



CROWDS assembled Friday at Times Square Shopping Center and other Hong Kong malls to sing "Glory to Hong Kong," a song that was first posted Aug. 31. In just weeks it's become a symbol of the protest movement.

A song of hope in Hong Kong

A composition posted online becomes a new anthem for protesters.

BY ROBYN DIXON AND MARCUS YAM

HONG KONG — It began with a few notes of warbling violin. A man with a harmonica and a backward baseball cap joined in. And then hundreds of voices joined in song Friday at Hong Kong's Science Park, in one of the dozens of singing sessions belting out across the city.

But it was not just any song.

The composition, "Glory to Hong Kong," written only three weeks ago by a composer identified only as "Thomas dgx yhl," has ignited Hong Kong's protest movement.

People, including the elderly and families with children, crowded into shopping malls across the city Friday, spontaneously singing the protest anthem that everyone suddenly seems to know by heart. Angus Wong, age 6, was at one mall with his parents, singing along, or trying to.

Some shed tears as they sang, in Cantonese: "Pray for democracy, for freedom eternal, for the glory to come back to Hong Kong!"

At the upscale IFC mall, a 28-year-old who gave his

Texas gun advocates fear a political shift

After 2 mass shootings last month, many firearms rights supporters begin to warm to gun control

BY MOLLY HENNESSY-FISKE

HOUSTON — Four years ago, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott urged his constituents to arm up.

"I'm **EMBARRASSED**: Texas #2 in nation for new gun purchases, behind CALIFORNIA," he tweeted. "Let's pick up the pace Texans."

Last week, as Texas was coming to terms with recent back-to-back mass shootings, Abbott sounded like a changed man.

"The Texas House & Senate are getting to work on laws to keep communities safe from gun violence," Abbott tweeted,

promising proposals to help prevent more massacres.

The governor reassured his supporters that he remains a staunch defender of the 2nd Amendment. But in a state as serious about guns as Texas — whose unofficial motto, "Come and take it," summarizes the stance of many residents when it comes to their firearms — even a slight diversion from the gun lobby agenda can set people off.

Gun control advocates have been energized by recent overtures from the governor and other Texas Republicans.

"The attitudes towards gun violence are changing in this state," said Ed

[See **Firearms**, A8]



IN EL PASO, a memorial honors victims of the Aug. 3 mass shooting at a Walmart. A shooting rampage in western Texas followed on Aug. 31.

COLUMN ONE

The 'sex-change capital's' hidden hero

Pioneering surgeon's legacy ignored in the city he made famous

BY MARTIN J. SMITH REPORTING FROM TRINIDAD, COLO.

If you're looking for evidence that this little-known Western outpost was, for 41 years, known as the world's "sex-change capital," be prepared to look a long time.

Dr. Stanley Biber, the colorful country surgeon whose pioneering work made "going to Trinidad" a euphemism for gender confirmation surgery, has been dead since 2006. His decades of work, which brought medical pilgrims from around the world to this heavily Catholic former coal-mining town, is not commemorated in any way at Mt. San Rafael Hospital, where Biber and his protegee, Dr. Marci Bowers, performed an estimated 6,000 gender surgeries between



DR. STANLEY BIBER with Henryetta, a patient at the hospital where 6,000 gender confirmation surgeries were done from 1969 to 2010.

1969 and 2010.

Biber's widow removed a display of her late husband's medical artifacts from the hospital's lobby when she moved to Pueblo after his death and says her discussions with the city about naming a nearby street after Biber went nowhere.

You'll find no statue, memorial, or even a plaque marking Biber's long career as the man who brought Trinidad world renown, though many other significant chapters in local history are acknowledged by plaques along downtown sidewalks. It wasn't until May, more than 13 years after the surgeon's death, that the local museum included any mention of his work in an exhibit space that celebrates practically every other detail of the city's remarkable Old West history.

Until then, the only

[See **Surgeon**, A6]

Felicity Huffman is sentenced to 14 days in prison

Prosecutors argued incarceration would be 'the only leveler' against money, power in admissions scandal.

BY MATTHEW ORMSETH AND JOEL RUBIN



ACTRESS Felicity Huffman was also ordered to pay a \$30,000 fine.

BOSTON — Actress Felicity Huffman was sentenced Friday to 14 days in prison for paying to rig her daughter's university entrance exams, a narrow victory for prosecutors in the college admissions case who wanted a heavier penalty but argued that some amount of time behind bars for Huffman and other wealthy parents can be "the only leveler" against their money and influence.

