

GENERATION
PROGRESS

campaign to
unload



Divestment Toolkit

Your Guidebook To Organizing On Campus

Hello!

Thank you so much for your interest in the Campaign to Unload and Generation Progress campus divestment campaign!

We are so inspired by your passion and energy to make change as it relates to gun violence prevention. We want to engage with you on this important issue and invite you to join our movement to use divestment as a means to change gun policy in the United States.

This work is a priority for us in 2014 and beyond, and young Americans need to make sure our voices are heard more than ever before.

Will you join us?

We're looking for passionate young people like you to join our movement in an effort to tackle the senseless gun violence that threatens the lives of Americans throughout the country.

By becoming a part of this movement, we will be able to amplify the voices of countless young people throughout the country. In the following packet, you will find the most pertinent information on what divestment is, how to plan an event, and how to pitch to media, along with facts that you will be able to easily share so that we can gain even more momentum.

Feel free to reach out to Campaign to Unload campus organizer Allie Clement at campus@campaigntounload.org or Generation Progress Advocacy Associate Lauren Sills at lsills@americanprogress.org with any questions, concerns, or ideas.

Thank you for your interest, energy, and passion to change our nation for the better. We look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,



Anne Johnson
Executive Director, Generation Progress



Jennifer Fiore
Executive Director, Campaign to Unload

Campaign To Unload's Divestment 101

What is “divestment”? Divestment is simply when an investor decides to sell their stock in a company. It's a decision that large and small investors make all the time, for all kinds of reasons.

Why a divestment campaign now? A vast majority of Americans support common-sense changes in public policy while respecting the rights of lawful gun owners, but a small number of well-financed extremists have blocked the political process. Since funding is now driving the process, de-funding the industry has become an appropriate and important priority for those committed to sensible reform.

How does a divestment campaign work? When many investors decide it's time to sell at the same time, that company's stock comes under pressure. Over time, a low stock price can make it harder for a company to get loans, finance sales, or expand its business. And if the pressure is high enough, an entire industry—even a national government—can decide it's time to change how they do business.

How can divestment improve gun policy? As the public outcry over gun violence continues to escalate, influential investors such as university endowments have greater reason to reconsider the business, financial, and moral implications of their holdings in firearm manufacturers that refuse even modest changes in their products and practices. At the same time, individual investors may not even realize that they own shares in such companies through their mutual funds, retirement accounts, ETFs, or other products. As investors of all kinds become more informed of the risks involved, the potential for widespread divestment will grow—and with it, the pressure on the industry to change.

Who is participating? The dozens of organizations that have joined Campaign to Unload to date include established national civic organizations, local grassroots groups, educators and students, and elected leaders. These voices come from urban, suburban, and rural areas throughout the country.

Have divestment campaigns worked in the past? Because funding is the lifeblood of business, divestment campaigns have been essential components in some of the most successful changes in public policy of the past 30 years. These include changes in U.S. tobacco policy and the end of Apartheid in South Africa.

Five Reasons Why To #DivestGuns Now

As gun laws throughout the country become more lax and the U.S. Congress remains stalled in passing common-sense universal background checks on gun purchases, it's easy to feel helpless. But we do not have to wait for government officials to make the call for "not one more" real. **There is a path forward: divestment.**

1. Young Americans are paying the price for Congress' failure to act on gun reform. In 2010, gun deaths were the second highest reason for death of young people ages 15 to 24, and by 2015, gun deaths will replace automobile accidents as the leading cause of death for Millennials.¹ As of this writing, there have been 86 school and campus shootings since the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Newtown, CT, alone.²

2. The National Rifle Association (NRA), with funding from irresponsible gun companies, obstructs legislative change. Freedom Group, Sturm Ruger, Smith & Wesson, and Olin profit from America's tragedies. Millions of dollars are funneled to the NRA to block gun reform—money invested in gun companies by individuals, pensions, and university endowments. Our money is being used to block common-sense gun reform.

3. Divestment works. Economic pressure on the gun industry is crucial to ending political stagnancy, much like similar pressures helped end the Apartheid regime in South Africa. As Eric Milgram, father of two Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting survivors stated, "gun companies won't respond to moral sentiment, but they will respond to economic pain."³ For this reason, the divestment movement is being called "the new front in the war on gun violence."⁴

4. The movement to divest guns is taking off. We've only just begun and are already getting a lot of attention and are finding success.

