

PATRICK

HOPE

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VIRGINIA LAWMAKERS PROPOSE GUN SAFETY LEGISLATION

Virginia Senator Adam Ebbin and Delegate Patrick Hope purchased handgun and 30-round magazine without undergoing background check

RICHMOND, VA – Virginia State Senator Adam P. Ebbin (D-Alexandria) and Delegate Patrick A. Hope (D-Arlington) have introduced a package of gun safety legislation to require universal background checks on prospective firearms purchasers (SB 1232 / HB 2025), close the gun show loophole, and tighten restrictions on the sale of weapons to the mentally ill (SB 1109 / HB 2221).

SB 1109 and HB 2221 would make it a Class 6 felony to sell firearms to persons found mentally incapacitated or who have been involuntarily admitted.

Ebbin also introduced legislation to require the reporting of lost or stolen firearms (SB 965) and to outlaw firearms in legislative buildings (SB 1012).

"We easily purchased a handgun at a Virginia gun show, without undergoing a background check. Sadly, nearly 40% of all gun sales are conducted without a background check. In the interest of community safety, it's not too much to ask for responsible gun purchasers to undergo a background check to screen for criminal history or history of serious mental illness," the two wrote in a joint statement.

The lawmakers discussed their visit to a gun show in a January 15th news conference at the Virginia Capitol. Hope showed the High Standard Sentinel Revolver he bought for \$175; because he purchased the gun from a private dealer, he did not have to undergo a background check to screen for a criminal record. "Today, a felon with a violent past can walk into a gun show or go on the Internet and buy any gun with no questions asked," Hope said. "A law we could pass today, requiring universal background checks for all gun sales, would have an almost immediate impact on gun safety. No responsible gun owner is afraid of a background check."

Displaying a 30-round ammunition magazine he purchased for \$20, Ebbin said, "Buying a 30-round magazine should not be as easy as buying a candy bar." He noted that a 30-round magazine was used in the recent Newtown, Connecticut tragedy that left 26 dead.

Citing the need to pass SB 965, Ebbin said, "When a gun is stolen, a deadly weapon is in criminal hands—a combination we all want to avoid. Reporting lost or stolen guns can help police avert a tragedy."

Hope and Ebbin called on Virginians to contact their legislators in support of the gun safety legislation.

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