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NRA-ILA

"A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

May 14, 2004



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GOVERNOR BUSH SUPPORTS GUN OWNERS` RIGHTS: SIGNS TWO IMPORTANT BILLS INTO LAW!

On May 13, with overwhelming support in the Florida Legislature and from firearm owners across the state, Governor Jeb Bush (R) signed two important gun rights bills (SB 1156 and HB 155) into law. Former NRA President Marion P. Hammer, NRA Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre, NRA-ILA Executive Director Chris W. Cox, and Director of State & Local Affairs Randy Kozuch were present on behalf of our four million members to witness the enacting of these two important laws.

SB 1156 ends damaging government lawsuits provided firearm ranges make good faith efforts to exercise sound management principles in their disposal of lead ammunition. Prior to its passage, range facilities had no shield or protection against environmental lawsuits devised to force ranges out-of-business by placing them at the mercy of the court, irrespective of whether they posed a risk to the environment.

<http://webmail.aol.com/fmsgview.adp?folder=SU5CT1g=&uid=8336214>

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During the bill's signing ceremony, LaPierre said that, "Shooting ranges are owned and operated by lawful businessmen and women who work to improve the environment and avoid contamination. The law demonstrates that our commitment to protecting the environment is just as strong as our commitment to Second Amendment rights and America's heritage of firearms ownership."

The new law, the first of its kind in the country, requires the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to provide copies of "Best Practices for Environmental Stewardship for Florida Shooting Ranges" to range managers statewide to keep their operations on a sound, environmentally friendly path. That blueprint for action was the culmination of nearly a decade of research and cooperative efforts initiated by the NRA, the National Shooting Sports Foundation, and the Wildlife Management Institute.

"Shooting ranges that implement these environmental management practices will not have to fear malicious lawsuits," added Cox. "That is what a win-win strategy is all about, SB 1156 is an ideal remedy for firearms owners and the environment."

The driving force behind passage of SB 1156, Hammer, Executive Director of "[Unified Sportsmen of Florida](#)," praised the Florida Legislature and Governor Bush saying, "Once again, Florida is leading the way with model legislation that should be adopted by every state. Protecting shooting ranges is an essential element of protecting Second Amendment rights. And teaching range owners best management practices to eliminate environmental risk is just plain common sense."

The second bill signed by Governor Bush, HB 155, stops the illegal compiling of computerized lists of law-abiding firearms owners and the guns they own, otherwise known as registration of law-abiding gun owners.

In violation of federal law, a few of Florida's urban Sheriffs have been effectively building gun registration lists and databases. This information has nothing to do with criminal investigations or crime guns, and is in clear violation of The Firearms Owners' Protection Act (18 U.S. Code section 926).

"HB 155 will stop law-abiding firearm owners from being profiled and made suspects simply because they exercise their constitutional right," Hammer said. "This law is important because it stops gun registration, the worst form of gun control, that only aims to destroy freedom."

Passage of the bill was supported by the Florida Police Benevolent Association, the Florida Sheriff's Association, and the Florida Police Chiefs Association.

SOUTH CAROLINA REPEALS "ONE-GUN-A-MONTH" LAW

After three decades of hard work, NRA-ILA can announce that the South Carolina Legislature has repealed the state's "one-gun-a-month" law, which has limited the rights of law-abiding citizens by prohibiting multiple handgun purchases within a 30-day waiting period. HB 3442 is now headed to Governor Mark Sanford (R).

"NRA is pleased that the people of South Carolina will no longer be subject to this unreasonable gun rationing law, a law that has only affected honest gun owners and therefore could only have a negative impact on crime," said NRA-ILA Executive

Director Chris W. Cox. "Gun rationing laws set a bad and unconstitutional precedent that government can limit the frequency with which a law-abiding citizen may exercise a constitutionally-protected right. If governments can limit law-abiding citizens to one gun a month, they can extend it to one gun a year, one-gun a lifetime, or no guns at all."

"One-gun-a-month" laws have been tried in South Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland, and have failed in all three states. After South Carolina imposed its law in 1975, violent crime soared there and in New York City, the supposed beneficiary of the law. In the 1990`s, violent crime declined nationally, but rose in Washington, D.C., the supposed beneficiary of Virginia`s law. Maryland imposed its law in 1998, yet it has the highest robbery rate of any state, and Baltimore`s homicide rate is among the worst of all major U.S. cities.