- In 2013, hedge funds divested more than \$171 million from the gun industry.
- New York City,⁵ Chicago,⁶ Los Angeles,⁷ and Rhode Island⁸ have divested their municipal and pension funds, as did the largest pension fund, CalSTRS (California State Teaching Retirement System).⁹
- Individuals are divesting their retirement funds at UnloadYour401k.com.
- Occidental College banned investments in assault weapons manufacturers in February 2014.¹⁰
- Student-led movements at Princeton and University of Pennsylvania have formed to demand their universities' endowments divest guns.

5. Together, young Americans can amplify their voices to create change.

Action from students is critical to reducing gun violence:

- Learn how the [University of California, Santa Barbara](#) can turn “grief into action.”
- Sign the [petition](#) to tell the University of California system to take a clear stance against investing in gun violence.
- Join the conversation by using **#DivestGuns** on social media.
- Start a divestment campaign on your campus. Contact us to learn how to get started: campus@campaigntounload.org

Gun Violence Facts

The below facts are taken from the Generation Progress report “Young Guns: How Gun Violence is Devastating the Millennial Generation.”¹

Youth and Gun Violence

- A person’s risk of being shot in the United States is greatest between the ages of 17 and 29.
- On average, 33,000 Americans are killed with guns each year.
- 54 percent of people murdered with guns in 2010 were under the age of 30.
- More than 1 million years of potential life are lost due to gun deaths each year.

The Horrifying Trend

- In 2010, the second most frequent cause of death for people between the ages of 15 and 24 was homicide, and 83 percent of those homicides were committed with a gun.
- Gun homicides, suicides, and accidents accounted for more deaths among young people ages 15 and 24 than any other cause of death except motor vehicle accidents.

How Gun Violence Affects Minorities

- While 13 percent of Americans are black, in 2010, 65 percent of gun murder victims between the ages of 15 and 24 were black.
- Forty-two percent of the total gun deaths of individuals in this age group were of black males.
- Young black men in this age group are killed by a gun at a rate that is 4.5 times higher than their white counterparts.

Policy and Government Spending

- The United States pays a high price for its incredibly high rates of gun violence—by one measure, roughly \$174 billion in 2010 alone.

Take Action Now

The University of California has an \$88 billion endowment for the entire UC system. The Board of Regents can pass a resolution making sure that the endowment is free of investments in the gun industry. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni have a voice that the Trustees should hear and respect. Here are ways to encourage the Trustees to take action to build a “gun-free” endowment.

For Students and Alumni: Start by asking your campus’ Associated Students Senate to pass a resolution demanding transparency for divestment, and banning future investments in the gun industry. See the sample University of California, Santa Barbara resolution on page 8 of this toolkit.

- **Connect** with Associated Students on your campus and add your support to the UCSB student government effort to have UC adopt a gun-free endowment.
- **Attend the [UC Board of Regents](#) meetings** to speak up in favor of divestment.
- **Write a [public comment](#) to the UC Board of Regents** if you can’t make it to the scheduled meetings in San Francisco. Send a copy to campus@campaigntounload.org.
- **Plan** a teach-in event (see page 9).
- **Sign the [petition](#)** for transparency in the UC endowment.

For Faculty and Staff: Contact the Office of the President to create a gun-free retirement plan. Most people don’t realize it, but inside many of our retirement portfolios are public gun companies. Find out if they’re in yours and how to get them out. Contact Allie Clement at campus@campaigntounload.org to learn more and organize. For more information about gun investments in retirement plans see unloadyour401k.com.

Outside of the University of California: There are still ways to support their movement for a gun-free endowment, and ways you can spark your own campus divestment campaign!

- **Sign the [petition](#)** for transparency in the UC endowment.
- **Start your own divestment action** with Campaign to Unload’s [organizing tools](#).
- **Bring the conversation to your campus and community** through roundtable discussions, and let others know how they can join the fight for divestment.
- **Help organize an event to raise awareness** around divesting the university endowment. Contact campus@campaigntounload.org to find out what you can do.

