# POINT BLANK

STRAIGHT TALK
ABOUT WHAT YOU
CAN DO TO
PRESERVE YOUR
RIGHT TO KEEP AND
BEAR ARMS



### October 2008 Volume XXXIII No. 10

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# CITIZENS COMMITTEE FOR THE RIGHT TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS

(a non-profit corporation)

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# HOUSE PASSES D.C. GUN RIGHTS BILL

On a sharply-tilted 266-152 vote, the U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation that will strip the anti-gun District of Columbia City Council of much of its authority to regulate firearms ownership in the nation's capitol after it had worked for months to dance around a Supreme Court ruling that outlawed the District's handgun ban.

The vote included 181 Republicans and 85 Democrats in the majority, which stripped the original language that had been offered by anti-gun District Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton, and replaced it with pro-gun language authored by Mississippi freshman Democrat Rep. Travis Childers.

The "National Capital Security and Safety Act" was passed despite a last-minute effort by the District Council to amend its own restrictive handgun registration regulations. The city had originally adopted an ordinance allowing the registration of only revolvers, while still banning semiautomatic handguns and requiring trigger locks. The high court ruling in the Heller decision specifically noted that requiring trigger locks, to prevent the gun from being used until it is required for self-defense, is unconstitutional.

The bill, which still must pass the Senate and be signed by President George Bush, removes semiautomatic firearms from the District's long-standing definition of a machine gun. It also strips authority from the city council to regulate gun ownership, including a requirement that firearms be registered. The legislation also allows District residents to purchase handguns in neighboring Virginia and Maryland, while allowing the possession of unregistered firearms.

The city's effort to head off this House bill included a similar provision allowing semi-autos and removing them from the definition of "machine gun." The House measure was in direct response to the deliberately complicated regulations initially adopted by the city after it lost the landmark Heller case in June.

Passage of the legislation in the House does not guarantee the bill will become law. What the vote did accomplish was that it gave several Democrats from conservative districts the ability to campaign as pro-gunners in tight races. CCRKBA Chairman Alan Gottlieb cautioned Democrats against feeling too smug about touting this single vote.

"Those Democrats are fully aware that chances of this bill getting through the Senate during this session of Congress are virtually nil," said Gottlieb, "but this issue gave them a chance to cast a pro-gun vote they can brag about on the campaign trail over the next seven weeks. You can bet your gun collection that Democrat Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid will block a vote on this measure." Page 2 October 2008

## CCRKBA: ENGLISH BAN ON HANDGUNS SHOWS STUPIDITY

For many years, self-appointed progressives (SAPS) in the United States have been citing gun control laws in the United Kingdom as examples which we in America ought to be imitating.

To counter this nonsense, we in CCRKBA and other pro-gun American organizations have been pointing out that no good could come to society at large from imitating English gun laws.

Now, we have a well-documented article that appeared recently in one of the United Kingdom's largest and most well-known newspapers which shows specifically the public insanity resulting from passage of England's handgun ban in 1997 and its subsequent implementation over the past decade.

It demonstrates once again what we in the right to keep and arms movement know instinctively, and that is that the ultimate effect of restrictive gun control laws is to rob law-abiding people of the right to acquire firearms while having virtually no effect on the ability of thugs and other criminals to obtain whatever guns they want.

The headline which appeared over the article in the August 30 issue of the Guardian read: "Firearms: cheap, easy to get and on a street near you." The subhead read: "From drug dealing to settling playground disputes, firearms offenses are rising."

Under the headline appeared a photo of a Webley revolver and the statement by article author Duncan Campbell that it "is up for sale in London for 150 pounds, one of hundreds of such weapons that are easily and cheaply available on the streets of UK's big cities, a Guardian investigation can reveal."

Campbell wrote that "the variety of weapons on offer in Britain is extensive and includes machine guns and shotguns, as well as pistols and converted replicas. A source close to the trade in illegal weapons contacted by the Guardian listed a menu of firearms that are available on the streets of the capital."

