

THE Gun Owners

36 YEARS OF NO COMPROMISE – 1975-2011

Anti-gun ObamaCare Celebrates One Year of Lies and Screw-ups — GOA Fighting the law in Congress and the courts

by Mike Hammond

Not since “Rosemary’s Baby” — a ground-breaking film about the birth of the son of Satan — has a one-year-old brought so much bad news during its first year of life.

But, believe it or not, ObamaCare turned one-year-old in March. And what a year it’s been!

Remember the promises that ObamaCare would reduce the deficit? Well, that didn’t happen.

Remember the dismissive pronouncements concerning Constitution-loving Americans who didn’t believe that Congress could force them to buy health insurance? Now, two federal courts have issued judgments in suits brought by 28 states (a majority) that ObamaCare is unconstitutional.

Remember the promises that ObamaCare wouldn’t affect your gun rights in any way? Well, the law will still compile all your health-related medical records into a massive computer database, which the FBI will be able to cull in order to determine whether you have a condition which would justify a gun ban.

GOA has reported on people like Wayne Irelan, who returned from Iraq with a Purple Heart and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). When his wife took over the family’s finances, the VA

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GOA exposing Bloomberg lies



GOA’s Erich Pratt challenged Michael Bloomberg’s Tour of Lies, which drove a mobile billboard across the country, while projecting the message that “34 Americans are murdered with guns every day.” Their so-called statistic, however, ignores the much larger number of times Americans use guns in self-defense — about 2.5 million times annually or almost 7,000 times a day. (See the related article on p. 4 and GOA’s video exposé at <http://tinyurl.com/6eq4rtw>.)

GOA Working to Stop “McCarthyite” Gun Control

by Mike Hammond and John Velleco

Like vultures, anti-gun congressmen are always picking the bones of some national tragedy looking for political advantage.

And the horrific shooting in Tucson earlier this year is just another example, as a string of anti-gun bills have been introduced recently. You may have seen a television ad about one of them: H.R. 308, introduced by gun-hating Carolyn McCarthy less than two weeks after the shooting, would ban so-called “high-capacity” magazines.

“I think when you think about just common sense here, large capacity clips

[sic] that can basically, in my opinion, be weapons of mass destruction, should not be available to the average citizen,” McCarthy said in an NPR interview.

But in virtually every way possible, Arizona shooter Jared Loughner is testimony to a generation of failed gun control.

Remember when, in 1968, we were told that if felons and other undesirables were prohibited from having guns, gun crime would stop? Well, Loughner was not a felon. Likewise, he was not an illegal, military deserter, or a fugitive from justice.

Remember when, in 1993, we were

assured that if gun purchasers were “checked out” against an FBI database, gun crime would stop? Loughner was

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- **ATF trying to bolster gun control statistics by running guns into Mexico (page 6)**
- **GOA combating ATF shotgun ban (page 8)**
- **GOA celebrates another constitutional carry state joining the ranks (page 8)**

GOA Working to Stop “McCarthyite” Gun Control

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checked out by the FBI; he passed.

Remember when, in 1999 after Columbine, we were told that if we cracked down on gun shows, gun crime would stop? That crackdown didn't pass, but Loughner didn't buy his gun at a gun show.

Remember when, after Virginia Tech, we were told that if we sent more of Americans' mental health records to the FBI's secret list, gun crime would stop? Loughner's name wasn't on the FBI expanded list because he hadn't been “adjudicated as a mental defective” or “committed to a mental institution.”

Now we are told by McCarthy and her ilk that the solution to tragedies like the one in Tucson consists of banning what are, in her opinion, “high-capacity” magazines.

Well, setting aside for a moment that her legislation ignores the issue of Congress' constitutional authority, what about regular Americans who face multiple attackers, such as the Korean store



“I think when you think about just common sense here, large capacity clips [sic] that can basically, in my opinion, be weapons of mass destruction, should not be available to the average citizen,” said Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY).

owners during the LA riots of 1992, or the man in Long Island last year who was forced to defend his family from 20 gang members?

McCarthy seems to care less about how her political maneuverings would endanger ordinary Americans. She, after all, can huddle behind the massive billion dollar-plus Capitol Hill security apparatus.

And, of course, she is not only interested in banning magazines, but also the firearms that accept such magazines. She inadvertently admitted, in an NPR radio interview, that she is a political culture with a larger agenda.

