

To the House Select Committee on Mass Violence Prevention and Community Safety:

Law enforcement can never be omnipresent. And we live in an imperfect world, where criminals will act. The best defense against mass shootings is law abiding citizens being armed. Armed citizens have stopped many criminal acts, including mass shootings. Repealing “gun free” zones will only be beneficial in this respect. A problem *never* exists with a law abiding citizen being armed. And criminals will *always* disregard “gun free” zones, as is evident on a daily basis. “Gun free” zones merely provide soft targets for criminals. If this were not true, all gun crime could be prevented by merely posting “Gun free” signs everywhere. Yet we all know how ludicrous are such suppositions.

Restricting or hampering law abiding citizens’ ability to acquire or carry firearms aids only criminals. The fact that the areas with the strictest gun control have the worst gun crime is no coincidence.

Unnecessarily expanding background checks will *never* stop a criminal from obtaining a firearm. Such will merely hamper law abiding citizens.

Regarding so-called “red flag” laws, the constitutional rights enshrined in the Second Amendment cannot be stripped away from a person without a crime having been committed. No more than a person could be imprisoned because someone believed they were likely to commit a crime. “Red flag” laws are subject to abuse, as has been evident as some governmental entities have implemented such laws. Too often, the criteria are far too arbitrary. Basically, this is tantamount to “thought police.” Additionally, this could lead to a disproportionate impact on minorities.

Gun owners would be forced to defend themselves in court without probable cause of a crime being committed. Courts could order firearm confiscation without even probable cause. And a high price is paid in the time, money and life impact involved in mounting a court defense.

If a person is truly mentally ill, then existing laws should be utilized to have them committed.

Further, research by College of William and Mary and Crime Prevention Research Center has shown that Red flag laws had no significant effect on murder, suicide, the number of people killed in mass public shootings, robbery, aggravated assault, or burglary.

Sincerely,
Brent Doty
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