In ordering her to prison, U.S. District Judge Indira Talwani rejected pleas from Huffman, 56, and her attorney that she be spared incarceration.

The judge also ordered Huffman to pay a \$30,000 fine and serve 250 hours of community service. After her two weeks in custody, Huffman must spend a year under the supervision of probation officials.

"I accept the court's decision today without reservation," Huffman said in a written statement. "I broke the law. I have admitted that, and I pleaded guilty to this crime. There are no excuses or justifications for my actions. Period."

Huffman, who was accompanied in court by her husband, actor William H. Macy, added, "My hope now is that my family, my friends and my community will forgive me for my actions." Macy was not charged in the scheme.

Friday's sentencing hearing in Boston capped months of embarrassing scrutiny for the "Desperate Housewives" star, whose reputation in Hollywood as a down-to-earth anti-diva has been tarnished by the revelation she paid \$15,000 to William "Rick" Singer, a college admissions consultant who profited from his wealthy clients' anxieties about getting their kids into top schools and their willingness to pay huge sums to access his illicit operation.

Huffman was one of 33 parents charged in March in a sweeping investigation into Singer's scheme. Some, like Huffman, were accused of paying Singer to boost their children's SAT and

[See **Huffman**, A10]

LAPD TO CHANGE POLICY ON USE OF SPIES

Use of informer to watch Refuse Fascism group drew concern.

BY JAMES QUEALLY

The Los Angeles Police Department will modify its policies on the use of confidential informants and undercover officers after a Los Angeles Times report revealed the agency had spied on a political group that was planning protests against President Trump in 2017, officials said.

Chief Michel Moore told the Police Commission on Tuesday that the decision to deploy informants inside sensitive locations — including churches, hospitals or law offices — or among political groups will now require the approval of some of the department's highest-ranking officers.

"The use of a confidential informant or undercover officer at a place of worship or other sensitive location where 1st Amendment protected activities [are] conducted, I believe, should receive a higher level of scrutiny and approval before becoming operational, to ensure that the benefit of the investigative technique is not outweighed by the po-

[See **LAPD**, A8]



PAUL NATKIN Getty Images

EDDIE MONEY DIES

The singer-songwriter's 15-year run on the charts included "Two Tickets to Paradise" and "Baby Hold On." Money, 70, died of cancer on Friday in Los Angeles. **CALIFORNIA, B6**

New tone, but old problems persist

Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador vowed to transform Mexico. Nine months into his term, few signs indicate his policies will amount to the "radical" change he promised. **WORLD, A3**

Weather Mostly sunny and hot. L.A. Basin: 93/68. **B6**

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Texas gun backers fear political shift

[Firearms, from A1] Scruggs, who leads the board of Austin-based non-profit Texas Gun Sense and sees hope for expanding background checks and other measures to keep firearms away from those who pose a danger.

Gun rights advocates say they are concerned that the state's politics are shifting and may no longer offer a bulwark against the regulation of firearms.

"There is a great risk of more gun control laws getting passed," said C.J. Grisham, founder of Open Carry Texas, which has successfully lobbied for gun rights. "I worry that Gov. Greg Abbott may be feeling too much political pressure to do something."

It didn't give Grisham any comfort when — after a gunman killed 22 people Aug. 3 at a Walmart in El Paso — Abbott held talks with gun control advocates and limited the pro-gun side to a single lobbyist invited at the last minute.

"That's what worries us," Grisham said. "He invited Texas Gun Sense, but he forgot to invite members of the grass-roots gun rights community."

In an even bigger blow to gun rights advocates, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, a long-time Trump supporter, told the Dallas Morning News last week that he was willing to defy the National Rifle Assn. to support expanded background checks on private gun sales.

"Someone in the Republican Party has to take the lead on this," Patrick said.

On Thursday, Abbott called on Texas legislators to make it easier for private gun sellers to conduct background checks and to close a loophole in the current law that makes it legal to buy a firearm and then give it to a felon or somebody with a history of dangerous mental illness or who is subject to a domestic-violence protective order.

Guns are deeply ingrained in the culture of Texas, where learning to shoot is a common rite of passage and even some gun control proponents own firearms.

Last year, Texas issued 1.3 million concealed-handgun licenses, more than any other state except Florida and 12 times the total in California.

Based on the number of federal background checks conducted this year, Texas has heeded Abbott's old tweet and surpassed California in total gun purchases.

