

Here's what they're saying about GOA....



TPM April 8, 2013

Democrats Blame 'Gun Owners of America' For Gun Control Setback

SAHIL KAPUR

A little known pro-gun lobby that's well to the right of the National Rifle Association has complicated efforts to reach a solution on gun control legislation, top Democrats have said in recent days.

The Gun Owners of America, a group in relative obscurity, dwarfed by the NRA's big gripe is that its recent efforts to secure a deal on gun control legislation from Republicans amenable to the Obama administration have been frustrated.

The results have frustrated Democrats. "The NRA — their extreme by virtue of the Second Amendment of America," Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said on Friday. "Whenever the NRA becomes more unreasonable, the NRA becomes more unreasonable."

GOA is proud of its decision to stay away from Sen. Tom Coburn (R-OK) from discussions with Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) about a bipartisan compromise on expanding background checks for gun purchases.

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Schumer's spokesman Brian Fallon took note of Gun Owners of America's role in the debate, tweeting a link to the *Times* profile and saying the group "is making [a] deal on even background checks extremely hard."

Meanwhile, the Gun Owners of America is flexing its muscle in [the] first major gun control effort in nearly two decades.

Pratt told the paper. "I've never heard complaints like that, and it's not changed his mind." He said he would like to see members to inundate GOP

Gun Owners of America's role in the debate, saying the group "is making a deal on even background checks extremely hard."

Gun Owners of America is the true foe of gun control for Senate Democrats who are wary of the group's power and are skittish about the group's power for now, negotiations over gun control legislation seeking to win over Sen. Pat

Gun Owners of America is flexing its muscle in first major gun control effort in nearly two decades. Prominently featured on the front page of

"They [GOA] are strong defenders of the Second Amendment," said Senator Ted Cruz, Republican of Texas. — *New York Times*, April 3, 2013



New York Times April 3, 2013

Upstart Group Pushes Harder Than the N.R.A.

SPRINGFIELD, Va. —

When word surfaced in February that Senator Tom Coburn, Republican of Oklahoma, was plotting for gun buyers, Larry Pratt, executive director of Gun Owners of America, was busy mounting a lobbying blitz that helps explain why a bipartisan Senate deal on background checks remains elusive.

Within days, his staff was building off the Beltway on the phone with supporters. Members were encouraged to call their senators to make it clear that a check law would not be passed without their support.

It wasn't long until negotiations with Senator Coburn, a Democrat, securing a deal on background checks from frustrating advocates of gun control. Once largely unknown, the group has emerged as an influential force as a result of its lobbying strength.

The group has already appeared to be on the fence about supporting bills to expand background checks and increase penalties for illegal gun purchases, and empowering those who have a strong gun rights background.

Then, Mr. [Larry] Pratt, the executive director of Gun Owners of America, got busy, mounting a lobbying blitz that helps explain why a bipartisan Senate deal on background checks remains elusive.

Once largely unknown, Gun Owners of America, with its war chest, membership and lobbying strength dwarfed by the National Rifle Association, is emerging as an influential force as a series of gun control measures heads to the Senate floor.

The group has already been successful in both freezing senators, particularly Republicans, who have appeared to be on the fence about supporting bills to expand background checks and increase penalties for illegal gun purchases, and empowering those who have a strong gun rights background.

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"Gun Owners of America [has] been pressing lawmakers who may have wavered on this emotional issue of background checks." — CNN's Wolf Blitzer, April 10, 2013



SALON April 4, 2013

Gun Owners of America out-hardlines the NRA

The group has been gaining power and effectively targeting Republicans in an effort to halt gun control legislation

The NRA's smaller but more hardline gun lobby cousin, Gun Owners of America, is steadily gaining influence and pressuring Republicans to oppose gun control legislation.

The New York Times' Larry Pratt, executive director of Gun Owners of America, has been effective in pressuring lawmakers to oppose gun control legislation.

For example, Tom Coburn, R-Okla., who began working with Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., for a deal on background checks, was pounded by calls and emails from constituents after the Gun Owners of America got involved.

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— which led to newfound media exposure. At the time, the NRA and other gun lobby groups went into hibernation mode, while Pratt made comments like "Gun-free

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In March, GOA's Erich Pratt shocked his opponent from the Brady Campaign — and Fox's Lou Dobbs — by arguing against background checks, saying that law-abiding citizens should not have to prove their innocence to the government before exercising their God-given rights.



GOP Senators Pushed to Join Gun Filibuster

Lobbying Group's Members Confront Lawmakers Back Home During Two-Week Spring Recess

By JANET HOOK And KRISTINA PETERSON

Opponents of new gun control legislation are expected to pressure lawmakers back home during the two-week spring recess to join a filibuster effort to block Senate leaders from passing any new gun controls.

Gun Owners of America, a lobbying group that has taken a hard line against any new gun controls, is telling its members to ask senators during their home-state visits if they will join the effort to block the legislation. The threat to block any gun bill was initiated last week by GOP Sens. Rand Paul of Kentucky, Mike Lee of Utah and Ted Cruz of Texas.