Online Engagement:

- **Tweet your school** to let them hear your voice! Host a Twitter town hall and use the **#DivestGuns** hashtag!
- **Have you been affected by gun violence?** [Tell your story.](#)
- **Share your photos, stories, and videos** with the campus divestment movement:

 [Generation Progress](#)  [Campaign to Unload](#)

 [@GenProgress](#)  [@Campaign2Unload](#)

 [@GenProgress](#)  [@CampaignToUnload](#)

 [Generation Progress](#)  [Campaign to Unload](#)

Sample Resolution To Maintain A Gun-Free Environment

Students on campus have the power to put pressure on their schools. You can support the divestment movement by writing a resolution stating that students on your campus do not want their endowment invested in guns.

The following is an example that students have written at UCSB to demand the Board of Regents take action. Modify this as needed for your school's student government format.

Whereas: As a public institution of higher learning, the University of California has a responsibility to invest university funds in a socially responsible manner.

Whereas: The mass shooting of UCSB students that occurred in Isla Vista on May 23, 2014 was incredibly tragic to the whole University of California community.

Whereas: Gun violence most impacts the Millennial generation; the generation that comprises the majority of University of California students.

Whereas: The gun industry uses funds to block common sense gun violence prevention legislation that is largely supported by the majority of Americans.

Whereas: The gun industry is defined for these purposes as the three publicly traded firearms manufacturers (RGR, SWHC, and OLN), private equity firm Cerberus Capital Management (majority owner of Freedom Group, the maker of the Bushmaster assault weapon used at the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in 2012), and any funds that do not specifically exclude these interests.

Let it be resolved: that this Senate requests full transparency from the University of California's Chief Investment Officer about the divestment dates and amount of money divested from the gun industry.

Let it be further resolved: that this Senate instructs the Board of Regents to resolve to divest any remaining university funds invested in the gun industry by December 2015.

Let it be further resolved: that this Senate instructs the Board of Regents to prohibit all future investments in the gun industry.

Fiscal Impact: \$0 from the account.

How To Plan A Teach-In Event

Organizing a teach-in is a great way to educate your community and speak out about the unacceptable gun violence that is affecting Americans throughout the country. As a possible organizer for the teach-in, you're joining a movement to put a face to the families that have suffered from gun violence, connect people in your community together, and fight for solutions that will keep the focus on reforming gun policy.

If this is your first time hosting an event or even if you're an experienced organizer, reading through this packet will help you get everything together. Your teach-in will be part of a series of huge actions around the country, organized by people like you—passionate folks who care about gun violence and want to make a difference in their communities. LET'S GET STARTED!

1. Plan Your Event

It's more fun to organize with friends. We recommend you find three to five fellow students who are able to help coordinate and facilitate the event alongside you. It is also a good idea to reach out to student organizations on campus to ask them to sponsor or provide support to your teach-in.

Create an agenda. The purpose of telling the story of gun violence in America is to humanize this issue and illustrate the many consequences facing millions of Americans who have suffered and will suffer from this violence.

- The event should have a strong moderator, who is able to break down the national divestment movement, the local divestment movement and at least one student speaker who can tell their personal story about how either gun violence affected their family or how they organized a successful divestment campaign on their campus. The moderator should be someone with knowledge of divestment: for example, a professor at a university, or a student government president, or even your smartest friend who never stops talking about the divestment movement.
- The speakers could be fellow students, members of the community, and professors. Other potential speakers include: policy experts, elected officials, or someone who works for an advocacy group. Regardless of their title, the most powerful speakers will be ones who can speak honestly about their story and experiences.

2. Secure a Location

Find a good location for your event on campus. The best place to hold an event like this is a big community space or an academic hall. Alternatively, you can use a local restaurant, coffee shop, organization, or community center, as long as the owner of the space gives you permission to use it. You'll want to book your location for slightly longer than your event. Make sure to ask lots of questions about sound, A/V equipment, if there's an Internet connection (if you need it), and other logistical questions.

3. Invite People To Your Event

The best way to get people to your event is by having face-to-face conversations with people you know. Start by making a list of the friends, students, university employees, and professors, who have knowledge about gun violence and/or divestment, or may want to know about the gun violence and/or divestment. Do you know family members and friends who have suffered from gun violence, people who teach students or work with students regularly, or are civically and politically engaged and passionate about the challenges facing our nation? These are the people who will be most likely to get involved in the effort. Take the time to talk to these folks about why you're involved—it's the best way to get people excited about attending your event.

