in New York, however, only 61 New York guns were traced to crimes committed in these five Southeastern states;
- criminals in states with weak gun laws mostly acquire guns within their state, whereas criminals in states with tough gun laws mostly acquire guns from an out of state source.

12 States Supplied More Than 1,000 Guns Traced to Out of State Crimes Last Year

Twelve states supplied more than 1,000 guns traced to out of state crimes last year and were the source of 57% of all out of state guns used in crimes. Four states with extremely lax gun laws – Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, and Texas – were the source of nearly one-fourth of all out of state crime guns.

By contrast, eight states with some of the strongest gun laws in the country -- New York, Illinois, Connecticut, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Maryland -- were the source of less than 10% of all out of state crime guns.

<u>State</u>	<u># out of state guns</u>	<u>Leading Victim States</u>
Florida	2,065	New York, DC, Tennessee
Georgia	1,945	New York, Tennessee, Illinois
Mississippi	1,788	Illinois, Tennessee, Louisiana
Texas	1,696	Illinois, California, Tennessee, New York
California	1,682	Texas, Illinois, New York
Indiana	1,479	Illinois, Tennessee, Ohio
Virginia	1,433	New York, Maryland, New Jersey
Kentucky	1,164	Tennessee, Illinois, Ohio, New York

Ohio	1,068	New York, Illinois, Michigan
Arizona	1,066	California, Texas, Illinois
Alabama	1,060	Tennessee, Illinois, Georgia, New York
North Carolina	1,044	New York, Virginia, New Jersey

Florida, Georgia, Mississippi and Texas are habitual suppliers of guns used in crimes committed outside of their state. None of these states require licensing or registration of handguns, limit the number of guns a person may purchase at any given time, require any waiting period beyond Brady before the purchase of a gun, dictate any reporting requirement if an individual sells or transfers a gun to someone else, or puts any restrictions on the sale of guns at gun shows.

Between 1997 and 1999, Florida and Georgia ranked either first, second or third in out of state crime guns. Texas ranked second in 1996, fourth in 1997, fifth in 1998 and fourth in 1999. Mississippi's ranking climbed from 8th in 1996, to sixth in 1997, seventh in 1998, and third in 1999.

Facts About the Worst Actors

Florida (2,065 guns traced to out of state crimes in 1999)

Florida's gun laws are weak. There is no licensing, permitting, or registration requirement for any firearm. There is no limit on the number of guns that may be purchased at one time. Background checks are not required at gun shows or for any private transfer of a gun. Florida has instituted a waiting period of 3 days before the purchase of a handgun and may hold parents liable if a child uses an unlocked weapon to kill or injure another. These are the only significant gun restrictions beyond national law. The leading destinations for Florida crime guns: New York - 340, DC - 207, Illinois - 181, Tennessee - 153, Virginia - 123, Georgia - 120, Texas - 114, New Jersey - 97, Maryland - 80, California - 76, Puerto Rico - 75, Pennsylvania - 50. Florida was one of the top 3 supplier states of crime guns to 12 destinations: Connecticut - 1st, DC - 1st, Puerto Rico - 1st, Georgia - 2nd, Maine - 2nd, New York - 2nd, Rhode Island - 2nd, South Carolina - 3rd, Virginia - 3rd, Alabama - 3rd, Louisiana - 3rd, Massachusetts - 3rd. At least one Florida gun was recovered in 45 states (Nebraska, New Hampshire, South Dakota, Wyoming were the exceptions.) Only 21% of the guns traced to crimes committed in Florida came from out of state. No Florida crime guns came from DC, 30 came from New York, 11 from Maryland, 5 from Massachusetts, and 11 from New Jersey.

Georgia (1,945 guns traced to out of state crimes in 1999)

Georgia's gun laws are exceptionally weak. There is no licensing, permitting, or registration requirement for any firearm. There is no limit on the number of guns that may be purchased at one time, minimum age for purchase or requirement that background checks be performed at gunshows or for any private transfer of a gun.

The leading destinations for Georgia crime guns: New York - 339, Tennessee - 279, Illinois - 196, Florida - 169, New Jersey - 109, Virginia - 107, Alabama - 106, Maryland - 73, Texas - 72, Pennsylvania - 64, Michigan - 54, North Carolina - 52.

Georgia was one of the top 3 supplier states of crime guns to 10 destinations: Alabama - 1st, Florida - 1st, Massachusetts - 2nd, Michigan - 2nd, South Carolina - 2nd, New Jersey - 3rd, New York - 3rd, North Carolina - 3rd, Pennsylvania - 3rd, Tennessee - 3rd

Only 19% of the guns traced to crimes committed in Georgia came from out of state.

Only 3 Georgia crime guns came from New York, 2 from New Jersey, 0 from DC, 3 from Massachusetts, 8 from Michigan, 10 from Illinois and 3 from Maryland.

Mississippi (1,788 guns traced to out of state crimes in 1999)

Mississippi's gun laws are exceptionally weak. There is no licensing, permitting, or registration requirement for any firearm. There is no limit on the number of guns that may be purchased at one time, minimum age for purchase or requirement that background checks be performed at gunshows or for any private transfer of a gun. Parents may be held liable if a child uses an unlocked gun to kill or injure another. That is the only significant gun restriction beyond national law.

The leading destinations for Mississippi crime guns: Illinois - 780, Louisiana - 102, Missouri - 79, Tennessee - 365, Texas - 64.