"We have been encouraging our members in all the states to ask that question while their senators are home in this recess," said Erich Pratt, director of government affairs for the group. He said the group would take note of each senator's vote on allowing a gun bill to reach the Senate floor when it ranks lawmakers' voting records at the end of the year.

Among those being questioned back home was Sen. Tom Coburn (R., Okla.), a conservative and gun-rights advocate who has come under heavy lobbying

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pressure because he has worked with a bipartisan group that is negotiating a bill to expand background checks.

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"Whenever the NRA tries to be reasonable, the Gun Owners of America becomes more unreasonable and that pushes the NRA. At one time they were the only organization that dealt with this. Now you've got Gun Owners of America which is way to the — I guess you would say the 'right' — of what the NRA is. It makes it hard for the NRA to be reasonable."

— Senator Harry Reid, April 6, 2013 on Nevada Public Radio

Slate

April 4, 2013

Meet Washington's Other Gun Lobby. It Loves Guns Even More than the NRA.

By Josh Voorhees

In the wake of Newtown that has since ensued, the National Rifle Association, the largest gun lobby in America, is doing its fair share to strengthen existing gun laws.

According to an estimate, the top of the group's Washington. Given the way the Times tells it,

Many lawmakers are rising profile and heavy aggressive stance against background checks to its chief executive of the NRA, anyone" on gun sale background director Larry] Pratt said they've gone far enough.

Gun Owners of America several bills about to hit would eliminate gun-free school zones. ... [The group's positions tend to veer farther right than those of the N.R.A. Instead of expanding background checks,

When Sen. Tom Coburn, an Oklahoma Republican, backed away from bipartisan talks to expand background checks earlier this year, he did so after Gun Owners of America and its members flooded the senator's office with e-mails and phone calls to make it, in the words of the paper, "exceedingly clear to the senator that an enhanced background check law would not be tolerated."

Democratic staffers likewise tell the paper that other Republicans they've approached to co-sponsor a background check bill were quick to point to the GOA as the most obvious reason not to. While the group's bank account is relatively paltry when compared to the NRA's (nearly \$2 million in total revenue in 2011 compared to almost \$220 million), its members often get Tea Party loud, inundating lawmakers' offices with calls and backing only the most conservative of candidates in GOP primaries back home. While the GOA obviously doesn't have the power of the deep-pocketed NRA, it clearly has power.

[Pratt] would like to unravel the existing ones on gun purchases, fearing they will lead to a smaller interest group noteworthy for the impact

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the GOA is also a tougher ration awards A-ratings to Mark Warner of Virginia (A+ in Baucus' case), the upstart group factors in non-gun legislation (like Obamacare) to hand those senators a D- and F, respectively. On the other end of the spectrum,

"Gun Owners of America's Larry Pratt had a great showdown with CNN's Wolf Blitzer... [Pratt] did an excellent job of not only pushing back against the idea that the Constitution is up for grabs every time the wind shifts and the public opinion polls change, but also making the point that there will be a political price to pay by those — like Senators Manchin and Toomey — who so blithely trample on the Second Amendment."

— ConservativeHQ, April 12, 2013



U.S. NEWS

April 10, 2013

The Math Doesn't Add Up for Gun Control Advocates



By ERICH PRATT, Director of Communications for Gun Owners of America

President Obama wants us to believe that 90 percent of Americans support background checks — a dubious claim to be sure. But even if true, since when do liberties guaranteed by our Bill of Rights become subject to a popular vote?

Polls that throw around the 90 percent figure are suspect for many reasons. For starters, they claim that roughly 80 percent of Gun Owners of America and National Rifle Association members support background checks. But after polling our members, we found that fewer than 5 percent support such restrictions — thus obliterating the credibility of these polls which purport to speak for our supporters.

Not only did a Quinnipiac poll say that, by a margin of 48 to 38 percent, Americans think background checks will lead to confiscation, a recent CBS News poll found that only 47 percent of Americans want stricter gun control. So if that's true, how is it that twice that number supposedly want background checks expanded? The numbers just don't add up.

The fact is, background checks are dangerous because:

- They force law-abiding citizens to prove their innocence to the government

before exercising a constitutionally protected right — something that we wouldn't tolerate with the First Amendment;

- They require the names of gun owners to be sent to the FBI, thus creating the framework for a national registration system — a cause for concern when politicians like Democratic Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York and others have called for gun confiscation; and
- They use a database through which government bureaucrats unduly denied more than 150,000 military veterans their constitutional rights, without any due process whatsoever, based on things such as PTSD.

Proponents claim that background checks prevent thousands of people from buying guns every year. It's a lie. In 2010, only 13 people were incarcerated for illegally trying to purchase a gun — meaning that the thousands of people with initial denials weren't ultimately stopped from buying a gun on the street. It's also a lie that 40 percent of gun purchases are done through private sales; The Washington Post gave Obama "Three Pinocchios" for this claim.

Finally, under Operation Fast & Furious, the Obama administration knowingly approved the sales of thousands of firearms to criminals. It is the height of hypocrisy for Obama to then tell Americans they will be safer with expanded background checks when the chief gun runner in America — Obama himself — was ultimately responsible for the program that directly led to hundreds of Mexican deaths.