
Allegheny County Sportsmen's League Legislative Committee Report

November 2003 • Issue 109

ALLEGHENY COUNTY SPORTSMEN LEAGUE ON THE INTERNET <http://www.acslpa.org>

Email Address: acsl@nauticom.net

ACSL Lawsuit against Pennsylvania State Police

We are still awaiting a response from the PA Supreme Court on rendering a decision in our case.

LEGISLATIVE ALERT!
**Contact your PA House member
to vote YES on HB 234 Provide
the Bill is amended (Amended
report)**

The Pennsylvania House of Representative has scheduled a vote on HB 234 for next week. HB 234 will provide gun owners a tax credit if you can show proof that you have attended a firearms training course. **Take time to contact you PA House member to vote yes on this bill ONLY if it is amended to clearly provide for specific language that defines the type of training courses that will qualify, and that the Pennsylvania State Police roll in approving the courses is limited.** The current bill reads as follows

Tax Credit for Attendance at a Firearm Training Course.--(a) An individual who attends and successfully completes a firearm training course approved by the Pennsylvania State Police is eligible to receive a tax credit as provided in subsection (b).

(b) The department shall grant a tax credit against the tax imposed under this article in the amount of the total cost of the firearm training course to an individual under subsection (a).

(c) An individual may claim a tax credit for each year the individual attends and successfully completes a firearm training course.

(d) This section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2003.

(e) The Pennsylvania State Police shall, by December 31, 2003, and each December 31 thereafter, publish a list of approved firearm training courses in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

(f) The department shall promulgate any regulations necessary to carry out this section.

The ACSL is preparing amendments to be offered on the floor of the House that will describe the courses that will be eligible for the tax credit. Our amendments will specify the exact roll of the Pennsylvania State Police. It will require the PSP to approve those course that an organization can show that they are conducting that are listed in the legislation and that all such courses shall be published in the Pennsylvania bulletin and on the PSP web site. **If none of these changes are made to the bill it should be defeated.**

There is nothing in this legislation, or in any of the ACSL's amendments that will require training to obtain a firearm nor require training to obtain a CCW permit. Any attempt to amend this bill to require training in these transactions should be defeated at this time.

ACSL meets with Senator Arlen Specter in Washington

In attendance were the Senator's Chief of Staff, Carey A. Lackman, his State Coalitions Director, Sheryl M. Delozier, and his Campaign Manager Christopher Nicholas. On the ACSL side were Mike Slavonic and Kim Stolfer. The discussions primarily

centered on the various pro and anti-gun legislation currently in the U.S. Senate beginning with the so-called "assault weapons" ban sunset which is to take place in September of 2004. We expressed to the Senator that this un-workable and un-constitutional ban must sunset and our reason why.

We discussed the need to pass S 659, a bill that Senator Specter co-sponsored that would give protection to firearms manufacturer from being sued. Specter told us that he supported this legislation, and is hopeful that the bill will pass before the end of the year. He said that he would encourage the Majority leader to bring the legislation to a vote in the Senate.

We also discussed the Tiahrt Amendment to appropriations bill HR. 2799 that prohibits the Justice Department from retaining records on information received during an instant background check. After giving the Senator a brief history of the failure of the NRA to obtain a favorable ruling from the U.S Supreme Court directing the Justice Department to destroy all of the records on the purchaser collected to conduct an instant background check, we gave his staff a written review of the bill and the history leading up to the reason for the amendment. We also itemized some real world situations wherein the retention of this information has resulted in prejudiced contacts between citizens and law enforcement. Senator Specter promised to help us on getting that language passed. Include in those discussion was the letter sent to the Pennsylvania State Police by the FBI demanding that the Pennsylvania State Police destroy the records they are keeping in regards to the instant check. Specter agreed to look into this matter.