Invite at least 50 people to aim for a gathering of 15 to 20 attendees.

Don't be afraid to invite more people than you need. You can talk to them in person, reach out to them via email or social media, or pick up the phone—just remember to keep a list of your attendees so you know how many people to expect. You can ask your friends to bring along some friends of their own. This will also give you a new network of people to reach out as you begin to organize for a safer future.

Get the word out on campus. Reach out to other campus groups asking them to co-sponsor the event or advertise it to their members. Pass flyers out in local businesses, large gathering locations, coffee shops, civic organizations, and public spaces. Your teach-in is your first opportunity to invite people to join our organization and participate in the conversation surrounding divestment and gun violence, so we ask that you use this opportunity to reach out to a wide group of people.

4. Attract Local Media

Get the word out to local press. Generation Progress and the Campaign to Unload will work with you to get press to your event. You'll need to send out a "media advisory," or press release, to let local press and the college newspaper know the background and details of the event.

Do your research. Find the number for your local television and radio station's newsroom. Let them know you will be hosting a large community event on campus as part of the coalition where you and your fellow students will gather to discuss gun violence in America and how divestment can influence gun policy. Ask them who the best person is to email the media advisory to, and send that person your advisory over email.

Blast your advisory. Reach out to your local newspaper and ask the news desk for whoever has the education beat (or covers education issues). Let both the political reporter and the local news desk know that the event will be taking place and invite them to cover the story. Email the most relevant reporters the media advisory.

Make sure you're plugged in. Ensure there is room, and that there are appropriate power outlets for the media to bring their audio/visual equipment. If you have access to them, consider obtaining a microphone to project your voice during your teach-in and to better support a question/answer period and good conversation.

Document your action. Take photos and video of the event with your camera. After the event, send them to local press and all the reporters who are covering the story.

5. Prepare Your Materials For The Event

Make things easy on yourself. Don't forget to review and print out crucial materials before your event. This includes a sign-in sheet, which should request the name, organization, email address, and phone number of all attendees. This is crucial for following-up, engaging, and sustaining membership within the movement.

6. Confirm Your Guests

Amp up your turnout with reminders. The more you remind people about your teach-in, the more people you'll have at your event. Reminders are one of the most important things you can do to have a successful event. Here's a sample schedule you can follow to send reminders:

- Invite your guests two weeks to a month before the date of your teach-in. This can be by phone, email, in person, or social media.
- One week before your teach-in, call, text, or email your attendees a reminder that the event is coming up, along with any details that will get them excited.
- One day before your event, send a reminder email, phone call, or text and let them know you're looking forward to having them join you. Let your guests know the details of your event and that you really appreciate them coming. This kind of follow-up will make a huge difference in boosting attendance.

7. Before, During, And After Your Teach-In

Before: You and your team should arrive at least 30 minutes ahead of your event start time to set up. Make sure that any audio/visual or sound needs are addressed right away, since they often take the longest to set up and have the highest chances of giving you problems. Assign someone the job of signing up everyone who attends through the sign-up sheet. Make sure there are people to pass out your agendas, if you have them printed out.

During: Keep someone at the door to make sure that anyone who comes in late is also able to sign-in. Don't be afraid to ask questions, and do your best to introduce yourself to others. The more connections you make, the stronger your relationship will be when you follow up with them after the event.

- **Amplify:** Take pictures, Tweet, and Facebook! Make sure to report back to Generation Progress and Campaign to Unload so we can report on our national social media platforms.

After: Make sure to clean your room up before you leave. Assign someone to put all the data from your sign-in sheet into a spreadsheet or Google Doc and share it everyone on your team. Figure out a time to meet to determine roles for following up. And celebrate your success! You did it!

8. Follow Up

Follow-up with your attendees. It's critical to follow up within 36 hours of your event with everyone who came. Make sure to get out your thank you cards or emails to each attendee, and let them know you'll be following up with them again in the coming weeks.

Debrief with your team. Sit down with your team and decide what's next. You don't want to lose the momentum from your event, so try to figure how to do something soon.

Say thank you. Make sure to thank everyone who helped make your event a success.

How To Pitch To Media

It is important to get media to attend your event. Here are ways to pitch your movement:

1. Figure out what you are saying. What goes in the press release? Is it an event, or a campaign you are launching? Add photos of the event or a link to a photo gallery online.