She was asked by a reporter, “And so

you want legislation that specifically targets that kind of magazine, not actually the weapons themselves?”

Rep. McCarthy: “No. The weapons in themselves — number one, I have to look at, you know, what can actually pass in Congress and have it signed by the president. The House and the Senate are pro-gun houses. So with that being said, I have to find something that will be reasonable to the majority of the members so that we can cut down.”

Well, it's time, once again, to remind the Congress that it cannot violate the Constitution just because Carolyn McCarthy thinks it's a good idea. Secondly, Congress needs to be reminded that no gun control measure has ever reduced crime or prevented criminals from getting their hands on firearms — to the contrary, gun control laws only turn law-abiding citizens into easy targets.

GOA is briefing members of Congress on the dangers — both to constitutional rights as well as public safety — of the McCarthy bill. ■

Anti-Gun ObamaCare

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began paying Sgt. Ireland a small stipend.

The Veterans Administration then used this as a basis to define him as “mentally incompetent” and stripped him of his gun rights — just like the other 150,000-plus veterans who have also been disarmed.

ObamaCare creates the ultimate list of “prohibited persons” — tens of millions of persons with PTSD and other supposedly debilitating conditions who could be subject to a national gun ban with the click of a mouse.

ObamaCare is probably the worst law in the history of the United States — hatched by the most corrupt process.

It costs \$2.5 trillion, conservatively. This will be paid for by a massive tax increase on the middle class. It takes the most important medical decisions concerning you and your family out of your hands — and puts them in the hands of government bureaucrats.

And, as mentioned above, gives federal bureaucrats the power to disarm

millions of otherwise law-abiding Americans.

Republicans have it fully within their power to offer Harry Reid and Barack Obama a mandate: either repeal ObamaCare or we will shut down your operations.

ObamaCare creates the ultimate list of “prohibited persons” — tens of millions of persons with PTSD and other supposedly debilitating conditions who could be subject to a national gun ban with the click of a mouse.

maCare or we will shut down your operations.

So this is what Gun Owners of America will be pushing for the next six months: Any spending bill which funds anti-gun ObamaCare *must* have a repeal (or defunding) provision. If it does not, Gun Owners of America will rate support for such a bill as an anti-gun vote.

This includes the individual appropriations bills for 2012 which the House will pass in May, June and July.

But these individual bills are destined for the wastebasket anyway since Congress will probably continue to fund the government through “continu-

ing resolutions” rather than pass a budget.

So the more important message is that the “continuing resolution” which will be passed at the end of September

to fund the government for 2012 *must* have an ObamaCare repeal or a defunding provision — or we will call out the cowardly Congressional defectors for the liars and hypocrites which they will be. ■

GOA challenging ObamaCare in court

Gun Owners of America has joined with a leading state legislator in Virginia and submitted an amicus brief in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, asking judges to affirm the lower court's ruling against ObamaCare. To see the GOA brief, go to: www.gunowners.org/pdf/amicus0411.pdf



Monday, April 25, 2011

Restricting firearms makes us less safe

Several states are passing Stand Your Ground laws and loosening their concealed carry laws, making it easier for people to defend themselves ... and that's a good thing.

Consider what happens when decent people can't protect themselves.

Amanda Collins was a student at University of Nevada's Reno campus in 2007. Even though she had a concealed carry permit, she was unarmed the night she was brutally raped by James Biela. She had left her gun at home because she was scared of what could happen to her if she was caught disobeying the laws prohibiting firearms on campus.

Amanda feels certain she could have used her gun successfully that night. "I would have at some point during my rape been able to stop James Biela," she said.

Amanda has reason to be confident. There are women today who have escaped the ugliness of rape because a gun was nearby. Take the Missouri teenager who was rescued by her handgun-wielding mother one night last year. Craig Kizer jumped on the sleeping teenager but was forced to flee the house after the teen grabbed a knife and the mom entered the room with a firearm, police said.

Stand Your Ground laws have passed in many states, giving homeowners added legal protection when they use guns defensively. These laws, coupled with those recognizing the right of people to defend themselves with firearms outside the home, are saving lives.

Anti-gun extremists always claim that allowing citizens to carry guns will result in random shootouts. But the truth is that these Chicken Little predictions never materialize.

Take El Paso, which was ranked by CQ Press as America's safest city in 2010. El Paso is situated in a very pro-gun state where people can easily carry concealed firearms. Residents there live quite peacefully, despite being located across from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico—a town with very stringent gun control laws and one of the highest murder rates in the world.

