

# White House 'applauds' historic gun control march but no word from Trump

The White House said it “applauded” pro-gun control demonstrators at the [March for Our Lives](#) on Saturday without directly addressing their calls for stricter gun regulation, although Donald Trump did not weigh in on Twitter, as he is prone to do.

“We applaud the many courageous young Americans exercising their first amendment rights today,” said a White House spokeswoman, Lindsay Walters.

She added: “Keeping our children safe is a top priority of the president’s, which is why he urged Congress to pass the Fix Nics and Stop School Violence Acts, and signed them into law. Additionally, on Friday, the Department of Justice issued the rule to ban bump stocks following through on the president’s commitment to ban devices that turn legal weapons into illegal machine guns.”

Trump spent much of the morning at the Trump International golf club in West Palm Beach, Florida. The White House did not respond to questions about his activities there.

■ [Emma Gonzalez's powerful March for Our Lives speech in full - video](#)

The Fix Nics 2017 Act would tighten the country’s background checks system. Nics stands for the National Instant Background Checks System. The legislation provides federal agencies with [a few more incentives](#) to submit records to the background check system – something they are already required by law to do.

The Stop School Violence Act would authorize \$50m in grant funding for campus safety improvements, including training for local law enforcement and faculty and the development of an anonymous reporting system to identify early warning signs of potential threats.

Both pieces of legislation were part of the omnibus government bill that Trump signed on Friday.

Other politicians from both sides of the partisan divide weighed in as well. The Florida senator Marco Rubio said in a statement: “I commend those who today are peacefully exercising their first amendment rights to march in favor of a gun ban.”

Rubio, who came under criticism from survivors of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas high school in [a televised town hall on CNN](#), added: “While I do not agree with all of the solutions they propose, I respect their views and recognize that many Americans support certain gun bans. However, many other Americans do not support a gun ban. They too want to prevent mass shootings, but view banning guns as an infringement on the second amendment rights of law abiding citizens that ultimately will not prevent these tragedies.”

In contrast, a number of Democrats actively participated in marches held across the country. Senators Brian Schatz of Hawaii and Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota were among those who marched in Washington. Senator Sherrod Brown attended an event in Columbus and Senator Elizabeth Warren attended an event in Boston. Barack Obama also [expressed his support](#) on Twitter, saying: “Michelle and I are so inspired by all the young people who made today’s marches happen. Keep at it. You’re leading us forward. Nothing can stand in the way of millions of voices calling for change.”

Trump, who ran as a strong supporter of gun rights, has taken several different positions on new legislation in the aftermath of the Florida shooting. Most recently, he proposed arming teachers while backing away from earlier statements about raising the legal age to purchase a semi-automatic weapon to 21.

On Friday, the US justice department proposed rule changes that would effectively ban bump stocks, devices that allow semi-automatic weapons to fire like a machine gun. Bump stocks were used by Las Vegas gunman Stephen Paddock to kill 58 people in the deadliest mass shooting in recent US history. Trump [heralded the DoJ’s move](#) on Twitter by saying: “We will BAN all devices that turn legal weapons into illegal machine guns.”

Trump has also proposed extreme risk protection orders, which would provide law enforcement officers and family members with a legal way to petition a court to temporarily remove an unstable person’s guns, and block them from buying new ones.

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