According to the Guardian source, "You can get a clean (unused) 9mm automatic for 1,500 pounds, a Glock for a couple of grand and you even can make an order for a couple of MAC-10s, or you can get a little sawn-off for 150 pounds. They're easy enough to get hold of. You'll find one in any poverty area, every estate in London, and it's even easier in Manchester, where there are areas where the police don't go.

"People who use shotguns tend to be lower down the pecking order. There is less use of sawn-off or full length shotguns, and if a criminal wants street cred, he wants a selfloading pistol, a MAC-10 or a Uzi submachine gun."

The Guardian's source said it is the arrival of eastern European firearms that, alongside a homegrown industry in converting them, has contributed to the firearms glut. "There has been an influx from Eastern Europe and particularly Poland, and there are also a lot coming in from people who have served in Afghanistan and Iraq. In Liverpool docks, you can put in an order for 10 guns and some grenades and they'll say OK and two weeks later, they will be there – and they are straight goers."

According to Campbell, Home Office data show that gun crime is up since last year, despite the recent doubling of sentences for possessing

or supplying firearms. There were 9,803 firearms offenses in England and Wales in the year to March 2008 with most in London, Manchester and the West Midlands.

Most buyers are involved with drug dealing, Campbell reported. Some are used to rob other dealers in crimes that go unreported; others are used as protection while a deal is under way.



"Straight talk about what you can do to preserve your right to keep and bear arms."

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### PALIN PICK PROTECTS PISTOLS, THINKS CCRKBA'S JOHN SNYDER

"Republican presidential nominee John S. McCain's his pick of Alaska's sharp shooting Gov. Sarah Palin as his vice-presidential running mate underscored the significance of Americans' gun rights in next month's presidential elections and appeared to galvanize the Second Amendment movement into support for the McCain candidacy for President of the United States," observed John M. Snyder, CCRKBA Public Affairs Director.

"While CCRKBA does not take formal, official positions on electoral matters," Snyder added, "and does not endorse candidates for federal elective office, it does seem that the McCain-Palin ticket contrasts sharply with gun-grabbing records of Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama and vice-presidential nominee Joe Biden.

Snyder recalled that, "while CCRKBA has criticized McCain for supporting additional regulations on firearms and ammunition at gun shows," he noted that, "McCain signed the congressional amicus brief supporting Heller's challenge to the District of Columbia handgun ban as a violation of the individual Second Amendment civil right to keep and bear arms. Under Palin's gubernatorial leadership, Alaska joined a multistate amicus brief supporting Heller. Both Senators Obama and Biden refused to sign the congressional brief. The Supreme Court threw out the D.C. law in its landmark District of Columbia v. Heller decision."

Snyder said, "While Sen. McCain notes that, 'for more than two decades I've opposed efforts to ban guns,' Sen. Obama's been a gun banner from the get go. He has an extensive antigun owner public record despite his occasional euphemistic references to the Second Amendment, including the one in his Democratic Party Convention presidential nomination acceptance speech. He even had the cynical gall to state he agreed with the Court decision in the Heller case after his campaign had told the *Chicago Tribune* last November that 'Obama believes the D.C. handgun law is constitutional.'

"When ABC's local Washington, D.C. affiliate asked Obama: 'One other issue that's of great importance here in the district as well is gun control...but you support the D.C. handgun ban?' Obama: 'Right.' When ABC's Leon Harris continued with, 'and you've said that it's constitutional,' Obama said, 'right.'"

Snyder recalled also that an Illinois candidate questionnaire revealed Obama supported a general state handgun ban in 1996. He later "flatly denied" the handgun ban statement and blamed it on a state senate campaign staffer for incorrectly filling out the questionnaire. However, the publication Politico located a copy of the filled-out questionnaire. Obama's own notes in his own handwriting showed that he personally checked answers and corrected them.

