

Guns and Politics in the U.S.A.	Data Compilation and Exploration	Who Has the Highest and Lowest Incident Rates	Impact of Gun Control Laws	Where the Links Lie	Conclusions and Next Steps
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Gun Violence and the Legislature in the United States

In this storyboard, we will explore the correlation between **gun violence** incident rates, the prevalence of **gun control laws**, and the political party in control of each state's **legislature**. These factors hold significant importance for individuals who are curious, frustrated, or actively working towards **creating change** in whatever direction that may be.



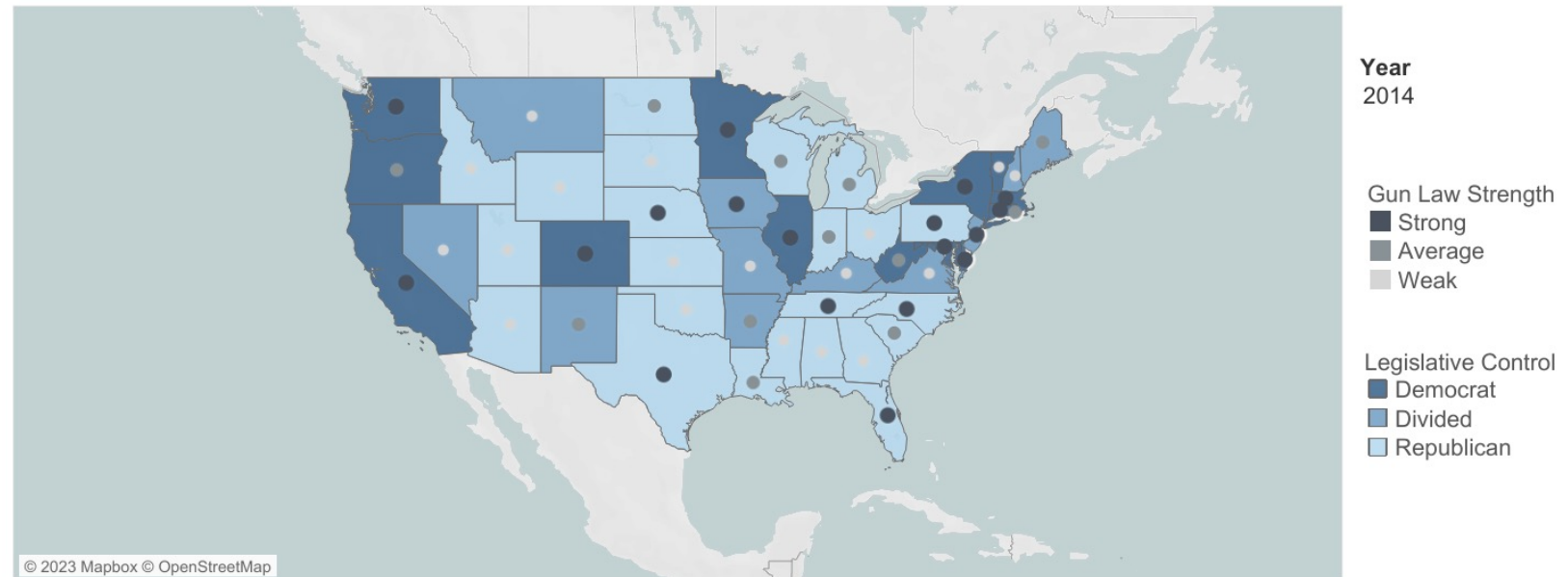
Gun violence in the United States has become what we can only call an **epidemic**. While a few non-profit organizations have begun to track and report on incidents, it is surprisingly difficult to find **comprehensive information** about it. This fact has led me to conduct an analysis on incidents across the 50 states focusing on state **gun laws** and the legislative bodies that do or don't enact them.

