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Dear Lawmakers,

The car manufacturers screamed bloody murder when seat belts were mandated. It would be too expensive! But millions of lives have been saved.

And it wasn't too expensive.

Car manufacturers cried out loud about a federal requirement for airbags.

But millions of lives have been saved. And, as we all know, it didn't detrimentally affect the automotive market financially.

And now, it is the gun manufacturers and their commercial trade associations who are putting their financial concerns above the safety of Americans.

(And let's not forget that - unlike guns - cars have some compelling alternate uses, other than for killing people).

My question for you is: Why are gun manufacturer's fiscal affairs taking precedence over the safety of the vast majority of the non gun-owning constituents you serve?

I am a political cartoonist who has spent the last twenty years of my career taking many potshots at the well-known commercial trade association that represents the financial interests of gun and ammunition manufacturers. But this is the first time I have ever written a testimonial to lawmakers, as I think this subject demands more than my usual efforts. I am paid to seek out irony, hypocrisy, avarice, greed, self-interest, snake oil salesmen and overt displays of indifference to the public good. The NRA proudly checks all those unsavory boxes. As a trade group, it pays its principals a lot of money (Wayne LaPierre receives almost a million dollars a year!) to ensure the gun buying public is sufficiently and constantly afraid of constitutionally sound legislation to "take away their guns". Their irrational and unscientific answer to gun violence? "More guns." How unpredictable!

What the NRA doesn't acknowledge, and fears, is that there are a massive majority of Americans (65% and growing) who don't own guns, and want nothing to do with them.

I don't understand how lawmakers can be so beholden to, and afraid of, a commercial lobbying group that represents a tiny minority of delusional hobbyists. The result of legislative fealty to a

ludicrously questionable and obviously self-serving misinterpretation of the 2nd Amendment is that tens of thousands of Americans, mostly women and children, die annually at the open end of a gun barrel. And the gun manufacturers continue to profit.

Now assuming legislators have no vested interests in gun manufacturer's financial concerns, and the ownership of guns is by a rapidly shrinking minority of people, what could possibly stop anyone from banning the cash sale of weapons at gun shows without background checks? It is a mockery of the law-abiding people who jump through legal hoops in order to buy a firearm.

Why do we allow the sale of assault rifles?

And why are high capacity magazines available to whichever civilian wants them? I can think of not a single good reason.

And while we're at it, what about body armor and armored vests. Even the most cynical reading of the 2nd Amendment can't find a loophole for a shooter to ensure he will be successfully unstoppable while carrying out his murderous crimes.

I am puzzled by the way we approach the Constitutional rights of a free people. It is agreed that it is not permissible to yell "fire" in a crowded theater. Yet the law, as interpreted by some, explicitly protects the ability to fire in a crowded theater.

I'm sure you have noticed that there are a lot of people who are today pushing back against the extreme elements of the gun lobby. These are people who have long questioned the silly, overly-permissive gun laws that have been limply and reluctantly hung around our legal system. They have been awakened, and are not going to go away.

I recently heard from a gun owner who said: "Assault rifles are fun to shoot. Get over it". I see nothing in the 2nd Amendment conferring a right to 'fun'. It is my believe that some gun owners have lost a sense of their responsibilities as citizens.

Please don't continue to side with the minority, and aid and abet such inane, immature and dangerous notions. The general safety and well being of the people is more important than one man's "fun."

We should be protecting the children, not the childish.

I trust and hope that you will all find the courage to do the right thing, this time.

Yours sincerely,

-Matt Davies

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