"Obama has supported a ban on the sale of all semiautomatic firearms," Snyder pointed out. "He and Biden support reinstatement of the Clinton Administration era's ban on the sale and importation of certain semiautomatic firearms, a ban that was allowed to sunset 10 years after it took effect because of its failure as a crime control measure. Biden voted three years ago against a measure to prohibit harassing third party civil liability actions from being brought or continued against manufacturers, distributors, dealers or importers of firearms or ammunition. By contrast, McCain voted for the measure and it became law, known as the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act."

Snyder noted that the Republican Party 2008 Platform underscores the significance of the right to keep and bear arms for the party's national ticket. "We uphold the right of individual Americans to own firearms," it reads, "a right which antedated the Constitution and was solemnly affirmed by the Second Amendment. We applaud federal court rulings affirming the right, particularly the Supreme Court's Heller decision, and we assert the individual responsibility to safely use and store firearms. We call on the next president to appoint judges who will similarly respect the Constitution.

"Gun ownership is responsible citizenship, enabling Americans to defend their homes and communities against violent individuals and the drug culture. We call for education in constitutional rights in schools, and we support the option of firearms training in federal programs serving senior citizens and women. We urge immediate action to review the automatic denial of gun ownership to returning members of the Armed Forces who have suffered trauma during service to their country. We condemn frivolous lawsuits against firearms manufacturers, which are transparent attempts to deprive citizens of their rights. We oppose federal licensing of law-abiding gun owners and national gun registration as violations of the Second Amendment."

# CCRKBA ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT SCHOOL IN TEXAS GUN POLICY

Harrold, Texas school district trustees and Superintendent David Thweatt deserve accolades for changing school policy to allow staff and teachers to carry concealed handguns for protection against school shootings, CCRKBA Chairman Alan M. Gottlieb said last month.

The announcement of the CCRKBA position with regard to the Harrold change in school policy came in the midst of the national controversy which has developed following a series of school shootings throughout the country. CCRKBA believes that the imposition of so-called "gun free zones" leave thugs, mass murders and assorted nut cases free to perpetrate their mayhem – free from potential and successful resistance from law-abiding armed citizens.

Gottlieb predicted that, "When classes open in Harrold, school buildings will be safer than normal, thanks to this decision. Critics of the plan will argue about liability, or suggest that the school could have hired a security officer or off-duty policeman. But we all know that such officers can't be everywhere, and in an emergency, every second counts."

Gottlieb, co-author of the book America Fights Back: Armed Self-Defense in a Violent Age, noted that a full chapter of the work is devoted to the folly of gun-free zones, including public schools. He said such places are magnets for cowardly killers who have nothing to fear because the victims cannot fight back.

"Gun control extremists despise this kind of common-sense approach to the potential of school violence," Gottlieb observed. "But the time has come to challenge their head-in-thesand philosophy. How many lives have been lost on public school and college campuses because of these insane victim disarmament measures? How many students and teachers might be alive today if only lawmakers and school officials has acted as responsibly as the Harrold administration?"

Under this new policy, school employees who have a state-issued concealed carry permit, and permission from the school administration, may carry their guns on campus. They must be trained in crisis management and hostage situations and use ammunition designed to minimize ricochet inside school buildings.

"Allowing armed staff and teachers will provide a last line of defense if other security measures at the school fail," Gottlieb said. "No doubt the school board and Mr. Thweatt will suffer some slings and arrows, but if this decision one day saves the life of even one child, it will have been worthwhile."

When school was about to open for the fall, some teachers at the tiny country school packed a gun along with their lesson plans when classes were about to begin, reported AFP.

According to the report, the isolated, 110-student Texas school near the border with Oklahoma is thought to be the first in the United States in recent years to allow guns in the classroom.

School officials, echoing Gottlieb's comments, said arming teachers is the only way to protect the old brick schoolhouse, which sits 30 minutes from the nearest police station.

"How do you stop the angry person without enough common sense?" asked Thweatt.

"It's not going to take long for it to be a total massacre."

Thweatt would not say which teach-

ers are armed or how many but said they all received adequate training.