Restricting firearms only makes us less safe. So let's applaud the almost 7,000 Americans a day who use firearms in self-defense to deter criminals.

Erich Pratt is the director of communications for Gun Owners of America, a grassroots lobbying group with more than 300,000 members.

RadioShack Store Owner Continues Gun Giveaway — But RadioShack Corp seeks to end promotion

by John Velleco

A RadioShack store owner in the small town of Hamilton, Montana, created a firestorm with a promotion intended to increase lagging sales: buy a satellite TV service, get a free gun.

People who sign a two year contract for Dish Network at this RadioShack Super Store have a choice between a gift card for a \$125 pistol, a \$115 shotgun or, if they're not inclined to get the free gun, \$50 in pizza.

Store owner Steve Strand initially promoted the offer with a sign reading, "Protect Yourself with Dish Network. Sign up now, get free gun." The sign, and the ensuing controversy, drew the attention of RadioShack's Fort Worth, Texas corporate office.



Although Strand's sales have tripled in recent months, RadioShack officials oppose the giveaway and have insisted that Strand pull the offer. "This offer is not consistent with our recommended marketing practices for independent dealers," whined the company's director of communications in an email. "We are in discussions with the dealer to end the promotion."

"RadioShack has taken the position that we're tarnishing their brand image with the promotion," Strand said. "I don't think this is a negative impact. I don't think they understand the way of life in Montana."

But customers have been streaming in to the store to take advantage of the deal regardless. Those who take Strand up on the offer can redeem the gift card at a local gun dealership, where they must comply with all state and federal gun laws. ■

Olofson out of jail, needs help to start his business

David Olofson has been subjected to a gross miscarriage of justice. What happened to Olofson could happen to any American who owns a semi-automatic firearm.

He was convicted of knowingly transferring an unregistered machine gun — a semi-automatic rifle which fired a burst and jammed. Gun owners call that a malfunction. The federal government calls it an easy way to get a felony conviction. Olofson was sentenced to 30 months in federal prison.

David Olofson is an information technology professional with a wife, three children and a mortgage. Until his conviction, he was also in the National Guard.

GOA took his appeal to the Supreme Court which declined to hear it. This was in spite of the trial court having ruled in direct opposition to a recent decision of the Supreme Court itself!

Olofson has served his entire sentence, but is having trouble finding a job. Background checks reveal David's "criminal" record. And even if a background check is not run, the Feds still manage to show up and ask the employer to cooperate in monitoring David's behavior.

As a result, David has started his own business, Joules of Nature, at <http://www.joulesofnature.com>. ■

Bloomberg Inadvertently Highlights the Failure of Gun Control

by Erich Pratt

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg recently exposed himself to the entire nation.

Beginning in February, Bloomberg sponsored a cross-country tour in his efforts to impose extreme restrictions upon Second Amendment rights.

GOA followed this Tour of Lies and spent several weeks blowing the cover off Bloomberg's misstatements.

Consider the huge slip up that was recently posted on his website — at www.fixgunchecks.org — indicating something that gun right supporters have suspected all along.

The blooper took place in Iowa.

Johnson County Sheriff Lonny Pulkrabek is seen on tape, proudly explaining how under the old carry law in the state, he used to make it considerably difficult for citizens to get carry permits.

"In the past, if someone owed traffic fines even, I denied them," said Pulkrabek. "I told them, 'Go get their traffic fines [paid and] come back.' I just felt compelled to do that."

He also rattled off a series of other non-violent, driving-related offenses that he would use to permanently deny people their right to bear arms as protected under the Second Amendment.

Holding up one gentleman's traffic record, he said: "Here's a gentleman that [got a] traffic citation. I would have denied [him a permit]."

Just to be clear, these denials were completely discretionary and were not required by statutory law. And this just demonstrates how unscrupulous officials can abuse background checks to deny otherwise law-abiding citizens.

When someone racks up several driving offenses, it's understandable if officials revoke his driver's license. But it's a big stretch to then use that information to take away his ability to defend himself and his family. After all, we're talking about God-given rights!

Would Sheriff Pulkrabek also deny these bad drivers the right to vote ... or their right to free speech ... or any of their other rights? Why is it that bad



While anti-gun Mayor Michael Bloomberg has focused on tightening gun control laws across the nation, the murder rate in his city spiked over 10% in 2010, even while it was dropping in the rest of the country.

drivers are only 'bad enough' to lose their gun rights, but nothing else?

