

# EVERYTOWN LAW

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August 19, 2019**

**CONTACT: [press@everytown.org](mailto:press@everytown.org)**

---

## **EVERYTOWN LAW WINS MAJOR FEDERAL COURT RULING REQUIRING THE BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, FIREARMS AND EXPLOSIVES TO PROVIDE DATA ON GUN VIOLENCE**

*Decision Holds that ATF Cannot Rely on the Tiahrt Rider, Passed at the Urging  
of the Gun Lobby in 2003, to Withhold Data on Gun Violence*

**NEW YORK** – Everytown for Gun Safety, the country’s largest gun violence prevention organization, today won a major federal court ruling that overturned the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives’ refusal to produce data from its firearms tracing database. The decision breaks new ground as the only federal court decision to hold that a Congressional appropriations law known as the Tiahrt Rider, first passed at the urging of the gun lobby in 2003, cannot be used by the ATF to withhold data under the federal Freedom of Information Act. The decision can be viewed [here](#).

“For more than a decade, the gun lobby has relied on the Tiahrt Rider to stymie gun violence investigations and hinder research into firearms used in crimes and suicides,” said **Alla Lefkowitz, deputy director of affirmative litigation at Everytown Law**. “Americans have the right to know where firearms are coming from and how they’re being used.”

Everytown’s FOIA request sought data pertaining to the use of firearms in suicide, a growing public health crisis in America. Between 2013 and 2017, an average of

more than 22,000 Americans died by firearm suicide each year. Gun suicides take the lives of more Americans than all other methods of suicide combined, and account for more gun-related deaths than all homicides.

The Tiahrt Rider, named after its sponsor former Representative Todd Tiahrt (R-KS), has been used to shield data about the sources of crime guns, hampering research and allowing irresponsible gun dealers to avoid public scrutiny. At the time of its passage, Rep. Tiahrt was quoted saying, “I wanted to make sure I was fulfilling the needs of my friends who are firearms dealers. NRA officials were helpful in making sure I had my bases covered.” However, in today’s ruling, the court held that the current version of the Tiahrt Rider does not qualify as an exemption to the federal Freedom of Information Act.

The lawsuit was filed by Everytown Law, along with Lawrence Lustberg and the law firm Gibbons PC.