In recent years, Texas enacted laws allowing people to carry handguns in full view, teachers to carry them concealed at school, and college students to bring them onto campuses.

This month, several laws passed by the Republican-dominated state Legislature took effect that clarify the right to carry guns during disasters and in apartment complexes, places of worship and schools.

But there are signs that



BRIANA SANCHEZ/El Paso Times

MOURNERS ATTEND a memorial service last month for victims of the mass shooting in El Paso. Gun rights advocates worry that the state's politics are shifting and may soon stop offering a bulwark against gun control.



ERIC GAY/Associated Press

GUN RIGHTS ADVOCATES gathered outside the Texas Capitol Aug. 22 while Gov. Greg Abbott held talks on gun safety. A lone gun rights lobbyist was invited.



TONY GUTIERREZ/Associated Press

GOV. GREG ABBOTT, a Republican, has called for making it easier for private dealers to do background checks, and harder for owners to give their guns away.

Texas is getting less gun-friendly.

The state's demographics are changing as transplants arrive from California and other places where guns are more scarce and gun laws stricter.

Newcomers are electing more Democrats in Houston and Dallas — and in their suburbs.

In a poll conducted by the

University of Texas at Austin and Texas Tribune in February, 49% of Texans said gun control laws should be stricter.

Gun rights advocates say it has become harder to get gun rights laws passed.

Grisham pointed to the refusal by Texas lawmakers to join the 16 states — including three this year — that have passed "constitutional

carry" laws to eliminate all gun licensing requirements.

"We have a reputation for being pro-gun that we honestly don't deserve," he said.

Derek Willis, who hosts the pro-gun podcast "Lone Star Gun Talk," said he too is worried to hear Texas Republicans suggest gun control concessions.

He opened his podcast Monday by criticizing Texas Republican leaders as "weak on gun rights," describing the governor as a "push-over."

That sentiment was also in the air on a recent afternoon at the family-run Shiloh Shooting Range, in Houston's western suburbs.

A group of regular customers nodded as Jeff Sanford, the manager, dismissed expanded background checks and other gun control proposals.

"It's a Band-Aid that won't do anything," he said. "It's just so they can say we did something."

One of the regulars was a 45-year-old priest, who wore his collar during target practice.

"I am concerned about

new restrictions because I think it's not about the people — it's about politicians," he said after shooting his new 9-millimeter handgun and a rifle.

The priest, who asked to be identified only as the Rev. George because he wasn't authorized by the church to speak publicly about the issue, said he doesn't carry a gun during Mass but supports congregants who do, given that houses of worship have not been spared from mass shootings.

As for when new restrictions might be considered, that's still unclear.

The governor could call a special session of the Legislature, which isn't scheduled to reconvene until 2021. So far, Abbott has refused requests from Democrats to do that.

Still, Scruggs said he was especially encouraged after talking with the governor and other officials at last month's meeting of the newly formed Texas Safety Commission.

He said the discussion, due to last two hours, stretched to five, and the mood was far different than at a meeting last year after the killing of 10 people in a shooting at Santa Fe High School south of Houston.

"There is a desire to do something," Scruggs said. "There's an admittance that our background check system is seriously flawed."

More evidence of that came on Aug. 31, when a gunman terrorized the western Texas cities of Midland and Odessa.

Driving around shooting people from his car and a hijacked mail truck with an AR-15-style rifle, the gunman killed seven before police fatally shot him.

Authorities said that the shooter had failed a background check when he tried to buy a firearm from a registered dealer, but that he had no problem purchasing his

weapon from a private seller. Unlike California and 11 other states, Texas does not require a background check for those sales.

It was soon after those killings that Abbott announced state lawmakers would take action.

Gun control groups from out of state say now is the time to make inroads in Texas.

The San Francisco-based Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence recently helped organize a group called Texas Gun Owners for Safety.

The group's 52 members say they are focused on keeping guns out of the hands of criminals, and hope to persuade lawmakers to adopt background checks for all firearms sales, regulate AR-15-style rifles and enact so-called red-flag laws that would allow courts to order the confiscation of guns from people deemed dangerous.

Patricia Krov, 64, a retired X-ray technician who lives in central Texas, joined the group with her husband because of recent mass shootings and the loss of a loved one to suicide by firearm.

"We feel like we can support common-sense gun laws and protect our right to own guns," she said.

"We don't have small children, but some of the people around us do, and seeing them have to do these active-shooter drills — they shouldn't have to grow up in that environment," she said.