This is the whole problem with background checks. You give a bureaucrat the power to say no, and quite often they'll abuse their power:

- **Delaware:** An 80-year old woman was denied the right to purchase a handgun in 2008 because she was too old, and because she was female!

According to State Police Superintendent Col. Thomas MacLeish, the sale to Alvina Vansickle was halted over concerns "based upon [her] age and gender." Vansickle was denied, despite the fact that she did not even have a speeding ticket to her name.

- **Oregon:** Officials have used background checks in the past to arbitrarily deny concealed carry licenses to law-abiding citizens — based solely on one's political views. In one case, a permit holder had his license revoked because he was the editor of a pro-life newspaper.

- **Nationwide:** A General Accounting Office study a few years ago found that the Brady Law had erroneously

denied firearms to thousands of applicants. In fact, over fifty percent of denials under the Brady Law were for administrative snafus, traffic violations, or reasons other than felony convictions.

Shooting blanks in Arizona

The Bloomberg Tour of Lies hit its climax in Arizona, claiming that "it is here that the national effort to fix our background check system gained a new urgency after the tragic mass shooting in Tucson."

Bloomberg has been pressing for stricter laws to close supposed loopholes that let criminals get guns. If these laws had been on the books — the argument goes — then Jared Loughner would not have obtained a firearm and Arizona Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords would never have been shot in January.

But there are several problems with this theory:

1. First, Jared Loughner had *not* been adjudicated of any crime ... of any drug use ... or of any mental illness.



Iowa Sheriff Lonny Pulkrabek has admitted to making it considerably difficult for citizens to get carry permits in his county — even to the point of using non-violent, driving-related offenses to permanently deny people their gun rights.

He had a clean legal record. So no background check would have stopped him from getting a gun, unless we're going to now change federal law and start denying people's rights *without due process of law*.

2. Second, stricter gun control laws have NOT stopped bad guys from getting guns — including in our

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Successful Self-Defense vs. “Gun Free Zones”

by John Velleco

When the “modern” handgun was introduced by Colt in the late 1800s, it became known as the “great equalizer.”

This 19th century observation proved true yet again earlier this year when a 110-pound former beauty queen shot and killed a violent thug who broke into her Florida home at three o’clock in the morning.

Meghan Brown, responding to a knock on the door, was overtaken by ex-convict Albert Franklin Hill and

forced to an upstairs bedroom. The victim’s fiancé, Robert Planthaber, was awakened by the commotion and went after the attacker.

Planthaber told FoxNews.com that he “took a severe beating to the head...But I got him off of her long enough for her to scramble to the room where she keeps her pink .38 special.”

Brown, the 2009 Miss Tierra Verde, retrieved the firearm and shot Hill several times. The intruder, who was pronounced dead at the scene, had a criminal record that included four prison sentences.

This attack could have easily gone bad for the victims — instead of bad for the criminal — if the law prevented Ms. Brown from receiving that pink pistol for Christmas last year.

All that was left for the police to do when they arrived was to cart away the body. It was the “great equalizer” that empowered Meghan to effectively



Refusing to become a victim herself, Meghan Brown used her Christmas present — a pink .38 special — to kill a violent thug who broke into her Florida home at three o’clock in the morning.

defend her home and save the lives of two would-be victims.

This is a side of gun ownership that rarely makes the news. And, true to form, the mainstream media largely ignored this case. Criminals using guns is front page news; armed citizens fighting back just doesn’t fit the storyline.

Meghan Brown’s story stands in sharp contrast to that of a

Nevada college student who was brutally raped on the University of Nevada’s Reno campus in October of 2007.

Amanda Collins held a CCW permit on the evening of the attack, but she was prohibited from carrying a firearm on the university campus.

She had just left a 10:00 pm class and was headed to her car on the ground floor of a parking garage — not 100 feet from the campus police building. She was careful to check around as she approached her car when she was grabbed by a 6’2” 200 pound man. He held her down and told her not to open her eyes. He held a gun to her temple, and she heard him click off the safety.

But that night, when Amanda most needed a gun for protection, she wasn’t carrying because the university is a so-called “Gun Free Zone.” Gun free, that is, for those who respect the law. It was not so for the attacker, who turned out to be a serial rapist and murderer and

who now occupies a place on death row.

