



## North Brooklyn News - by Jason Moskowitz

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In this month's edition of the North Brooklyn News, I will not be writing about the fate of 421(a), I will not be proselytizing about the direction of our state legislature and the short-sightedness of the DSA. I will not be giving statistics on absorption, vacancy, rental income, etc. Nor will I be telling you about interest rate increases, inflation, or employment. This month I write about the only issue that should matter to any of us: The continued murder of American children, and the lack of appropriate response by our politicians. In a New York Times article published 48 hours after the tragic event at Robb Elementary School – ELEMENTARY school – in Uvalde, TX, not one Republican senator was willing to speak about the current legislation, or rather lack thereof, regarding gun laws. The fact that

50 senators cannot commit to changing the antiquated and disastrous gun laws in this country sickens me, and I am not alone. According to Bradyunited.org, 97% of Americans want expanded background checks, including 75% of NRA members. This should not be a political issue – this should be a basic human right issue. The right to go to school feeling safe and secure. So why do our politicians continue to ignore their constituents? How can 50 men and women hold up legislation that has already passed through our House of Representatives, defying the will of 97% of the people in the United States of America? How are they permitted to hide behind the second amendment of the constitution, which was written, as a matter of fact, approximately 70 years before the bullet was even invented, and immediately following the shedding of the yoke of colonialism?! Obviously, the forefathers of this once great country did not envision the assault rifle. They could not know that we would grow to a land of 300 million people; could not fathom a single individual having access to weapons of such fearsome and horrifying power – that spew upwards of 1,000 rounds per minute. They could not predict that their beloved nation would have a death-by-firearm rate 25 times higher than any other high-income country, or that on average eight children would be killed by guns every day, or that in the past 10 years, according to the Naval Postgraduate School's Center for Homeland Defense & Security, the United States of America has experienced 948 school shootings – TEN PER YEAR. Innocent children, sitting in class, where they should feel safe, where parents should have the peace of mind to drop them off, go to work, and know their children will be coming home for dinner. The proliferation of gun ownership, and the ease in which we have allowed them to be obtained, has essentially removed that security. These politicians talk about our rights. What about the rights of children and parents to feel safe in school? Because it isn't written in a 200+ year old document, is it not their right – all our right?

What can be done? Laws similar to The Brady Law can be enacted. These laws work. Since the Brady Law was enacted in 1994, over 4-million gun sales have been blocked, about half of those being felons looking to obtain firearms. The problem is that The Brady Law only covers about 60% of gun sales in the US. Online sales and gun show sales are still not subject to Brady Law background checks. Universal background checks are simply a must. Let's start there!

All of these statistics mean nothing if no one speaks up. Thoughts and prayers aren't cutting it. We need change in this country. If any of this has gotten through to you, please visit Bradyunited.org, Sandyhookpromise.org, amnesty.org, or any other website devoted to the prevention of gun violence in America. From there you will find easy links to take whatever action you deem appropriate – contact your congressman, speak out, attend an event, donate, etc. We once thought the smoking epidemic was unsolvable and the tobacco lobby too rich and powerful, but since the enactment of small laws and the relentless increase in education about smoking, countless lives have been saved over the past 50 years. Let's make guns the cigarettes of the 21st century. Do your part – speak up. Maybe my grandchildren will know a world in which going to school doesn't come with an "active shooter" safety lesson.

Jason Moskowitz is a licensed associate real estate broker at Marcus & Millichap.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540