Another topic that was discussed was Civil rights restoration. We began with a description of various real world incidents for instance a woman in PA who is involuntarily committed for observation due to post partum depression after childbirth loses her right to own a firearm forever. We stressed that there should be a mechanism wherein a citizen can petition to restore their firearms rights as was possible through the ATF previously. **Senator Specter asked if we were happy with the ATF process and we said yes.** We also informed the Senator that we worked with Robert E. Sanders who was the ATF official in charge of this program prior to its' defunding and related his comments to us about the actual real world performance of the program. Senator Specter said that he would help us with this issue as well.

Senator Specter ended the meeting by autographing a copy of his book, "Passion for Truth", and standing for photographs.

As we walked out of the meeting with Christopher Nicholas and Sheryl M. Delozier we stressed to them the importance of the Senator taking a position on the Assault Weapon Ban issue. Christopher and Sheryl told us that Stan Caldwell would be in touch.

State Senator Jane Orie to Introduce Reciprocity Reform in PA Senate

State Senator Jane Orie's office has informed the ACSL that Sen. Orie has introduced SB 941, a bill with language drafted by the ACSL to reform Pennsylvania's reciprocity statute.

This bill is almost identical to the bill introduced in the House by State Representative Daryl Metcalfe.

With the introduction of Sen. Orie's bill all pro-gun legislation in Pennsylvania will be in control of Southwester Pennsylvania legislators with a diverse list of co-sponsors.

Senate Co-sponsors of the bill are: LEMMOND, WOZNIAK, MADIGAN, ROBBINS, KASUNIC, LOGAN AND SCHWARTZ

Chicago Auto Plant Shooter - Long Record of Violence . . .

People who knew him say Salvador Tapia, the 36-year-old who died after shooting six former co-workers at an auto parts warehouse in Chicago, had a violent temper and had been arrested 12 times on charges that included domestic battery and aggravated assault. According to the *Chicago Tribune*, he was convicted in 1989 for unlawful use of a weapon, and as recently as 1997 threatened his sister and brother-in-law with a weapon. While public officials call for more gun control, nowhere is there a call for an explanation of why Tapia was not behind bars. More important is the sudden silence of both Mayor Daley and Acting Supt. Cline who were quick to push an anti-gun agenda, complaining about the availability of guns on Chicago streets, until it was revealed that the murder weapon had been owned consecutively, without proper registration, by two different cops.

If a lawsuit arises out of this case, as they frequently do, would the estates of the two deceased officers be held liable? Would the city? Perhaps Mayor Daley

should think about this and fix his BROKEN judicial system before any further pronouncements about firearms in his city. It may be easy to get an undocumented gun in Chicago, and now it appears to be even easier if the undocumented gun.

Media Bias is Alive and Well At KDKA TV in Pittsburgh

John Shumway interviewed Harry Schnieder of the Pennsylvania Sportsmen's Association on the topic of implementing a Waiting Period on handgun sales in Pennsylvania. They broadcasted the interview on Thursday November 6 at the 5:00 to 6:00 pm hour.

The catalyst for the topic was the triple murder in Allegheny County by an a former EMT & firefighter who completed Act 120 police officer training in February 2003, was asked to resign his job as a 911 dispatcher, apparently because he had been stalking and making threats to kill a former girlfriend.

He finally made good on his numerous threats. He bought a Glock and murdered his former girlfriend, her sister and her new boyfriend.

The victims were unarmed despite knowing of the threats and capability.

It was obvious that KDKA was using this incident to feed the Political Vultures who want to exploit this tragedy to achieve a political agenda - revive waiting periods.

After the interview the KDKA news editors once again proved their skill at editing out fact and reason and substituting drama and emotion when Propagandizing for gun control schemes that have been scientifically proven to be ineffective at reducing violence.

It is noteworthy that KDKA edited out Schneider's statement that in an attempt to justify the illegal expenditure of millions of dollars of tax money to lobby for gun control, the CDC was challenged to prove that the waiting periods and other gun control schemes they advocate actually reduce violence. The CDC had 14 anti gun experts spend the last three years examining 51 anti-gun studies and could not find any evidence that waiting periods reduce violence. It seems that none of the anti gun studies that claimed that waiting periods reduce violence could withstand scientific analysis and per review scrutiny. The CDC added qualifying language and KDKA made a big deal out of the CDC saying that we should not draw any conclusions from their inability to find that any waiting period helped more

than it hurt but never offered any proof that waiting period are effective in prevent violent crime.

