

Colorado in center of fight over gun laws as two senators lose their jobs

By Los Angeles Times, adapted by Newsela staff

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Voters line up to receive their ballots for a recall vote for Democratic state Sen. Angela Giron, in Pueblo, Colo., Tuesday Sept. 10, 2013. Giron and Senate President John Morse were both voted out in what became a national debate on gun control laws. Photo: AP Photo/Brennan Linsley

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — Two lawmakers who helped to write Colorado's strict gun laws lost their jobs on Tuesday. John Morse and Angela Giron lost a vote organized by people who don't agree with their rules on guns.

Morse and Giron believe there should be strict laws on who can own a gun. So they helped pass new laws for Colorado during the winter. But some gun owners don't agree. They collected thousands of signatures earlier in the year and organized a special vote. The people of Colorado Springs had to decide whether they wanted Morse and Giron to continue working for them. Such an election is called a recall.

Both lawmakers lost. This was the first time in Colorado that somebody lost a recall vote.

Morse and Giron passed the gun control laws last winter. This was after several mass shootings in 2012. Twelve people died in a shooting in July at a Colorado movie theater. Then there was another shooting at a school in Newtown, Conn. Twenty-six people were killed.

Recall Vote Was About Gun Control Laws

The new Colorado laws said that guns should only hold 15 bullets at once. People who want to buy guns would also have to have a background check. Some gun owners and their supporters said that their opinions were ignored when the laws were made.

Morse said he would continue to fight for gun control. He thinks that the laws he made make Colorado safer. Morse said that this was worth the sacrifice of losing his job. "It is a small price to pay," he said.

Giron told her supporters that "this will make us stronger." She said that she has no regrets about voting for the laws. "I'm a fighter," she said. "We will win in the end, because we are on the right side."

This vote was important to many people across the country. Some believe there should be more rules on who owns guns. They think these laws would stop shootings like in Aurora and Newtown.

Other voters think that owning a gun is matter of freedom. They believe the government should not get involved in gun laws. People on both sides spoke in Colorado.

People Across The Nation Watched Colorado

The vote against Morse and Giron started in Colorado. But the events here were watched all over the United States. And thousands of dollars were spent by those on both sides.

The National Rifle Association worked against Morse and Giron. The NRA thinks that there should be no more gun laws. New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg supported Morse and Giron. He thinks guns should be more tightly controlled.

Both sides argued hard in the days leading up to the vote.

The people who don't believe in gun control want another vote in 2014. They hope to get rid of all the new gun laws. A group of sheriffs went to court to ask a judge to throw out the laws.

The results of Tuesday's vote pushed forward Morse's retirement date. He was first elected in 2006 and had to leave office in 2014. Giron was serving her first term as a senator. She hoped to win re-election next year.