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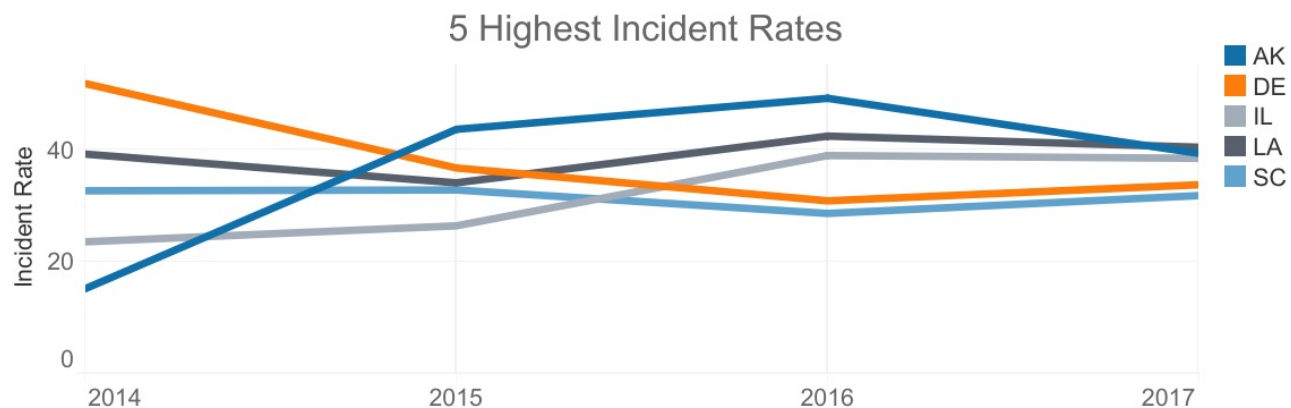
Who Is Doing What, Where?

In this combination choropleth and bubble map, the color of the states indicates whether that state's legislative branch is led by **Republicans**, **Democrats**, or is **Divided**. The bubbles represent the strength of each state's **gun laws** according to the analysis I conducted. I compiled a list of 137 gun-related laws and information on which states had enacted them. I created categories regarding such topics as: **background checks**, if permits are required to purchase or own a gun, laws regarding permissibility of **guns in schools**, whether or not **open carry** is legal, and several other issues. I then determined the strength of each state's laws according to the number of laws in these categories that were in place in each year between **2014-2017**.

My **hypothesis** was that states led by **Republicans** would have **weak** or average strength laws at best. That was quickly proven wrong, as you can see immediately that **Texas, Florida, South Carolina, and Nebraska** are led by a Republican legislature and have **strong gun laws** in place.

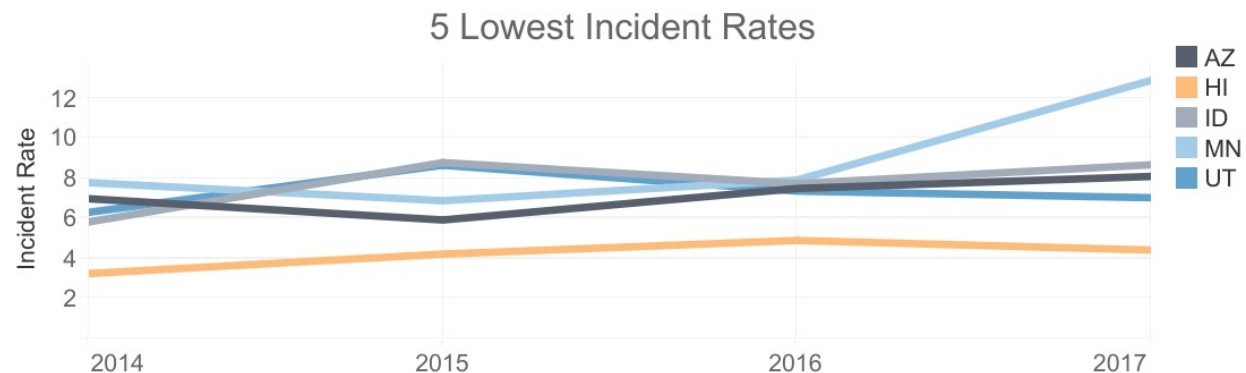


Where are the Highest and Lowest Incident Rates Occurring?