KDKA never questioned why this obsessive stalker, a 911 operator, who over the past three years made numerous threats that he would kill the object of his obsession, was not subjected to a PFA, or convicted of staking or making terroristic threats.

It is going to be vital that gunowners remain alert for media bias in during the months leading up to the 2004 elections. Once again gun control will be a topic injected into the debates by a bias media.

Britain The Most Violent Country In Western Europe - London Daily Telegraph

Britain has the worst record in western Europe for killings, violence and burglary and its citizens face one of the highest risks in the industrialized world of becoming victims of crime, a study has shown.

Offences of violence in the UK have been running at three times the level of the next worst country in western Europe, and burglaries at nearly twice the rate.

Britain has the highest level of homicides in western Europe and the totals for robberies and thefts of motor vehicles have also been close to the highest in the European Union, outstripped only by France, the Home Office figures show.

Only Germany, which has 20 million more people, recorded more crimes overall in 2001, the most up-to-date figure in the research - International Comparisons of Criminal Justice Statistics 2001, with data collected by the Home Office and the Council of Europe.

NRA-ILA Grassroots Alert

Vol. 10, No. 41

10/10/03

SUPPORT S. 659 AS VOTE DRAWS NEAR

In recent months, we have frequently reported on the growing support for passage of [S. 659](#), the "Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act." Dozens of national associations, unions, wildlife conservation groups, and shooting sports organizations--representing literally millions of dedicated members, workers, and sportsmen--have expressed their unqualified support for this critically important legislation which seeks to protect

America's firearm manufacturers and dealers from malicious, predatory lawsuits.

While we are encouraged by this positive trend, the fight is still far from over. We hope to have a vote on this legislation in the coming weeks, thus, it is imperative that you continue to contact your U.S. Senators in support of S. 659 and urge them to do everything in their power to end these meritless lawsuits and ensure that this essential legislation is approved. Let your Senators know that it is crucial they cosponsor and support S. 659.

In addition, please continue to urge your U.S. Representative and your Senators to oppose current legislation seeking to reauthorize and expand the 1994 Clinton gun ban--[H.R. 2038](#), S. 1431, and [S. 1034](#). 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.

Vol. 10, No. 42

10/17/03

UPDATE ON D.C. RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS CASE

On October 8, a hearing was held on a motion to dismiss in the pending *Seegars v. Ashcroft* lawsuit. The lawsuit was brought as a result of the extremely restrictive gun laws that have been in effect in Washington, D.C., for more than a quarter of a century. Handguns are effectively banned in the District of Columbia. Before 1976, citizens could possess registered handguns in the District. The city's law required all firearms to be registered, but that year a law was passed prohibiting the registration of any more handguns, thereby completely banning them! The *Seegars* lawsuit seeks to allow D.C. residents the right to once again lawfully possess handguns. The case is a narrowly focused effort to encourage the court to recognize the Second Amendment as an individual right and to declare the D.C. handgun ban unconstitutional, so that residents who are threatened daily by criminal violence may keep handguns in their homes to defend themselves.

NRA supports this litigation as a first step toward restoration of Second Amendment rights to law-abiding D.C. citizens. NRA is also in strong support of current legislation introduced in both the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives to repeal not just the handgun ban, but also the requirement that all firearms be registered. The goal is the complete restoration of Second Amendment rights, and NRA will continue vigorously to pursue this objective in the courts and in Congress.