A week after the attack on Amanda, another woman was raped on campus. Then came the abduction of Brianna Denison, who was raped and murdered. Her body was found in a field days after the attack.

Amanda is confident she could have defended herself that night. “I would have at some point during my rape been able to stop James Biela,” she said. “I know, having been the first victim, that Brianna Dennison would still be alive, had I been able to defend myself that night.”

In Nevada, GOA is pushing legislation to eliminate the absurd requirement that CCW holders get permission from a university president — permission that is routinely denied. Amanda, who testified in favor of the legislation, was eventually granted permission to carry a firearm, but it was *after* her attack. And she is the only permit holder to be granted such permission at the university.

The attack on Amanda Collins is a reminder that — despite any good intentions — gun control leaves victims vulnerable to criminal attack.

Successful self-defense with a firearm, such as in Meghan Brown’s case, is hardly unusual. Studies by government agencies, criminologists and economists show that citizens use firearms to defend themselves anywhere from 600,000 to 2.5 million times per year to thwart crimes.

The facts show that firearms are used most often to protect the innocent against dangerous, violent thugs. ■

Bloomberg Inadvertently Highlights the Failure of Gun Control

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nation’s capital. Washington, DC saw its murder rate skyrocket after enacting a draconian gun ban in 1976, but has subsequently seen murders drop to a 40-year low after the ban was struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2008.

3. Finally, how can any background

check be expected to work when the ATF has been intentionally approving gun sales to suspected bad guys?

Several news agencies (including CBS and Fox News) have exposed the ATF’s illegal activity, which contributed to the murder of Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry. (See related ATF article on p. 6.)

The fact is, gun control has shown itself over and over again to be a failure.

Years ago, one of the nation’s leading anti-gun medical publications, the *Jour-*

nal of the American Medical Association, found that Brady background checks have failed to reduce murder rates or overall suicide rates.

But don’t expect Michael Bloomberg to tell you about that study. ■

People can follow the progress of GOA’s efforts to shine the light of truth on the Bloomberg Tour of Lies at:
<http://gunowners.org/bloombergtour.htm>

And be sure to see our Fact Sheet on the Problems with Background Checks at
<http://gunowners.org/fs2011b.htm>

Obama Administration Lying About Guns — As ATF allows guns to flow into Mexico

by Erich Pratt and John Velleco

Ronald Reagan once said, “Government is like a baby: an alimentary canal with a big appetite at one end and no sense of responsibility at the other.”

No sense of responsibility? Yeah, like the duty to tell the truth. Consider these whoppers from recent years:

- More than 90 percent of all crime guns in Mexico “come from the United States,” many of them from “gun shops” that line our shared border; or,
- My administration is going to be “accountable” and “transparent,” so the American people’s interests are being “well served.”

That last promise comes from Barack Obama’s first day in office. It kind of rings hollow today, however, now that Obama’s Justice Department appears to be in the midst of a massive cover-up.

That’s because the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) — the bureaucracy charged with jurisdiction over gun stores — has been cracking down on federal agents who are blowing the whistle on abuses committed within the agency.

Sadly, these abuses have led to innocent people being killed — like Border Patrol agent Brian Terry.

When Terry was shot and mortally wounded in a gun battle about 10 miles from the Mexico border in Arizona in December, 2010, it appeared to be yet another example of Mexico drug gang violence spilling over the border.

But as more and more information from the crime scene leaked out, disturbing evidence also pointed to serious wrongdoing at the ATF — where the ATF was working with gun shops, approving firearms purchases to buyers who were suspected smugglers.

Exonerating gun dealers

One wonders why New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg never talks about this ATF scandal. He’s the one who made headlines recently when he employed a team of undercover investigators to ferret out gun dealers who were supposedly willing to bend the law and make sales to questionable



GUN OWNERS OF AMERICA

March 23, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

GOA calls on President Obama to answer charges that his administration was funneling guns into Mexico to help fuel the calls for more U.S. gun control.

Dear Mr. President:

You had indicated in your article in the *Arizona Daily Star* and in subsequent comments that you were eager to meet with the Second Amendment community to discuss potential areas of agreement.

Frankly, we have no interest in negotiating with you concerning additional constitutional rights which you might want to persuade us to give away for no apparent purpose.

We are, however, willing to brief you on what we know about actions by your administration in promoting the sale and exportation of firearms which you knew (or should have known) were bound for Mexican drug cartels.