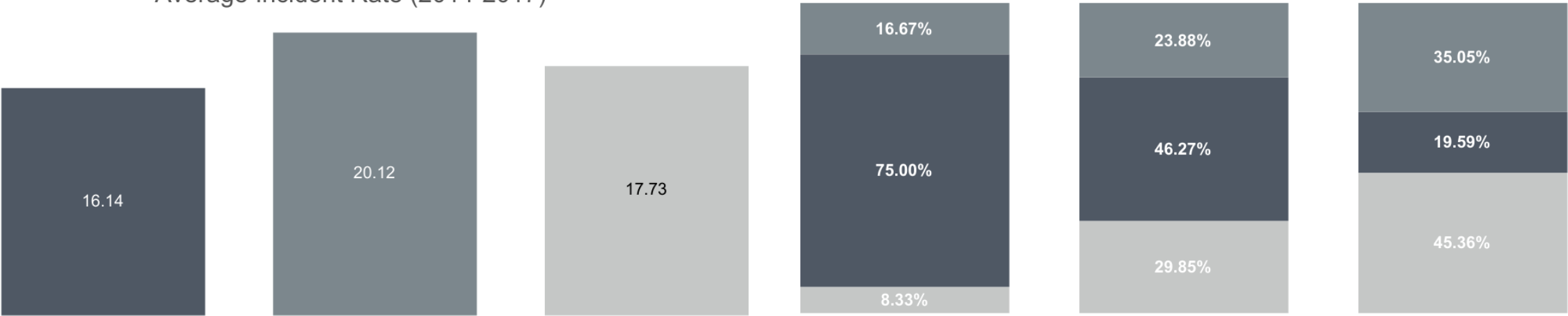
Overall, **Alaska** touts the **highest rate** of gun violence per 100,000 people. Alaska has some of the **weakest gun control laws** in the United States, however that is not the only cause of their high incident rate. I did not separate incidents by **intent** (accidental, suicide, homicide), but <http://everytownresearch.org> reports that the **suicide rate** in Alaska is a significant contributing factor.

Hawaii's legislature has been led by **Democrats** and has **strong laws** in place while maintaining the **lowest incident rate** throughout 2014-2017. **Arizona, Idaho, and Utah** all maintain relatively low rates as well which again challenges my hypothesis as they are all **Republican** led states with **historically weak** gun control laws.



Do Gun Laws Make a Difference?

Average Incident Rate (2014-2017)

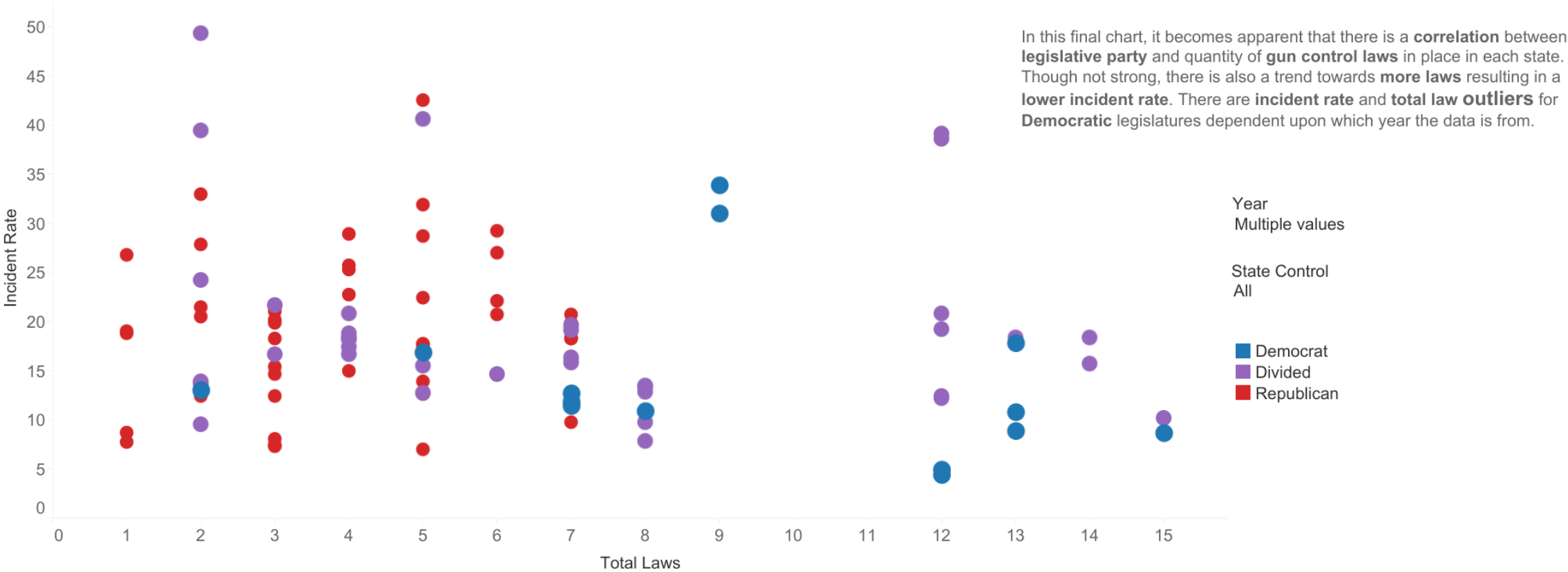


The **average incident rate** for all 50 states over four years is impacted by the veracity of laws in place, though not as significantly as might be expected. The **highest average** rate belongs to the states with **average** gun control laws. The **difference** in the average rates for the states with the **strongest and weakest** gun control laws, statistically speaking, is **less than 3%**.

