

US | Fri Jan 1, 2016 2:51pm EST

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Obama, frustrated by Congress, plans unilateral gun control steps

WASHINGTON



Weapons confiscated from last Wednesday's attack in San Bernardino, California are shown in this San Bernardino County Sheriff Department handout photo from their Twitter account released to Reuters December 3, 2015.

REUTERS/SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY SHERIFFS DEPARTMENT/HANDOUT

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President Barack Obama, frustrated by Congress' inaction on gun control, will meet with U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch on Monday to discuss ways of reducing gun violence unilaterally through measures that do not require congressional approval.

Obama, in his weekly recorded address, said on Friday he has received "too many letters from parents, and teachers, and kids, to sit around and do nothing."

He has repeatedly urged Congress to tighten gun laws. His calls grew louder following the 2012 massacre at an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut, and again after mass shootings in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and San Bernardino, California in recent months.

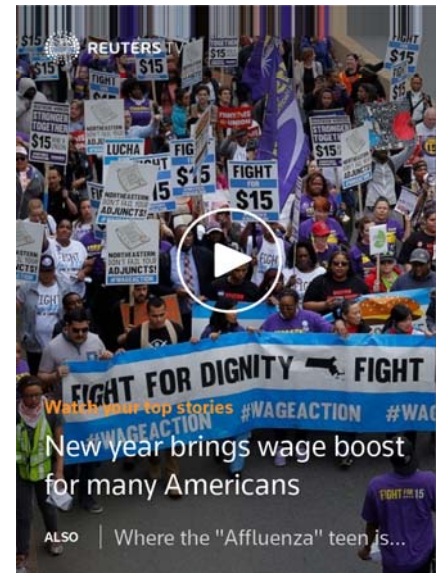
"A few months ago, I directed my team at the White House to look into any new actions I can take to help reduce gun violence," Obama said in the address. "And on Monday, I'll meet with our attorney general, Loretta Lynch, to discuss our options."

The Washington Post, citing several individuals briefed on the matter, said Obama and Lynch would finalize executive actions, which do not require congressional approval, that he will unveil next week.

Frustrated by Congress, Obama has vowed to use "whatever power this office holds" to put in place gun control measures.

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"We know that we can't stop every act of violence," Obama said. "But what if we tried to stop even one? What if Congress did something – anything – to protect our kids from gun violence?"

Obama's address came as a Texas law allowing licensed firearms owners to carry handguns openly in public places took effect.

Republican Texas Governor Greg Abbott echoed its backers' slogan in a Twitter comment: "Obama wants to impose more gun control. My response? COME & TAKE IT."

The Post said Obama would use executive authority in several areas, including expanding background-check requirements for buyers who purchase weapons from high-volume dealers.

Ted Alcorn, research director for gun control advocacy group Everytown, said Everytown officials met with Obama in December to make recommendations for executive action.

Top among them was a regulation to clarify when gun sellers need a federal firearms license, he said.

Thousands of guns are sold yearly by dealers who fall between licensed dealers and occasional sellers who do not need a license. Clarification could define which sellers need to meet rules and do background checks. Alcorn said.

On Thursday, White House spokesman Eric Schultz said Obama was aware Congress was unlikely to act on gun reform.

(Reporting by [Sandra Maler](#) and [Ian Simpson](#); Additional reporting by Megan Cassella in Washington and [Jeff Mason](#) in Honolulu; Editing by [Bill Trott](#) and [Cynthia Osterman](#))



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