

# Florida shooting: NRA sues as Florida enacts gun-control law

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Florida school shooting



**The National Rifle Association (NRA) is suing Florida after it passed a gun control law in the wake of a school shooting that left 17 people dead.**

Governor Rick Scott, a staunch ally of the gun lobby, enacted the bill, which the NRA says violates the constitution. The law raises the legal age for buying rifles in Florida, but also allows the training and arming of school staff. It does not ban semi-automatic rifles like the one used in the 14 February massacre in Parkland. But it does introduce a three-day waiting period on all gun sales and a ban on bump stocks, a device that enables semi-automatic rifles to fire hundreds of rounds a minute.

Florida Governor Rick Scott, a Republican, signed the bill into law on Friday, after lawmakers at the Florida state level voted in its favor. As he signed it, he said he was an NRA member, and that some members would agree with the new law while others would not.

"It's an example to the entire country that government can and has, moved fast," he said.

Florida's Attorney General Pam Bondi said the changes were "the right thing to do".

"This bill is not perfect, and sadly it will not bring back the 17 lives lost in the horrific school shooting, but the safety of our children is not a political issue," she said.

## **What does the NRA say in its lawsuit?**

The NRA filed its lawsuit on Friday just an hour after the bill was signed by the governor. The NRA is asking a judge to block the age restriction and prevent the state of Florida from enforcing the new law.

People aged 18 are considered adults "for almost all purposes and certainly for the purposes of the exercise of fundamental constitutional rights", the lawsuit says.

The complaint says the law violates the second amendment of the US constitution, which protects the right to bear arms.

It also argues the bill breaches the 14th amendment's equal protection clause by banning law-abiding citizens between 18-21 from buying guns.

NRA spokesman Chris Cox said the bill "punishes law-abiding gun owners for the criminal acts of a deranged individual".

"Preventing a responsible 20-year-old from purchasing the best tool for self-defense will not stop a deranged criminal intent on committing a crime," the lobby group said.

The legal action says the Florida legislation particularly affects young women.

"Females between the ages of 18 and 21 pose a relatively slight risk of perpetrating a school shooting... or, for that matter, a violent crime of any kind," says the lawsuit.

It also points out that men of 21-24, just outside the new age limit, account for more violent crime arrests than men aged 18-21.

The bill's passage by a Republican-controlled legislature in a state where the NRA wields considerable influence is seen as a testament to an impassioned pro-gun control campaign launched by young survivors of the shooting and parents of the victims.