Harrold's school board decided a year ago, in October 2007, to allow its employees to carry concealed handguns on campus when the 2008-2009 school year began.

Mass murders at schools, college campuses, shopping malls and churches have claimed scores of lives across the United States in recent years.

Some, like Harrold's superintendent, blame the violence on federal legislation enacted in 1995 that made such areas "gun free zones."

"That's the place people could go if they are feeling crazy or mad at the world and get a big body count," Thweatt said.

Thweatt said he studied the issue for two years while he filled his school with more than 100,000 dollars worth of state of the art security systems.

But even with the new keyless entry, camera system, lock-down buttons and classroom telephones, Thweatt said he still could not have prevented a mass murder like the one in an Amish one room schoolhouse in Pennsylvania in 2006 that left five girls dead. It also would not have been enough to deter the deranged student at Virginia Tech University, who killed 32 people and wounded 23 in 2007.

"They were like fish in a barrel," Thweatt said.

The Harrold policy requires that guns must be worn – not locked in a safe – and loaded with ammunition designed to blast into powder instead of ricocheting through the hallways.

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### DEMOCRATIC PARTY SLAPS GUN OWNERS

Alan M. Gottlieb, Chairman, CCRKBA, and Dave Workman, CCRKBA Communications Director

Judging from the Democratic Party platform, remarks from presidential candidate Barack Obama and his selection of anti-gun Sen. Joe Biden as a running mate, the long, transparent courtship of gun owners by Democrats is over and instead of a goodbye kiss, there was a slap in the face.

After Democrats lost Congress in 1994 because their actions brought legions of angry gun owners to the polls, the party re-packaged its rhetoric and tried to sell itself as a friend of the Second Amendment. American gun owners, who are becoming increasingly gun rights activists, are not the fools Democrats think they are. As we note in our new book, These Dogs Don't Hunt: The Democrats' War on Guns, Democrats earned their reputation as being the party of gun control. They need to repudiate their long-standing animosity toward gun owner rights.

The party platform tries to patronize gun owners by claiming to "recognize the right to bear arms is an important part of the American tradi-

tion, and we will preserve Americans' continued Second Amendment right to own and use firearms." But then the document quickly reveals that Democrats have changed their tune but not their agenda: "We can work together to enact and enforce common-sense laws and improvements, like closing the gun show loophole, improving our background check system and reinstating the assault weapons ban..."

Gun owners know that the 10-year "ban" on so-called "assault weapons" -which included more than 200 types of commonly-owned firearms – had no measurable impact on violent crime, and that reinstating it is all about symbolism rather than substance. They know that gun shows are the source of less than one percent of guns used in violent crimes. They know that gun shows are the source of less than one percent of guns used by violent criminals. They know anti-gunners believe "common-sense laws" include licensing, registration and a surrender of the "right to carry"

to the discretionary whims of police chiefs and sheriffs.

The party chose Obama as its standard bearer. He once served on the board of the vehemently ant-firearms civil rights Joyce Foundation. During his first run for public office he supported a ban on the manufacture, sale and possession of handguns and semiautomatic rifles. He supports mandatory waiting periods on all gun purchases. He told the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review in April that "I am not in favor of concealed weapons," insulting millions of armed citizens who care about self-defense in the process.

Gun owners know Biden as an anti-gun extremist. He consistently earns "F" ratings from gun rights organizations. He claimed credit for writing the original legislation to ban semiautomatic sport-utility rifles that are owned by millions of Americans who have harmed nobody.

It is now clear to gun owners that Democrats only asked them to the dance just to get through the door.

### CITIZEN ACTION PROJECT

On Tuesday, November 4, Election Day, Americans face what well could turn out to be the most important political contests to date for determining what may be the future of the individual Second Amendment civil right to keep and bear arms.

Although the Supreme Court decided in June for the individualist interpretation of the Second Amendment, it did only by the slim margin of five to four. A slight change in the ideological composition of the Court in a collectivist direction on the Second Amendment could lead to a reversal of the District of Columbia v. Heller decision.