Vol. 10, No. 43

10/24/03

HERE'S A "STORY" --FROM A GROUP NAMED BRADY

The Brady gun-ban group is at it again. Faced with the prospect of the Clinton Gun Ban expiring, the Brady bunch is engaging in a desperate fundraising campaign aimed at portraying the NRA as "extremist." Full page ads, recently placed in the *New York Times*, are not only full of fallacious drivel, emotional sensationalism, and outright falsehoods, but also state that NRA has "flat-out lost touch with the American people." The Brady Campaign's extensive research must have overlooked the fact that NRA has four million "American people" as members and is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization.

Desperately seeking relevance, the Brady bunch has even launched an anti-NRA website which attempts to bash NRA as "blacklisters" for merely documenting the gun-ban advocacy of such "mainstream" American "luminaries" as Alec Baldwin, Michael Moore, and, lest we forget, Moon and Dweezil Zappa.

Duplicitous ads and imaginary "blacklists?" That's some story.

Alternatively, to demonstrate the broad base of support for NRA and its legislative agenda, we have launched an NRA "Good Guys" List website. It's a list of law-abiding Americans who support freedom of speech and the Right to Keep and Bear Arms. We encourage you to stand up and be counted by adding your name to our "Good Guys" list. You don't have to be an NRA member to join the list; you just have to believe in freedom. To visit the site and add your name to the list, please go to www.NRAHQ.org/goodguys.asp.

AN ADVOCATE FOR GUN SAFETY?

At a recent meeting of police chiefs from around the country, Richard Aborn, the former president of Handgun Control, Inc. (now the Brady Campaign) opened the program and introduced the speakers. Speaking at the end of the presentation, Mr. Aborn caused members of the assembled group to stare wide-eyed at him as he pointed with his finger on the trigger of a semi-automatic pistol at the audience!

This "advocate for gun safety" most assuredly flaunted his ignorance of even the most basic rules of safe gun handling, ignorantly pointing the gun in an unsafe direction, failing to visually inspect the

gun's chamber and not keeping his finger off the trigger. The outspoken gun-rights critic seemingly has little or no practical "hands on" experience in the area for which his background and political position would beg some expertise.

Back-peddling and sounding more like a child rationalizing his being caught in a wrongful act, Aborn weakly offered, "In demonstrating them, I inadvertently pointed it to show how criminals use them. I instantly realized it was a mistake, and I said so. I was very honest about that."

Perhaps Mr. Aborn should attend an NRA safety course and learn the rules of safe and proper firearm handling from the real advocates of gun safety.

UPDATE ON D.C.'s PERSONAL PROTECTION ACT

As reported in the September 26 issue of the Grassroots Alert, Representatives Mark Souder (R-Ind.) and Mike Ross (D-Ark.) recently introduced H.R. 3193, the House version of the District of Columbia Personal Protection Act. Demonstrating broad bipartisan support, H.R. 3193 is currently cosponsored by 32 Democrats and 94 Republicans. A companion to Senate bill S. 1414, introduced by Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) on July 15, this legislation seeks to restore the constitutionally-guaranteed Second Amendment rights of the residents of the District of Columbia. The need for this legislation is obvious. While effectively banning handgun ownership for over a quarter-century, Washington, D.C., consistently has one of the highest homicide rates in the nation. "D.C.'s politicians have stripped law-abiding residents of their ability to defend themselves and their families," said NRA-ILA Executive Director Chris Cox. "Passage of the District of Columbia Personal Protection Act will remedy this senseless and dangerous injustice."

Please contact your Senators and your U.S. Representative and urge them to cosponsor and support this important legislation. 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

Judge dismisses lawsuit against gun industry

ST. LOUIS -- A St. Louis County judge has dismissed a lawsuit the city of St. Louis brought against the

gun industry seeking reimbursement for costs associated with gun-related injuries.

St. Louis County Judge Emmett O' Brien said he found no basis for the claim. O' Brien dismissed the lawsuit against gun manufacturers on Oct. 15. Then on Friday, he dismissed it against the remaining defendants: gun distributors and trade organizations.

In a five-page opinion, O' Brien wrote that such lawsuits would open "a floodgate to additional litigation." He also said that "issues of both logic and fairness" favored dismissing the case.

