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FAU Poll Finds Floridians Support Ban on Assault-Style Rifles, Universal Background Checks and Raising Age to Buy Guns

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BOCA RATON, Fla., Feb. 28, 2018

BOCA RATON, Fla., Feb. 28, 2018 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- In the wake of a mass shooting that took the lives of 17 students and teachers at a South Florida high school, a vast majority of Floridians support stricter gun laws, including a ban on assault-style rifles, universal background checks and raising the minimum age for gun purchasers, according to a statewide survey by the Florida Atlantic University Business and Economics Polling Initiative (FAU

BEPI).



Seven out of 10 Florida voters want stricter gun laws while only 19 percent said laws should be left as is and 11 percent said laws should be less strict. Universal background checks for all gun buyers are supported by 87 percent of

voters. Nearly 4 of 5 voters (78 percent) support raising the minimum age to purchase a gun from 18 to 21, while 69 percent support a ban on assault-style rifles. A proposal to arm teachers is opposed by 56 percent of voters and supported by only 31 percent.

The survey also found that 27 percent of voters have either been a victim of gun violence themselves or know someone who has. When asked what they believe is the major contributor to mass shootings, the availability of guns came in first with nearly 4 of 10 voters (39 percent), while 24 percent selected a lack of mental healthcare.

Florida voters disapprove of U.S. President Donald Trump's response to the recent mass shooting 49 to 34 percent.

Florida Gov. Rick Scott has lost ground to Sen. Bill Nelson in a U.S. Senate race hypothetical matchup. Although Scott has not officially declared his candidacy for the seat currently held by Nelson, the latest poll shows Nelson with a two-point lead over Scott, 40 to 38 percent. A poll FAU BEPI conducted at the beginning of February showed Scott leading Nelson by 10 points.

"The bad news for Scott is his A+ rating from the National Rifle Association (NRA) makes 44 percent of voters less likely to vote for him," said Monica Escaleras, Ph.D., director of the BEPI.

The survey, which polled 800 Florida registered voters Feb. 23-25, was conducted using online questionnaires and via an automated telephone platform (IVR). The survey has a margin of error of +/- 3.6 percentage points.

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