Since the next President probably will be in a position to nominate one or more justices to the Court, it is important that gun rights supporters are registered to vote and able to vote for the candidate most likely to nominate to the Court jurists who accept the originalist, individualist appreciation of the Second Amendment. It also is important for prospective voters to be able to vote for U.S. Senate candidates most likely to support confirmation of such appointees when they come before that body for confirmation.

It's easy but absolutely most important that gun owners make use of the forthcoming election to support candidates who support their civil rights. CCRKBA Members and Supporters can do this by making sure they are registered to vote and indeed do vote.

CCRKBA Members and Supporters: Your gun rights are at stake! Your vote is your voice! Use it or lose it! .

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# MISSISSIPPI CONGRESSMAN THE CCRKBA GUN DEFENDER

U.S. Representative Travis W. Childers of Mississippi is the CCRKBA Gun Rights Defender of the Month for October.

Rep. Childers is chief sponsor of H.R. 6691, the most recent version of the proposed Second Amendment Enforcement Act.

In nominating the Congressman from the Magnolia State for the Award, John M. Snyder, CCRKBA Public Affairs Director, explained that, "in order to understand the public service that Rep. Childers has rendered to Americans' gun rights, it is important to consider the situation in which he has acted."

"For years," Snyder continued, "congressional gun right defenders have been incensed over the extreme gun laws in the District of Columbia, a federal city over which Congress has ultimate authority. The Washington, D.C. gun laws, enacted by District politicians after Congress granted home rule to the District, have prohibited law-abiding District residents from possessing handguns even within their own homes.

"Second Amendment supporting Representatives and Senators have sponsored federal legislation to overturn the severely restrictive District of Columbia gun laws. At the same time, District residents have pursued Second Amendment arguments in the courts in an effort to overturn the District gun laws on a constitutional basis. This approach finally bore fruit in June when the U. S. Supreme Court declared, in the case of District of Columbia v. Heller, that the prohibition on handgun possession is an unconstitutional violation of individual

Second Amendment gun rights."

Snyder added that, "While this decision was a victory for gun rights, District officials adopted new regulations which, while ostensibly in keeping with the letter of the Supreme Court decision, continued to undermine its spirit. These officials are trying to make it so difficult for law-abiding District residents to possess handguns that it will be almost impossible for them legally to do so. They also continue to consider semiautomatic handguns as machine guns and to prohibit citizens from possessing them.

"A number of Representatives, from both political parties, want to thwart this attempt by District politicians to in effect vitiate the Supreme Court gun rights decision. It appears there are a sufficient number of Representatives willing to sign a discharge petition to force the anti-gun Speaker of the House, Rep. Nancy Pelosi of California, to allow consideration of such a bill. However, in order to avoid such a confrontation, Congresswoman Pelosi reportedly indicated she would be willing to allow such a bill to come to the floor of the House provided it enjoyed bipartisan support."

Snyder noted that, "by stepping into this situation, Congressman Childers, a conservative Democrat, takes a leadership role in Congress as a top gun right advocate. He most certainly deserves this Award."

When Rep. Childers introduced H.R. 6691 in August, he stated that, "the Supreme Court recently upheld Americans' fundamental right to bear arms, and the legislation ensures that this decision is not infringed upon. I am proud to have introduced the

Second Amendment Enforcement Act with my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to protect the rights of gun owners. I will continue to fight for the constitutional rights of Mississippians and all Americans."

He noted H.R. 6691 would repeal the D.C. ban on semiautomatic handguns, repeal the requirement that firearms be disassembled or secured with a trigger lock in the home, repeal extensive D.C. bureaucratic requirements of the D.C. gun registration system, and allow D.C. residents to buy handguns in Virginia or Maryland.

Childers was born in Booneville, Mississippi. He received a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Mississippi.

While a student at Ole Miss, Childers became licensed as a Real Estate Salesperson. After graduating he joined a real estate business eventually establishing Travis Childers Realty and Associates, a successful Northeast Mississippi real estate firm. He and his wife Tami also own Landmark Community, a personal care home, and Landmark Nursing Center.