"On behalf of tens of thousands of South Carolina NRA members, gun owners and sportsmen, I want to thank the Senators and Representatives who supported this bill and Governor Sanford for acting to abolish this senseless law," added Cox. "Additionally, I would like to single out the efforts of several key lawmakers who ensured passage of this reform including Representatives Bill Sandifer (R-2) and James Harrison (R-75), and Senators Hugh Leatherman (R-31), Glenn McConnell (R-41), and John Hawkins (R-12). The Second Amendment is stronger today thanks to the efforts of all those in South Carolina and across America who stand up to preserve freedom."

VICTORY FOR NRA AND HUNTERS AS MINNESOTA REINSTATES DOVE SEASON

In an historic vote, law-abiding sportsmen will enjoy a dove hunting season in Minnesota for the first time since 1946. Despite efforts from anti-hunting groups to block the legislation, the Minnesota Legislature voted overwhelmingly to pass the Omnibus Game and Fish Bill (HF 2368) that places the mourning dove on the state`s game bird list. The bill is now headed to Governor Tim Pawlenty (R) for his expected signature. Minnesota will be the 40th state with an established dove hunting season in America.

"This is a significant moment for hunters and NRA members across the state," said NRA-ILA Executive Director Chris W. Cox. "The men and women of Minnesota have made their voices heard, they do not want animal "rights" extremists making crucial decisions about their sport and hunting traditions. Establishing a mourning dove season in Minnesota is a victory for the American hunting heritage of this popular and familiar game bird.

"Thanks to the strong bi-partisan support of this legislation, the people of Minnesota will finally have the opportunity to participate in one of America`s oldest and cherished pastimes," added Cox. "On behalf of Minnesota`s NRA members, sportsmen and hunters, I want to thank Governor Pawlenty and all of the Senators and Representatives who supported this historic legislation. I would especially like to thank Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-28B) and Senator Pat Pariseau (R-36) for their hard work and perseverance to reestablish this important tradition for future generations."

"MILLION" MOM FARCE

One Second Amendment supporter who witnessed last Sunday`s (two-one-thousandths-of-a) "Million" Mom March was quoted as saying, "It wasn`t a ?Million Mom March,` it was a ?thousand gang limp.``"

The quote aptly describes the event`s extremely low turnout, and is indicative of the waning interest in the group`s anti-freedom message. The Associated Press generously estimated the size of the crowd at just 2,000, or about 99.8 percent less than the group`s billing implied!

The year`s event, organized in conjunction with the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, represents yet another unsuccessful attempt by the "Million" Mom March group to forward its misguided agenda, and rally what`s left of its supporters against lawful firearms ownership. Undeterred by the obvious lack of support, and determined to persist in its anti-gun mission, the group continues to lobby for the renewal of the Clinton gun ban, which will expire on September 13, 2004. And while they will claim that their primary concern is "safety," it is ironic, to say the least, that the group`s two marquee events have coincided with presidential election years.

Make no mistake. Over the next few months we`re in for a sustained political battle over this issue. And we need to be prepared. If you want to know the TRUTH about the Clinton gun ban, please visit NRA-ILA`s informative website-- www.ClintonGunBan.com --and learn the facts about this debate, which has too long been driven and dominated by falsehoods and emotion. And please forward this website to others who need to know both the history and the truth about this issue. Then, please contact your U.S. Representative and Senators and urge them to oppose current legislation seeking to greatly expand the 1994 Clinton gun ban-- H.R. 2038, H.R. 3831, S. 1431, and S. 1034. And remember to use NRA-ILA`s Resources on this issue to write letters to the editor of your local newspaper whenever the need to set the record straight arises. Together, we can expose and refute the anti-gunners lies, and emotional sensationalism.

You can find contact information for your elected officials by using the "[Write Your Representatives](#)" tool at www.NRAILA.org, or you can call your U.S. Senators at (202) 224-3121 and your U.S. Representative at (202) 225-3121. You can also use the "[Write the Media](#)" feature for assistance in identifying, and writing letters to, the editor of your area newspaper.