2. Find the right outlets to pitch.

- **Reporters:** Go to your local newspaper’s website and see which reporters write stories on Millennials, gun violence, divestment, advocacy, or other similar issues. Get their email address. If you can’t find it—call around or Google around to find their contact information.
- **Op-Ed:** If you cannot get a print reporter to write about your issue, you can write an op-ed and send it to the op-ed submission email address for the paper.
- **Radio:** Find the news desk contact at your local stations.
- **Television:** Find the news desk contact at your local stations.
- **Blogs:** Find the “Contact” or “Submission” link on the blog.
- **Generation Progress:** Pitch stories to be posted on our blog.
- Feel free to contact Generation Progress if you need help with any of these outlets by emailing jlittle@americanprogress.org.

3. Pitch to reporters. Copy and paste the post-event press release into an email. Above the release, include a brief pitch and your name and contact information. Here is a sample:

I would love to talk to you about divestment and how it can influence gun policy or potentially write an op-ed for your publication. Are you interested? I can be reached at campus@campaigntounload.org. Thank you so much!

4. Follow Up. You didn’t hear back? Be persistent—try again. Try finding other emails, tweeting at them, contacting similar reporters, etc.

Sample Press Release

Use this template as a guide when sending notices to media.

GENERATION PROGRESS

April 15, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 15, 2014

CONTACT: Jamal Little

jlittle@americanprogress.org

#Fight4The33 Video: Jazz Musician Jon Batiste Partners with Generation Progress Ahead of Failed Senate Background Check Vote Anniversary

Young People Dance For The 33 Who Are Killed Each Day Due to Gun Violence

Washington, D.C.—Almost a year since the Senate’s failed vote on background checks for gun purchases, Generation Progress partnered with jazz musician Jon Batiste to release a new gun violence prevention video, #Fight4The33. The video highlights that each day, 33 people die due to gun violence.



“When the Senate failed to pass the background check bill last year, it was one of the lowest moments for our generation,” said Anne Johnson, Executive Director of Generation Progress. “Gun violence disproportionately affects young people, and almost all of us support background checks on gun purchases. With this video, we’re reminding Congress that Millennials haven’t stopped fighting for a common-sense solution to this issue.”

According to a recent report by Generation Progress, every 70 minutes an American under the age of 25 dies by gun fire.

“Congress broke a promise to Americans who lost family members and friends to gun violence,” said Sarah Clements, founder of the Junior Newtown Action Alliance and a leading member of the Generation Progress Gun Violence Prevention Network. “Our elected officials have failed to act and young Americans have suffered because of it.” Batiste wrote the song, “Life is Gold,” to recognize the 33 Americans who die each day due to gun violence. Many of the dancers—students at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts participated in

the video because they have personal experiences with gun violence.

One dancer, Jordan Harris, first experienced gun violence when he was 10 years old. While Harris was attending Sunday School, a woman was shot and killed by her husband outside of Harris' church sanctuary.

"I immediately broke down and cried. It was so difficult for me to learn at age 10 that there is truly no safe place in the world," said Harris, who is now 15. "If you can be harmed at church, then you can be harmed anywhere."

To learn more about the #Fight4The33 campaign and video, please visit Fight4The33.org.

Sample Flyer

When working in outreach and recruitment, it is essential to have flyers to share in person and online. Be sure to include the date, time, location, RSVP information, and cost.

#Fight4AFuture Chicago Roundtable



On September 10 and 11 from 6:00-8:30PM young people in the Chicago area will connect to strategize how to prevent gun violence in their communities through meaningful discussions on a variety of topics, including state policies, community organizing, and the intersectionality of gun violence and civil rights, health, employment and education. Dinner will be provided. Join us!

GENERATION PROGRESS

Generation Progress, part of the Center for American Progress, is a national organization that works with and for young people to promote progressive solutions to key political and social challenges. Generation Progress' work is based on the idea that young people don't have to wait to change the world; they have the power right now to tip the balance on critical issues from economic opportunity to access the education to environmental sustainability to human rights to civic engagement.



Campaign to Unload is a coalition of over 50 organizations representing more than 30 million people across the country who have united to hit back at irresponsible gun makers where it hurts: their sources of funding. Find us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

END NOTES

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