Another member, Kevin Crusier, said he learned to shoot as a boy outside Austin — and hoped his children would have the same relationship with guns.

"They were a huge part of our lives, and I want my boys to grow up and go hunting and have that appreciation," he said.

But Crusier said he also believes that the hijacking of the 2nd Amendment by extremists is one reason that his sons — ages 11 and 13 — have to endure active-shooter drills at school.

Crusier, a 42-year-old lawyer who has worked with Republican lawmakers and considers himself an independent, said he too has had to adapt to the new reality of gun violence.

Before a recent gathering at his house, a guest asked if he had guns, and if so, how they were stored.

"Ten years ago I would have been offended," Crusier said. "Now I understand. The laws have become inadequate to the point where we all have to live in a state of fear."

He said he wanted to try to improve gun laws before more mass shootings lead to major restrictions.

"My big fear is that this sort of weird ideological insanity that 'any gun you can own is OK' is going to create a backlash so big, I don't get to have my shotgun anymore," he said.

"We're a couple of mass shootings away from nothing. I see the tide turning."

Spying case spurs LAPD to modify policy

[LAPD, from A1] tential loss of public trust," Moore said Tuesday.

The policy change comes after The Times revealed that the department had sent an informant to monitor and surreptitiously record four meetings held by Refuse Fascism in October 2017 as the group planned demonstrations and protests to mark the one-year anniversary of President Trump's election.

Refuse Fascism is considered to be a largely nonviolent group, yet the LAPD informant monitored four of its meetings inside an Echo Park church.

Records about the informant's activities became public as part of a criminal case against members of Refuse Fascism who blocked downtown freeways during two separate protests in 2017.

The informant filed multiple reports but never uncovered information about potential violence or crimes being plotted by the group, according to court records.

Civil liberties advocates and experts who monitor street protests described the LAPD's tactics as "deeply troubling." The protest that Refuse Fascism ul-

imately staged in downtown Los Angeles on Election Day 2017 ended with two arrests and no injuries.

The LAPD did not conduct similar spying operations on right-wing groups in the lead-up to the one-year anniversary of the presidential election, a law enforcement source previously told The Times.

Moore said the department's actions in the Refuse Fascism case did not violate LAPD policy, and he did not believe investigators had done anything wrong.

Some of the department's highest-ranking officials, including former Police Chief Charlie Beck, had been made aware of the operation even though it was not required by policy, Moore said.

Going forward, Moore said, he wants to make sure that such reviews are mandated. The department's general counsel may also become involved in such decisions, according to Moore, who said he now considers the matter closed.

"It's not a judicial review, but it is an effort to ensure that the strategy is warranted given the sensitive nature of the location and the public perception of



REED SAXON/Associated Press

THE LAPD COVERTLY monitored the group Refuse Fascism as it planned an anti-Trump protest in October 2017. Above, its members rally in L.A. in May 2017.

whether or not we are respectful and mindful of the added deference that society places on these locations," Moore said.

The police chief said he expects a written policy to be developed and implemented by the end of the year.

Moore has said the decision to place an informant inside Refuse Fascism followed violence at street demonstrations in other parts of the country. The op-

eration was carried out less than two months after a white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Va., left one woman dead and dozens injured, and also came on the heels of repeated brawls between antifascist and far-right groups in the Bay Area.

Refuse Fascism has a chapter in the Bay Area, but police never provided evidence that the Los Angeles sect had anything to do with violence in San Francisco or

Berkeley. Arrest records from those incidents show most of those accused of violence during those protests were from the Bay Area.

Chantelle Hershberger, a Refuse Fascism member who was among those arrested in the 2017 freeway protests, said the proposed policy change was meaningless if the LAPD would not admit that its initial decision to monitor the group was wrong.

"In keeping with the long, bloody history of LAPD spying and political repression, Moore's comments amount to saying: It's fine because we say so," she said. "The allegedly independent Police Commission gives this a rubber stamp — with no evidence, no transparency, inconsistencies in Moore's comments and nothing in place to stop them in the future except an empty promise of reforms...promises the LAPD has made and broken again and again."

Civil rights advocates met news of the policy change with skepticism.

Mohammad Tajsar, a staff attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union in Southern California who specializes in surveillance matters, said the LAPD should allow for independent review of its potential use of informants. He scoffed at Moore's conclusion that the department had done nothing wrong.

"The fact that they substantively concluded that this was OK is, to me, the real problem. I don't understand why that was a determination given the facts here," Tajsar said. "The real answer here is 'Look. We screwed up.'"