

SB941.txt
Written Testimony for SB 941 Hearing
April 1, 2015

Over time I have seen attempts at gun control legislation in every Legislative session, and I have noticed some common salient characteristics.

First, like other legislation of its type, the campaigns for gun control are always driven by a well-financed, well-organized, highly vocal minority, while we find those in opposition to it far more numerous and representative of a much broader spectrum of the population, but by comparison rather disorganized.

Second, it is what might be called "stalking horse" legislation. With the exception of the financiers of what seems to be an endlessly metamorphosing parade of political organizations and political action committees supporting gun control, the supporters of gun control have not arrived at their position through reasoned argument but by a visceral and often morbid fear and hatred of firearms or criminal violence. So they seize on one issue or method of convenience after another, willy-nilly and invariably without regard to the effectiveness of any thereof, in an effort to somehow make progress toward what is really their end goal of "making the guns go away".

The ultra-wealthy financiers of this effort, of course, have an entirely different and arguably sinister motivation, which is simply control of the common man and of society in general. Frankly, it amazes and mystifies me to see those on the Left of the political spectrum supporting the agenda of billionaires who are attempting to gain control of society, but to analyze that is beyond the scope of this writing. Suffice it to say that I suppose it should come as no surprise that money always trumps ideology in the end, and all the more readily among those lacking firm moral convictions.

The point of the preceding is that "gun control" legislation (and as such it is not the only legislation of the sort; legislation to address "global warming", all the current rage nowadays, comes immediately to mind as another example of such) does not have its origin in a desire to solve a problem, but rather in a political or social agenda. Is it too much to expect of our Legislatures that they recognize such wholly contrived issues and refrain from occupying themselves therewith? Such "tilting at windmills" is dangerous, not just because it wastes time and money, but because - and to probably even more deleterious effect - it distracts our lawmakers from addressing any real problems at hand, or real solutions thereto.

This brings me to my third point, regarding the origin of what the prohibitionists refer to as "gun violence". In particular, the relatively recent spate of school shootings has with good reason horrified the public. But again, with even easier access to firearms than we have nowadays, we did not until fairly recently in historical terms see the sort of mass killings by psychotic criminals that have now become all too common. At one time, anyone could buy an M1 carbine, an inexpensive semiautomatic rifle with a high capacity magazine, through the mail with no restrictions. Yet at that time school shootings were nonexistent - a fact which by itself alone indicates

that "easy access to firearms" has little or nothing to do with the recent tragedies, all hysterical media hype notwithstanding.

Moreover, any number of the "school shooters" have obtained their weapons from relatives - in some cases with their their parents even buying the weapons for them - Adam Lanza, perpetrator of the Newtown massacre, and Kipland Kinkel, Oregon's own dismal example of the breed, being cases in point. Clearly, no amount of "background checking" is going to stop one of these little maniacs, whose crimes are the putative justification for expanding the existing background check system. Yet now here we are, with such a bill before the legislature, propelled either by ulterior motives or by sheer lunacy. There is a saying, "Never ascribe to conspiracy, that which can be easily explained by stupidity", and while either motive may be understandable if not forgiveable in the case of those deluded by propaganda, one would hope that our Legislators at least would not be vulnerable to such deceit and manipulation.

As one of our Sheriffs commented who is equally dubious about the usefulness of this Bill, it is nevertheless gratifying to see our legislatures' attempts to focus on mental health issues as being the root cause of the crimes which fuel the prohibitionists' obsession with firearms. All of the perpetrators of these mass killings were recognized by those around them to be deeply disturbed, and were typically suffering from paranoid schizophrenia and/or medication with dangerous SSRI drugs. In most cases the person was recognized to be a threat and authorities were warned and yet nothing was done, out of an abundance of caution over jeopardizing the rights of the innocent.

Yet while it is a very small but extremely dangerous category of the mentally ill who are perpetrating these crimes, society at large including our legislatures seems, incredibly, to be paralyzed and incapable of finding a means to identify and isolate them without in some manner putting at risk the rights of the innocent including both firearms owners and the vast majority of those with mental health problems, who pose no threat to anyone. Clearly, it is this conundrum that needs to be resolved in order to begin to really address this issue. Deploying an even more onerous screening system for firearms purchases which is virtually guaranteed to be ineffectual while at the same time leaving dangerously disturbed people among us is not the solution. Instead, we should focus on identifying and removing from among us those who, even if it were possible to prevent them from obtaining firearms, will find other methods of wreaking their havoc upon us. Is it too much to expect of our legislators that they thus "take the bull by the horns" and address what is clearly the real root cause of this problem instead of allowing themselves to be manipulated, by special interests which really do not have our collective interest in mind, into enacting legislation which does not address the problem, and ironically, in the end only serves to jeopardize the rights of the innocent?

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