You may have seen press reports on CBS and elsewhere about a large number of current and former ATF agents who have alleged that ATF encouraged reticent gun dealers to sell firearms to persons known to be straw men for Mexican drug lords. It apparently did this, in part, so it could push gun control in Congress by demonstrating that guns used in Mexican violence came from the United States.

Finally, internal dissent with respect to this immoral policy was reportedly squashed without mercy.

We would like to know who, within your administration knew what — and when they knew it. We would also like to know of your intentions to discipline, dismiss, and prosecute the culpable parties.

As I’m sure you know, if your administration fails to act quickly, Congress has the capacity to appoint a special counsel to do it for you. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Larry Pratt
Executive Director

characters.

CBS News reports in February and March, however, show a completely different picture. It shows gun dealers actually trying to *prevent* the sales of guns from going to suspected bad guys.

According to CBS News, several gun shops “wanted to stop the questionable sales, but ATF encouraged them to continue.” ATF special agent John Dodson also told CBS News that he and fellow agents were under orders to “intentionally [let] guns go to Mexico.”

This is quite ironic since the Obama administration has repeatedly stated that

we are to blame for much of Mexico’s crime problems. Never mind the fact that Mexico has *very strict* gun control laws — which not only keep *their* law-abiding citizens almost completely disarmed, but turn them into mandatory victims.

And never mind the fact that the ATF has been allowing US guns to “walk” across the border — not to those law-abiding Mexicans who need protection, but to dangerous drug cartels.

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Obama Administration Lying About Guns

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ATF's Gunrunner sending guns into Mexico

Since 2005, the ATF has been involved in an initiative called "Project Gunrunner."

Under this plan, ATF was to trace the flow of guns supposedly trafficked by straw purchasers in the U.S. and follow them across the border into Mexico.

The mismanagement and botched oversight of "Gunrunner" has led to what has become known as the "Gunwalker" scandal.

According to current and former agents, perhaps as many as 3,000 firearms were allowed by ATF to "walk" across the border into Mexico. But the firearms — along with any hope of tracking them to higher level criminals — disappeared once the guns crossed the border. The ATF literally lost track of the weapons.

Two of these guns, however, turned up at the scene of Brian Terry's murder. They were traced to an American gun store that had been cooperating with the Phoenix ATF office as part of Project Gunrunner.

High-ranking Senator investigating ATF corruption

The information about Agent Terry's murder and the potential role played by Gunrunner came to the attention of Iowa Senator Charles Grassley, who sent a letter of inquiry to Acting ATF Director Ken Melson in January.

In the letter, Sen. Grassley wrote that the Judiciary Committee, of which he is

the ranking member, "received numerous allegations" that the ATF authorized the sale of hundreds of firearms to suspected illegal buyers, "who then allegedly transported these weapons throughout the southwestern border



GOA's Larry Pratt appeared on Fox Business News to draw attention to Project Gunrunner in April — a program where ATF agents knowingly approved sales to suspected gun smugglers.

area and into Mexico.... Two of the weapons were then allegedly used in a firefight ... killing CPB Agent Brian Terry."

Senator Grassley went on to quote from a scathing Department of Justice review of Project Gunrunner, which found that ATF focused on low level, individual straw buyers "instead of targeting higher-level traffickers and smugglers."

Sen. Grassley clearly ruffled some feathers in the agency. When an agent in the ATF's Phoenix office spoke to someone on Grassley's staff, that agent was accused by a superior of "misconduct related to his contacts with the Senate Judiciary Committee."

The Senator had to remind the agency of federal whistleblower protections and that agents "have the rights to be free from fear of retaliation or reprisal" for speaking with members of Congress. "Rather than focusing on retaliating against whistleblowers, the ATF's sole focus should be on finding and disclosing the truth as soon as possible."

Most illegal guns in Mexico coming from Central America

News reports over the last couple of years are showing that, despite claims to the contrary by the Obama administration, most of the illegal guns in Mexico are not coming from the United States.

In 2009, Fox News was the first agency to conduct an investigation and show that, in actuality, less than one-fifth of the guns confiscated in Mexico — not 90 percent as Obama claimed — originated in the United States.

And according to a CNSNews.com article this April, "The Obama administration has repeatedly said that 90 percent of traceable guns seized from drug cartels in Mexico come from the United States, a rate that has been questioned by analysts."