UPCOMING PRIMARY ELECTIONS

Arkansas and Kentucky will hold primary elections this Tuesday, May 18, and Oregon`s mail-in ballots are due on May 18, as well. NRA members are encouraged to head to the polls and vote for those candidates who support our Right to Keep and Bear Arms. And please be sure to encourage your family, friends, and fellow firearm owners to vote on May 18, as well. Oregon voters must remember to have their ballots mailed in by the May 18, deadline. NRA members who have not received NRA-Political Victory Fund (NRA-PVF) endorsement information can call the NRA-ILA Grassroots Division at (800) 392-VOTE (8683) for additional candidate information.

A LOOK AT THE STATES

GEORGIA

In the first law of its kind in the nation, Georgia will now allow citizens to register to vote while they get their hunting and fishing licenses. The "Sportsmen Voter Registration Bill" (SB 541), signed into law yesterday by Governor Sonny Perdue (R) and supported by NRA, was patterned after the national "motor voter" law and requires businesses who sell hunting and fishing licenses to act as a voter registration site as well. The Georgia General Assembly overwhelmingly approved the measure. Special thanks go out to Governor Perdue, Senator Preston Smith (R-52) and supporters in the Georgia General Assembly for recognizing the importance of providing ample opportunities to register citizens to vote.

ILLINOIS

This week, the House passed SB 2165, which seeks to provide an affirmative defense for a gun owner if he uses a firearm prohibited by local ordinance in defense of himself or others. This bill now heads to the Senate for concurrence, where it has already passed once with strong, bipartisan support. Please call your State Senator at (217) 782-4517 and urge him to support this critical reform. In addition, SB 2386, which also seeks to prohibit civil suits against a gun owner who uses a firearm to defend himself or others, has now passed both the House and Senate, and heads to Governor Rod Blagojevich (D). In other good news, SB 2156, the "Illinois Hunting Heritage Protection Act," has now passed both the House and Senate, and is awaiting action by the Governor. This legislation seeks to provide protections for the future of hunting in Illinois. Be sure to call Governor Blagojevich at (217) 782-6830 and urge him to sign SB 2165 and SB 2386, and remind him that both passed with overwhelming bipartisan support. Governor Blagojevich continues to threaten to veto any and all pro-gun reforms unless he also is sent anti-gun legislation. In that vein, Chicago Democrats continue their efforts to resurrect attacks on gun shows and semi-automatic firearms. SB 947 is an assault on Illinois gun shows that seeks to tax firearm sales, register transfers, and increase the waiting period. It is being promoted in spite of anti-gun organizations that admit that there is no gun show "loophole" in Illinois. This bill has been on life support since last year, but anti-gun extremists are doing everything they can to revive it. The gun-ban crowd also continues to target semi-automatic firearms. Last year's gun ban bill from Chicago Mayor Richard Daley (D), SB 1195, failed to garner enough support to pass, and similar legislation introduced this year also failed to move before legislative deadlines had passed. Nonetheless, it is clear that banning semi-automatics remains a serious threat, and the word is, that Governor Blagojevich will work to have a ban introduced next week. Blagojevich and Deputy Governor Bradley Tusk (D), a former staffer of U.S. Senator Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), will be working overtime to build support for their gun-ban agenda. Please be sure to call your State Senators at (217) 782-4517 and urge them to oppose any attacks on gun shows or semi-automatic firearms. For additional contact information, you can use our "[Write Your Representatives](#)" tool at www.NRAILA.org.

LOUISIANA

The full Senate approved SB 837, NRA-backed Right-to-Carry reciprocity legislation which requires Louisiana to recognize permits from states which, in turn, recognize Louisiana permits. The bill now moves to the House for consideration. We'll keep you posted on its committee referral and hearing schedule! Also, the House Natural Resources Committee will consider SB 2, a constitutional amendment regarding the right to hunt, fish and trap, on May 20, at 9:30 a.m. in Committee Room 4 of the capitol in Baton Rouge. Please contact committee members and urge them to support SB 2; contact information is available at www.legis.state.la.us

MISSISSIPPI

Governor Haley Barbour (R) signed SB 2623, legislation creating specialized NRA license plates and dedicating a portion of the fees for such plates to the NRA Foundation State Account for Mississippi. We`ll report on how you can order these tags in future fax alerts!

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