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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 7, 2004



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YOUR ACTION NEEDED ON ILA`S FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

NRA-ILA is seeking support and cosponsorship of several important pieces of legislation that have recently been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. Following is a brief summary of each bill, along with instructions on how you can influence the outcome of these debates. Once you have taken the requested action, please be sure to forward this information to your family, friends, and fellow firearm owners and ensure they do the same.

H.R. 3193, the "District of Columbia Personal Protection Act," introduced by Representatives Mark Souder (R-Ind.) and Mike Ross (D-Ark.), already has 178 cosponsors. This bill would restore the right of self-defense to law-abiding citizens of Washington, D.C., so that those citizens could own rifles, shotguns, and handguns without the current bureaucratic registration requirements. Most importantly, it would allow law-abiding District residents to use firearms to protect their homes and families? a right enjoyed throughout the U.S., but currently denied

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by the D.C. Code.

H.R. 4048, the "Firearm Commerce Modernization Act", introduced by Representative Phil Gingrey (R-Ga.), updates federal gun law to take advantage of modern technology. When the Gun Control Act of 1968 was enacted, the only way to screen criminal records or other disqualifications of potential gun buyers was at the state level, so the Congress passed a broad ban on interstate sales to allow state enforcement of various permit and license systems. Today, however, all retail gun sales involve an FBI background check, either for issuance of a state permit or as an instant check at the point of sale. The "Firearm Commerce Modernization Act" would allow interstate gun sales, provided all other federal or state laws (in both states) are abided. It would also remove convoluted limits on licensed dealers, so that dealers could carry out the same transactions in person that they currently perform with one another by mail?even though mail transactions create a much greater risk that guns may be lost or stolen during shipment.

H.R. 4126, the "Cockpit Security Technical Corrections and Improvements Act," introduced by Representative Joe Wilson (R-S.C.), would speed up the training and arming of qualified airline personnel to defend against terrorism as Federal Flight Deck Officers (FFDOs). Despite overwhelming congressional support for the original armed pilot legislation, the Transportation Security Administration has been extremely slow in implementing this program. In addition to limited capacity at training facilities, highly qualified pilots?including nuclear-qualified military pilots and even federal law enforcement officers?have been deterred from participating by unnecessary and counterproductive "psychological screening". They have also been subjected to dangerous gun storage requirements that have already resulted in the loss of FFDOs` government-issued firearms. H.R. 4126 would expedite the implementation of this program by immediately arming experienced, trained pilots on a provisional basis, and by streamlining the training of all pilots who wish to participate in the FFDO program. It would also reduce the load on federal training facilities by allowing use of qualified private facilities for training and requalification of FFDOs.

H.R. 3801, the "First Amendment Restoration Act", introduced by Representative Roscoe Bartlett (R-Md.), would repeal the most offensive provision of the recent campaign finance "reform" law?the prohibition on use of non-PAC money for broadcast communications that use the name or likeness of a federal candidate. The NRA opposed the "reform" law from the outset. Unfortunately, the Supreme Court`s abandonment of First Amendment principles in this area leaves no choice other than a congressional repeal of this provision.

Please be sure to contact your U.S. Representative and urge him to cosponsor and support all of these bills. 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. Representative at (202) 225-3121.

COURT UPHOLDS D.C. LAWSUIT DISMISSAL

Last week, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals last week unanimously upheld a trial court`s ruling dismissing the District`s "negligence" and "public nuisance" claims against the firearms industry. The appellate court`s decision specifically found that none of the plaintiffs stated a valid claim of negligence and that the District had not stated a claim of public nuisance on the facts alleged.

However, while the court said that the District could not sue under its unique "absolute liability" statute, it did allow that individual plaintiffs could. In doing so, the court has thrown out the traditional role of "liability." With the introduction of "absolute liability," a defendant is essentially stripped of almost any defense. While the Court took a positive step in affirming that firearm manufacturers are not responsible for the criminal misuse of firearms due to (in this case) "negligence" and "public nuisance," the case represents yet another blatant example of the need to pass a comprehensive federal lawsuit protection bill. Allowing these types of lawsuits to continue unabated will be disastrous for the American firearm industry, and for your right to lawfully own firearms. We owe it to ourselves, and all gun owners across the country, to continue this fight until we pass a lawsuit bill as soon as possible. When we succeed in ultimately enacting a lawsuit bill into law, it will represent a monumental step forward for our rights. Rest assured we will keep you informed of our efforts.

RANGE VOTED "POINT OF PRIDE"

As noted in the February 13 edition of the Grassroots Alert, the Phoenix, Arizona-based [Ben Avery Shooting Facility](#) (BASF), one of the nation's premier shooting facilities, had come under attack in recent years because of encroaching development. As a result, NRA-ILA recently helped pass HB 2158, the "Ben Avery Shooting Facility Preservation Bill."

Fast on the heels of this important legislative victory, we're happy to report that the BASF has now been named as a Phoenix Point of Pride!

The Phoenix Points of Pride program is operated by the Phoenix Pride Commission. A Point of Pride is a landmark or attraction unique to, and located within, the city of Phoenix that evokes a sense of pride among area residents. The public nominated more than 70 sites for Phoenix Points of Pride status in the fall of 2003. The list was narrowed to 10 finalists, which were voted on by the public in February and March.

The City of Phoenix called the range, "a professionally managed and operated safe, family-based and customer-friendly shooting sports recreational facility."

Congratulations to BASF on this notable and much deserved distinction!

