

A List of Rules to Help Stop Gun Violence

Editor:

□ Outright prohibition of guns will not stop gun violence. History shows that prohibition is seldom effective.

□ Lack of international cooperation creates a black market for the export/import of prohibited goods. Prohibition would only take guns out of the hands of law abiding, responsible people.

□ Our goal should be to restrict ownership to those who are competent; to obstruct those who are not competent/qualified (i.e. felons) from possessing guns; and to punish those who are unlawful or negligent in their possession/use of guns.

□ A database must be maintained to show the history of possession of every firearm. This information should be maintained by the manufacturers and the retailers. This database should be private, but the authorities must be able to determine the chain of custody for any gun used in a crime.

□ Each party in the chain must demonstrate lawful transfer and “keeping” of the gun. If any party cannot so demonstrate lawful behavior, that party should be held responsible for the ultimate harm caused by the gun. If the manufacturer cannot demonstrate that the gun was sold to a licensed retailer, or if the retailer cannot identify a lawful purchaser, there should be criminal punishment.

□ Punishment for crimes involving guns should be significantly enhanced to create a substantial disincentive to use or keep a gun unlawfully. Punishment for negligence in keeping/storing guns should be equally severe.

□ A lawfully possessed gun should never be accessible for unauthorized use, regardless of whether by an unauthorized family member or a burglar.

□ The gun should be “kept” in such a way that it cannot be fired without the consent of the lawful

owner. If they can do it for a cell phone, they can do it for a gun.

□ No constitutional right is absolute. The rights to free speech and exercise of religion are subject to government infringement upon the demonstration of a rational basis.

□ There is a rational basis for our government to curtail the violence caused by illegal and negligent firearms use – the safety of our children and ourselves.

—**Andrew Kopp**

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Says NRA's Mouthings Are Helping the Gun-Safety Side

Editor:

About the only positive emerging from the slaughter in Newtown Connecticut has been the exposure of the intellectual bankruptcy of the arguments being put forth by the pro-gun side.

□ NRA spokesman Wayne Lapierre has done much to aid the gun-safety side with his bellicose and often deranged mouthings since the incident.

□ The emptiness of the case being made by those who insist that the Constitution permits them to have any type of weapon and unlimited amounts of ammunition is becoming more obvious with each day.

□ The sooner we isolate and marginalize these folks who mask their racism and paranoia, with nonsense about what the Second Amendment really says, the sooner we will be able to place some sane and reasonable rules and regulations on fire arms.

□ There have been at least a thousand people killed by guns in this country since the Newtown massacre. The lunatic fringe keeps telling us that this is collateral damage and the answer is more guns.

—**Vernon S. Burton**

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