Gun Law Strength
■ Strong
■ Average
■ Weak

These **percentages are cumulative** over the 4 year time span of the data. This is the first part of the analysis that aligns with my **hypothesis** that Democratic led legislatures would, in general, enact **stronger gun control laws**.

(How) Does It Come Together?



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the U.S.A.

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Who Has the Highest
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Impact of Gun Control
Laws

Where the Links Lie

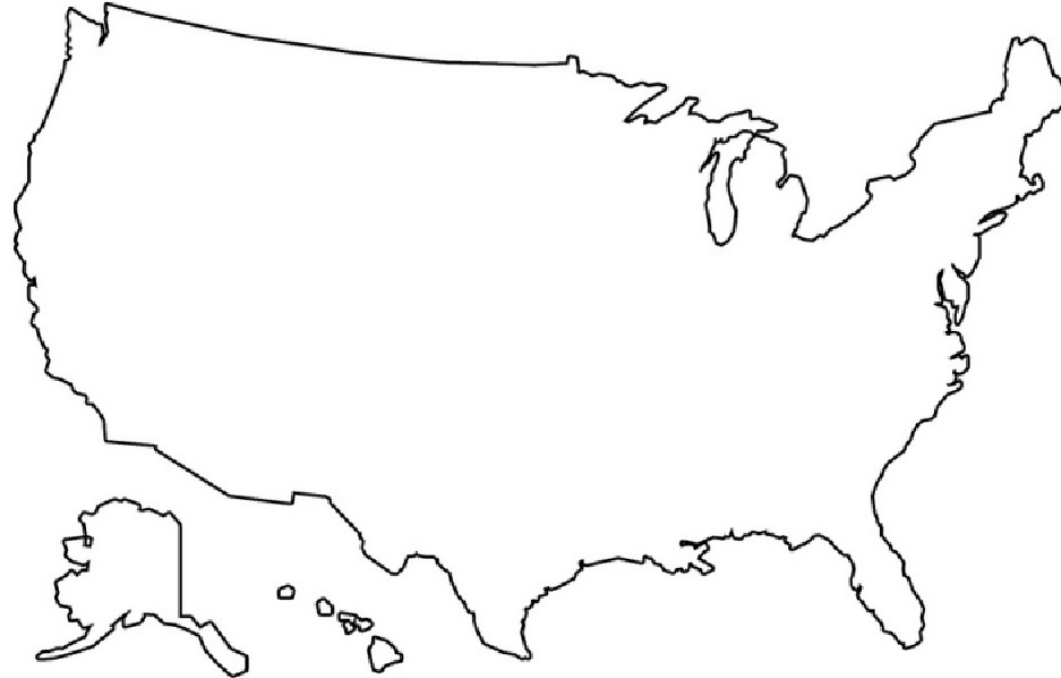
Conclusions and Next
Steps

What's Next?

Through conducting this analysis I discovered several surprises, such as **Republican** led states having **strong gun control laws** and **Democrat** led states with strong laws experiencing **high rates of gun violence**. I don't believe that the results lead to the **conclusion** that **gun laws don't help** lower violence, rather that **there isn't a state in this country that has enough gun control**.

Much more **research** and analysis is required to truly understand the **root causes** of our epidemic. My next step will be to gather more specific **geolocations** of incidents in order to determine the incident rates in **rural** versus **urban** locales.

It will also be essential to investigate **intent** and **circumstance** around incidents. Is it **Domestic Violence**? **Suicide**? **Homicide**? **Accidental**? These are just a few of the **questions** I intend to **answer** in my further anal..



Parting Thoughts:

We have all been living through various stages of a **different kind of epidemic** for the last few years, though they have something in common: **people die**. While epidemiologists, lab technicians, healthcare workers, and everyday people scrambled and **worked around the clock** to discover a treatment or preventative measure for **COVID-19**, we are incredibly far from that kind of **urgency** and **priority** around gun violence in the **United States**. I hope that through further study and sharing my work, we will **come together** to find a way to end this epidemic.