



## Senate gun hearing: Controversy over background checks

By Ryan Teague Beckwith – February 5, 2013

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Expanding background checks for gun purchases was the major topic of a wide-ranging Senate hearing Wednesday.

A Senate committee held a wide-ranging hearing Wednesday about gun control. Although topics included a proposed assault weapons ban, mental health and crime, the proposed expansion of federal background checks to buy guns was the most-discussed measure.

According to a transcript, the phrase "background check" came up 137 times at the hearing, compared to "assault weapon," which came up only 33 times.

Here are some of the key things people said at the hearing about background checks.

**"When it comes to background checks, let's be honest. Background checks will never be universal because criminals will never submit to them."**

— Wayne LaPierre, CEO of the National Rifle Association.

**"Mr. LaPierre, that's the point. The criminals won't go to purchase the guns because there will be a background check."**

— Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill.

**"You know, Adam Lanza at Newtown didn't have background checks. He stole the guns after murdering his mother."**

— David Kopel, policy analyst at the libertarian Cato Institute

**"The best way to stop a bad guy from getting a gun in the first place is a good background check."**

— Baltimore County Police Chief James Johnson

**"We'd like to see the federal laws that are on the books enforced."**

— Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala.

**"Universal background checks is a proven, effective step we can take to reduce gun violence. And I believe it has a good chance of passing."**

— Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y.

**"I bought a hunting rifle from Walmart a few months ago, and I went through a background check. It didn't take very long."**

— Mark Kelly, husband of former Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz.

**"I know gun store owners in Vermont. They follow the law. They conduct background checks to block the conveyance of guns to those who should not have them. And they wonder why others who sell guns do not have to follow these same protective rules."**

— Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt.