The Fix NICS Act, **SB 2135**, was introduced by Senator John Cornyn on November 15 and awaits action in the Judiciary Committee. The bill would seek to improve data gathering and reporting requirements in place under the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), designed to maintain a comprehensive account of individuals with high-risk characteristics for use during firearm purchases. The bill aims to improve the quality of the database so individuals seeking to purchase firearms can be screened with the most up to date information. The legislation follows a handful of mass shootings over the past decade that have involved a breakdown in the screening process due to a failure to update the system with critical records. Advocates of the legislation point specifically to violent events in Blacksburg, Virginia (2007); Charleston, South Carolina (2015); and Sutherland Springs, Texas (2017).

The legislation features a preference for incentivizing rather than coercing state action. Specifically, the bill would:

- Require states to submit NICS implementation plans outlining improved policies around system data entry, including methods to verify data accuracy and annual benchmarks.
- Hold both federal agencies and states accountable for failing to upload relevant data into the system using public reporting requirements.
- Reward states for compliance using grant preferences and incentives.
- Establish the Domestic Abuse and Violence Prevention Initiative to provide states with adequate resources to properly relay when domestic abusers or felons should be barred from purchasing a firearm.
- Reauthorize the National Criminal History Improvement (NCHIP), which provides states grants and technical assistance to ensure states can make criminal history records available in an efficient, accurate, and accessible manner.
- Reauthorize the NICS Act Record Improvement (NARIP), which aims to improve the timeliness with which criminal history records are uploaded to NICS by providing states grants, direction, and setting benchmarks.

The bill is cosponsored by U.S. Senators John Cornyn (R-TX), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Tim Scott (R-SC), and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Dean Heller (R-NV), and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH). Senator Murphy called it the “strongest update to the background checks system in a decade,” while Cornyn said the bill would “help fix what’s become a nationwide, systemic problem.” The text of the legislation is not yet available on the Congressional legislative database, Congress.gov, but is accessible on Senator Cornyn’s [page](https://cornyn.senate.gov).