

January 26, 2013

Sen. Martin Looney, Rep. Craig Miner, members of the Gun Safety Task Force,

Over two centuries ago our fathers brought forth a new idea, the idea of self-governance, the idea that this nation can be ruled By the People and For the People. Some would argue we have been experimenting with this idea for the last two hundred years. Today I believe we face a critical point in this experiment: the decision of the legislature and governmental bodies to infringe the rights of the people as established by the constitution in the name of safety or if in the name of liberty they will stand for the principles on which this nation was founded upon so long ago.

We have come to crossroads. There are many who would limit the right of law-abiding citizens to protect their life, liberties and the pursuit of happiness as established by this nation in the name of public safety. Yes, public safety is important, but is it more important than our liberties, which have been established and protected for years? If you believe the framers of the Constitution, who faced the might, power and army of King George only wanted to protect the rights of hunters and target shooters then you must by all means go ahead and vote to restrict the rights of individuals with increased restrictions on guns. But if you believe the framers of the Constitution planned and knew this day would happen, when this nation would have to decide between the securities of safety and the liberties of freedom, then you must not restrict the rights of the individual as defined by the Constitution.

Imposing arbitrary limits on which gun is legal or illegal; whether a gun can hold 7, 10, 15 or 30 rounds or how many bullets one can own or fire for self preservation is an infringement of the rights of the individual and a violation of the Constitution of the United States. The colonists went to war over taxes and now our legislative body wants to impose overbearing and restrictive taxes on law-abiding citizens all in the name of public safety.

My rifle is NOT an "assault weapon!" It is a modern musket. It will be used to protect my family and my rights as an individual; my inalienable rights which have been granted to me by my Creator. Benjamin Franklin, in the National Historical Review, said, "They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserved is neither liberty nor safety." I would say today "they that can give up essential liberty to obtain a **feeling** of temporary safety deserved is neither liberty nor safety". These restrictions on law-abiding citizens will provide neither safety nor security. It will do nothing to prevent another tragedy from happening. It will only restrict law-abiding citizens from protecting themselves while providing this society a feeling that they "did something."

I believe everyone here holds the noblest intentions and I believe no one here would be standing contrary to the stark realities of what the founder of this nation stood for. But quoting Thomas Paine, "the greatest of tyrannies are always perpetrated in the name of the noblest causes."

By passing these restrictions, as lawmakers you are chipping away at the rights of the individual to stand against the tyranny that may arise and dare I say, will arise in the future. We as a nation are not exempt from the horrors of tyranny. Protecting these freedoms and rights of individuals was your oath when you took office. If you vote to restrict the rights of the individual by imposing these arbitrary bans on weapons which are now legal, you may have the nice feeling of "doing something", you may believe you are protecting the public, when in fact you are only restricting citizens' rights. You are chipping away at our liberties and in the long term you are paving the way for criminals and tyrants to have the power.

Respectfully,

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