St. Louis city counselor Patti Hageman said Monday it was too early to say whether the city would appeal the decision.

Dean Walks a Tightrope Over Positions on Gun Control - *New York Times--Registration Required*

Back when Howard Dean was running for governor of Vermont in 1992, he told the National Rifle Association in a signed questionnaire that he opposed any restrictions on private ownership of assault weapons. These days, running for the Democratic presidential nomination and appealing to a very different electorate from that of his small, largely rural state, Dr. Dean assures audiences that he firmly supports the assault weapons ban enacted under President Bill Clinton in 1994 though vigorously opposing any further federal regulation of guns.

Clark Favors Gun Safety Locks - *Politics NH*

Wrapping up a two day trip through New Hampshire on Wednesday, retired General Wesley Clark said he favored safety locks on firearms as a general principle though he said he needed to review the situation more before he would make any specific suggestions on how, if elected president, he plans to mandate such an action.

Vol. 10, No. 44

10/31/03

NEW "GUN SHOW" BILL: ALL TRICK, NO TREAT

Introduced, appropriately enough, on Halloween, the McCain-Reed-DeWine-Lieberman gun show bill masquerades as reform but imposes bureaucratic restrictions aimed at eliminating gun shows. The legislation is based on the McCain-Lieberman bill (S. 890) from the 107th Congress, and, similarly, not only fails to address gun owners' most significant

concerns, but also fails to address any issues within the National Instant Check System (NICS).

McCain-Reed is not about closing a "gun show loophole" there is no "gun show loophole." Existing laws apply at gun shows just the same as any other place guns are sold. McCain-Reed is, in fact, about eliminating gun shows. It would give any future Second Amendment-hating Attorney General the power to effectively shut down gun shows, invade the privacy rights of American citizens, and impose many other restrictions that have nothing to do with conducting background checks on firearms purchases.

The legislation also seeks to impose a whole host of additional restrictions and unnecessary requirements, including gun owner registration and limitless regulations! Perhaps most importantly, the legislation ignores the fact that multiple federal government studies prove gun shows are not a source of "crime guns." No matter how creative the packaging, this bill isn't about controlling crime. The attack on gun shows makes no sense as a crime control measure. It is strictly driven by an anti-gun political agenda. Closing gun shows means shutting down one of the most important venues for Second Amendment activists to communicate with other gun owners. That's their real goal.

Vol. 10, No. 45

10/31/03

SUPPORT S. 659 AS VOTE DRAWS NEAR

As regular readers of the Grassroots Alert know, in recent months, we have frequently reported on one of NRA-ILA's top legislative priorities in Congress, the passage of [S. 659](#), the "Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act." Dozens of national associations, unions, wildlife conservation groups, and shooting sports organizations representing literally millions of dedicated members, workers, and sportsmen have already expressed their unqualified support for this critically important legislation which seeks to protect America's firearm manufacturers and dealers from malicious, predatory lawsuits.

It is likely that we will have a vote on this crucial legislation in the near future. It is also quite likely that the gun-banners in Congress will do all they can to add anti-gun amendments to the bill in a last ditch attempt to dilute it. Therefore, as we await a vote on this crucial legislation, it is imperative that you continue to contact your U.S. Senators and urge them to fully support S. 659 without any anti-gun amendments! Ask them to do everything in their

power to end these meritless lawsuits and ensure that this essential legislation is approved as written. Let your Senators know that it is imperative they cosponsor and fully support S. 659.

In addition, please contact your Senators and your U.S. Representative and urge them to cosponsor and support S. 1414 and H.R. 3193, the Senate and House versions of the District of Columbia Personal Protection Act. This important legislation seeks to restore the constitutionally-guaranteed Second Amendment rights of the residents of the District of Columbia, which has once again reclaimed the title of "murder capital" of the United States.

Finally, please continue to urge your U.S. Representative and your Senators to oppose current legislation seeking to expand the 1994 Clinton gun ban [H.R. 2038](#), S. 1431, and [S. 1034](#). 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.