In 1991, Childers was elected Prentiss County Chancery Clerk. He was reelected five times. In 2001-2002, Childers served as president of the Mississippi Chancery Clerks Association.

Childers was elected to Congress earlier this year in a special election when incumbent Rep. Roger Wicker was appointed to the U.S. Senate by Gov. Haley Barbour after long-time Sen. Trent Lott vacated the post.

Travis and Tami have two children, Dustin and Lauren.

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An 85-year-old grandmother from Lake Lynn in Fayette County, Pennsylvania kept an alleged burglar at bay in mid-August with the use of a .22 caliber handgun, according to newspaper reports. Police said a 17-year old suspect was attempting to burglarize Leda Smith overnight. Police said that's when Leda Smith grabbed her gun and told the teenager that she would shoot him if he moved. "I had the gun on him before he turned around and said, 'you've had it," Smith told local media. According to police, Smith ordered the boy to dial 911 and then gave him some advice. "Dial 911 and don't attempt to throw the phone or I'll shoot you," Smith said. When police arrived, they took the teen into custody. Charges have been filed against him and an alleged accomplice. Trooper Christian Lieberum said the charges include attempted burglary and related offenses. "It was exciting," Smith said. "I just hope I broke up the (burglary) ring because they have been hitting a lot of places around here."

\*

Self-defense is a crime under an on-the-books Allentown, Pennsylvania ordinance, according to columnist Paul Carpenter of The Morning Call. Carpenter reported that Allentown resident Michael Trilli contacted Carpenter after he was harassed for "exercising his right to carry a weapon." A Trilli neighbor had "called police, who rushed to the scene with a canine unit and shot-

guns, and pounced, seizing Trilli's gun, for which he had a license, from his holster." Trilli's gun was returned the next day but he was still peeved and sent Carpenter a copy of the state constitution, which states that the right of citizens "to bear arms in defense of themselves...shall not be questioned." He also sent along a copy of Allentown ordinance 734.01, which states that, "No person shall use, carry or discharge firearms of any kind, air rifles, spring guns, bows and arrows, slings or any other form or weapons...within the limits of the city." Carpenter wrote he "had a pretty spirited conversation with Al-Ientown Police Chief Roger MacLean about all this...he emphasized that Trilli was not charged with a crime and he agreed that state and federal constitutions trump local statutes. 'I think it (the city ordinance) needs to be looked at,' MacLean said."



The lawyers who defeated the District of Columbia's handgun ban in the Supreme Court, successfully arguing that Americans have an individual right to arm themselves, want about \$3.5 million for their trouble, reports Legal Times. The team, financed by The Cato Institute's Robert Levy and led by civil rights and intellectual property lawyer Alan Gura, says it clocked at least 3,273 hours in the course of District of Columbia v. Heller, which was filed in February 2003 and concluded in spectacular fashion on June 26, the last day of the high court's cycle. The lawyers anticipate the District will oppose their fee petition motion.



In Ohio, as of early last month, concealed weapons permit holders may keep a gun hidden in the car as long as it's carried in a secure holster. Previously, the law required the gun to be in plain sight. Permit holders also may bring a gun onto school grounds as long as the gun owner is in a car picking up or dropping off a child. "The more law-abiding people that have guns, the better off we are," said Hamilton County Prosecutor Joe Deters, "because the bad guys always have guns. You look at these school shootings or church shootings, the ones that have been stopped, it was because someone there had a gun,"



In Nevada, State Assemblyman Harry Mortenson of Las Vegas wants the state to adopt a legal doctrine strengthening a home owner's right to use deadly force to protect someone's life from an intruder. He already has submitted his bill draft to implement the "castle doctrine" for the 2009 legislative session. "I support the old philosophy that a man's home is his castle and people should not invade it with impunity," he said. "We've moved so much in the direction of helping the invader that I think we need to go a little bit in the other direction."

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