Mississippi was one of the top 3 supplier states of crime guns to 5 destinations: Louisiana - 1st, Tennessee - 1st, Wisconsin - 1st, Illinois - 2nd, Alabama - 3rd.

Only 25% of the guns traced to crimes committed in Mississippi came from out of state.

No Mississippi crime guns were traced back to Illinois, Wisconsin, or New York stores. 1 was traced to a Missouri dealer.

Texas (1,696 guns traced to out of state crimes in 1999)

Texas' gun laws are exceptionally weak. There is no licensing, permitting, or registration requirement for any firearm. There is no limit on the number of guns that may be purchased at one time, minimum age for purchase or requirement that background checks be performed at gunshows or for any private transfer of a gun. Parents may be held liable if a child uses an unlocked gun to kill or injure another. That is the only significant gun restriction beyond national law. The Center on Crime, Communities and Culture of the Open Society Institute ranks Texas gun laws 47th weakest of the 50 states.

The leading destination for Texas crime guns: Illinois - 231, California - 170, Tennessee - 134, New York - 132, Louisiana - 94, Virginia - 88, Missouri - 86, Florida - 68, New Mexico - 66.

Texas was one of the top 3 supplier states of crime guns to 13 destinations: Arkansas - 1st, Kansas - 1st, Louisiana - 1st, New Mexico - 1st, Oklahoma - 1st, Arizona - 2nd, California - 2nd, Colorado - 2nd, District of Columbia - 3rd, Florida - 2nd, Missouri - 3rd, Nevada - 3rd, Oregon - 3rd

At least one Texas gun was traced to a crime committed in every state except Alaska, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

Only 27% of the guns traced to crimes committed in Texas came from out of state.

Texas, with 7,663 gun stores, is home to more licensed firearms dealers than any other state and has 1,100 more licensed gun stores than California (6,535), the number 2 state.

Criminals in States with Weak Gun Laws Use In-State Guns; Those in States with Strict Laws Rely on Out-of-State Guns

Of the 35 states with at least 300 successful crime traces last year, four states with gun laws among the strictest in the country had at least half of their crime gun traces come from out of state and two others had at least 40% of their crime traces come from other states.

**The States with the Highest Percentage of Out of State Gun Traces Have Strict Gun Laws
(Minimum of 300 traces)**

State	% Out of State Guns	Leading Suppliers and # of Guns
New Jersey	71%	Pennsylvania (148), Virginia (136)
New York	67%	Virginia (459), Florida (340)
Missouri	53%	Kansas (693), Illinois (226)
Massachusetts	51%	New Hampshire (68), Georgia (48)
Illinois	42%	Indiana (879), Mississippi (780)
Michigan	41%	Ohio (120), Georgia (54)

New Jersey requires assault weapons to be registered, background checks at gun shows, and for all private transfers of handguns, and a permit to purchase handguns and assault weapons. Parents are potentially liable if a child uses an unlocked gun to injure another.

New York requires handguns to be licensed and registered as well as a permit to purchase handguns and assault rifles. Background checks are required at gunshows and for all private transfers of handguns.

Missouri bars anyone under the age of 21 from possessing a handgun, requires a background check at gunshows and for all private transfers of handguns, has a waiting period of 7 days before the purchase of a gun and requires a permit for all handgun purchases.

Massachusetts requires all handguns, rifles, and assault weapons to be registered, gun buyers must pass a safety course in order to qualify for a license, Saturday Night specials are illegal, anyone under the age of 21 is barred from owning a firearm, background checks are required at gunshows and for all private transfers of handguns, and parents are potentially liable if a child uses an unlocked gun to injure another.

Illinois bans Saturday Night specials, forbids anyone under the age of 21 from owning a firearm, requires owners of all firearms to be licensed, and parents are potentially liable if a child uses an unlocked gun to injure another.

Michigan requires handguns to be registered and owners must pass a safety training course before being allowed to purchase a handgun.

**The States with the Highest Percentage of *In State* Gun Traces Have Lax Gun Laws
(Minimum of 300 traces)**

<u>State</u>	<u>% of In State Guns</u>
Indiana	89%
Louisiana	82%
Arizona	81%
Georgia	81%
California	79%
Florida	79%

Indiana, Louisiana, Arizona, and Georgia have no significant gun restrictions beyond federal law. Florida has no significant gun restrictions with the exception that parents may be held liable if a child uses an unlocked gun to injure another. California, which traditionally has had weak gun laws, enacted tough gun restrictions only last year.

Firearms Freeways Used To Traffic Guns on Familiar Routes

Certain states supply an inordinate amount of guns to select states indicating a trafficking route connecting gun stores to gun runners to gun buyers in states with tough gun laws who cannot pass a Brady check.

I-95: Florida, Georgia, North and South Carolina, and Virginia are the source states for a vast gun running effort that stretches up the coast to New England. These five states supplied 3,623 guns traced to crime in DC, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Conversely, these Mid-Atlantic and New England states supplied only 869 to crimes committed in these five Southeastern states of which more than half were Maryland guns used in Virginia crimes.

Kansas was the source of 693 guns traced to crimes committed in Missouri. Missouri was the source of 12 guns traced to crimes in Kansas.

Mississippi was the source of 780 guns traced to crimes in Illinois. Illinois was the source of 0 guns traced to crimes in Mississippi.

Sources

All gun trace data derives from raw data obtained from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. Information about state gun laws was supplied by the Center on Crime, Communities and Culture of the Open Society Institute through its report, "Gun Control in the United States: A Comparative Survey of State Firearms Laws."