A LOOK AT THE STATES

ARIZONA

SB 1210 makes Arizona one of more than 30 states that allow law-abiding citizens to carry firearms for self-defense in restaurants and other places that serve alcohol. It prohibits a person carrying a firearm from consuming alcohol in these establishments and allows property owners to post a sign to prohibit firearms if they choose. The bill is up for a final vote in the Senate and promises to be extremely close. It is absolutely critical that you contact your State Senator and ask him to support SB 1210. Every single call counts! A final vote could be scheduled any day. You can find contact information regarding your Senator by using the "[Write Your Representatives](#)" feature at www.NRAILA.org.

CALIFORNIA

Next week, the California Assembly Appropriations Committee will be hearing AB

2858, a bill that will impose a ten percent tax on ammunition and a five percent tax on handguns, with the resulting revenue being deposited in the Firearm Victims Reimbursement Fund. Also, next week the Senate Appropriations Committee will be hearing: SB 1733 a bill that would prohibit the sale of firearms and ammunition at the Cow Palace Fairgrounds; and SB 1140, a bill that would make criminal storage of a firearm in the third degree punishable by imprisonment in a county jail, not exceeding six months and a fine not exceeding \$1,000. SB 1152, is a bill that will require any person engaged in the retail sale of ammunition to record the date of sale, along with the name, address, and date-of-birth of the transferee, a thumbprint, and a requirement that the information be made available to peace officers. This bill would also outlaw the sale of ammunition to a person under 18 years of age. As of press-time, this bill had been forwarded to the Senate floor. Please contact your legislators and respectfully urge that they oppose these bills! You can find contact information for your legislators by using the "[Write Your Representatives](#)" feature at www.NRAILA.org.

ILLINOIS

On May 5, the House Judiciary Committee 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 passed the Senate with strong, bipartisan support, and now heads to the full House for consideration. Please call your State Representative at (217) 782-8223 and urge him to support this critical reform. In addition, 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, and is being promoted in spite of anti-gun organizations admitting 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 has also targeted semi-automatic firearms. Last year's gun ban bill from Chicago Mayor Richard Daley (D), SB 1195, failed to garner enough support, 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 something similar to SB 1195 could be the vehicle. 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

After weeks of being on the defensive in Baton Rouge, it's time for gun owners to go on offense! Two NRA-supported bills should be set for public hearings in the next few weeks: SB 2, by Senator Joe McPherson (D-Woodworth), proposes a state constitutional amendment protecting the right to hunt, fish, and trap; and SB 837, by Senator James David Cain (R-Dry Creek), requires Louisiana to recognize Right-to-Carry permits from states that recognize Louisiana carry permits, making your carry permit valid in nearly 30 other states. SB 2 has passed the Senate and is awaiting action by the House Natural Resources Committee. SB 837 has been assigned to the Senate Judiciary C Committee. Please begin calling the appropriate committee members and urging them to support SB 2 or SB 837. Contact information for committee members is available at www.legis.state.la.us (click on "Committees").

MASSACHUSETTS

In response to S. 2282, which would place a more extensive ban on semi-automatic firearms, Senator Stephen Brewer (D-38) and Senator Richard Moore (D-40) have drafted an amendment that will erase the unfavorable "semi-automatic" firearm language and institute the needed reforms which will include the reinstatement of the 90-day grace period for expired FID and LTC licenses, as well as the restoration of FID and LTC cards for individuals convicted of non-violent crimes. The Senate will debate S. 2282 sometime next week, in order to study the proposed changes. Please contact your Senator today and urge him to support the Brewer-Moore amendment. We need your help to get the Massachusetts legislature back on the right track for all gun owners! Contact information your State Senator is available at www.state.ma.us/legis/memmenus.htm.

MINNESOTA

This Monday, May 10, the State Senate will be voting on the Omnibus Game and Fish Bill, Senate File 2203, which contains a provision that will allow a dove hunting season in Minnesota. As usual, anti-hunting Senators are offering an amendment to remove the provision. Your state Senator may be the deciding factor on whether or not you are able to share the same opportunity as hunters in 39 other states, to hunt doves. Please contact your state Senator and respectfully urge him to stand up for hunters and to support dove hunting in Minnesota. You can find contact information for your Senator by using the "[Write Your Representatives](http://www.NRAILA.org)" feature at www.NRAILA.org.

MISSISSIPPI

Governor Haley Barbour (R) has signed HB 989, the NRA-backed Right-to-Carry Reciprocity bill that requires Mississippi to recognize carry permits from states that, in turn, recognize Mississippi permits. The bill will take effect on July 1, 2004.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Today, HB 3442 passed Third Reading in the Senate. This bill seeks to repeal the current prohibition on purchasing more than one handgun in any 30-day period. HB 3442 now heads to the House for an expected concurrence vote, and then to Governor Mark Sanford (R) for his expected signature. This legislation represents a tremendous victory for South Carolina's pro-gun community, as it will repeal a restriction on our Right to Keep and Bear Arms that has been on the books since the 1970's. Our thanks go out to all Senators and Representatives who supported this bill, but a special thanks should be extended to several key lawmakers who worked with NRA, and Gun Owners of South Carolina (GOSC), NRA's state affiliate, to ensure passage of this critical reform. Representatives Bill Sandifer (R) the primary bill sponsor and James Harrison (R); and Senators Hugh Leatherman (R), Glenn McConnell (R), and John Hawkins all deserve a special thanks.

TENNESSEE

HB 3360, the Shooting Range Protection bill, has passed the full Senate and House and has been transferred to Governor Phil Bredesen (D) for his consideration. This legislation is critically important to the future of the shooting sports in Tennessee. It puts an end to virtually all lawsuits intended to harass and close shooting facilities throughout the state and prohibits zoning authorities from unfairly closing ranges. Please contact Governor Bredesen at (615) 741-2001 and request that he sign HB 3360 into law.

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