So here's the hypocrisy:

- The ATF has been watching guns flow into Mexico for years and telling American gun dealers to shelve their apprehensions about selling those firearms to suspected drug dealers.
- But even while the ATF was helping send guns into Mexico, our President was blaming our Second Amendment for fueling Mexico's violence!

This may even have been intentional, as noted in an Exminer.com article this April: "The Obama Administration, according to ATF agents who blew the whistle on the illegal plot, intended to use statistics concerning U.S. guns in Mexico to call for more stringent gun control."

Imagine that. A lack of transparency, even from a President who promised us that his administration was going to be different. ■

THE Gun Owners

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The Cowboy State Joins the Club

by Larry Pratt

Wyoming residents no longer have to seek permission from state officials to exercise their Second Amendment rights now that Governor Matt Mead signed a constitutional carry bill into law in March.

This comes as welcome news to gun rights activists who treasure our constitutional freedoms.

After all, America has come a long way from its 17th century founding. Massachusetts and Virginia used to have laws requiring travelers to be armed. In Massachusetts, congregants had to be armed.

That all changed, though, over the next couple of centuries when states began imposing massive amounts of gun control. These restrictions turned countless Americans into mandatory victims, and many innocent lives were lost as a result.

But now, we are ever so slowly inching our way back to removing the mountain of prohibitions on being armed in public. Prior to this year, three states had stopped requiring law-abiding citizens to first get a permit to carry firearms concealed in public. And now, legislators in Wyoming have added the Cowboy State to this growing list.

Constitutional carry is the term Gun Owners of America has applied to carrying firearms without getting prior approval from the government. It recognizes that the Second Amendment is serious when it says that our gun rights “shall not be infringed.” We hear statisticians say that all of our rights are subject to being balanced by the “interests” of the government. Such a view would have us forget that “We the People” are the boss, and the government works for us. We have the “interests;” but the government has

only one responsibility — to do what it is told.

For the people to be the sovereign — not just in theory, but in fact — we must be armed. For our employees to tell us how, when and where we might be armed is a role reversal. A disarmed sovereign is a sovereign that has suffered a coup d'état.

Constitutional carry is also a recognition that gun control only restricts the good guys. Criminals are not deterred by gun laws. Criminals are in the business of breaking laws, and breaking a gun law does not result in a crisis of conscience for criminals.

It is a huge mistake to think that any of the gun control measures on our books, or which have been proposed, deter criminals. Consider that in Mexico, in spite of a constitutional declaration of a right to have guns, there is only one gun store in the whole country — in Mexico City. If you manage to get a permit, it will be for a handgun of a fairly ineffective caliber, or for a limited selection of long guns. Then you can make your appointment and travel to Mexico City to finally get your gun.

Yet what dominates the news coming out of Mexico? Guns. And the ones used by the drug traffickers are not usually the ones available to the American public. But tens of thousands of fully automatic machine guns have gone missing from the Mexican military. And, strange as it may seem (sarcasm), the same planes and boats that are used to smuggle drugs also smuggle firearms.

More civilians were murdered in Juarez last year than civilians in Afghanistan. Right across the border in El Paso, the murder rate is enormously lower. Texans own guns, and many of them carry concealed.

So, let's get a grip on reality. Let's remove the obstacles that impede the sovereign from arming himself where he chooses and when he chooses. It is the constitutional thing to do, after all. ■

ATF Shotgun Study Will Lead to Gun Ban — GOA mobilizes opposition



Unable to push a gun ban through the current Congress, the anti-gun Obama administration is seeking to ban many guns through executive fiat.

In January, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) proposed that the importation of many shotguns be prohibited. In a report titled a Study on the Importability of Certain Shotguns, the ATF found that “certain shotgun features are not particularly suitable or readily adapted for sporting purposes,” including:

- Folding, telescoping or collapsible stocks
 - Bayonet lugs
 - Flash suppressors
 - Magazines over five rounds, or drum magazine
 - Grenade-launcher mounts
 - Integrated rail systems
 - Light-enhancing devices
 - Excessive weight
 - Excessive bulk
 - Forward pistol grip
- Shotguns containing any of these fea-

tures are classified by the ATF as “military shotguns, or shotguns with common military features that are unsuitable for traditional shotgun sports.”

GOA is working with members of Congress to repeal the “sporting purposes” test and has submitted comments to the ATF contesting the “findings” of the Study on the Importability of Certain Shotguns.

GOA also used its website and email alert system this Spring to mobilize grassroots gun owners in opposing the ATF study. ■