



For Immediate Release, Thursday, Feb. 22, 2018
Contact: Michael A. Schwartz, SDCGO, (619) 828-3006

Gun Owners Are Ready to Have A Conversation

A high-profile mass murder and again, the nation is saddened and horrified to hear about the heinous acts of violence committed by a highly troubled young man who showed many clear signs that he needed help. It goes without saying that law-abiding gun owners abhor acts of violence, whether the offender is using a gun or not. It is our passion and our respect of an individual's life that makes us committed Second Amendment supporters. We feel for the victims, their families, and their loved ones.

San Diego County Gun Owners' job and the job of every Second Amendment organization is to have a conversation about our Second Amendment rights, not just after horrible acts of violence, but 365 days a year. We want to have a conversation about our Second Amendment protected rights throughout the year and not just when the topic makes the headlines.

So, what's standing in our way?

In the last few weeks the San Diego City Council has had a conversation about federal gun carrying laws, California Assembly Members have had a conversation about a new piece of state gun legislation, and everyone has had a conversation about the horrible murders at a Florida high school. Here are just a handful of examples of the comments and reporting:

1. "You don't need a permit to conceal carry a rifle or shotgun"
<https://www.cnn.com/2018/02/15/us/florida-gun-laws-trnd/index.html>
2. "a person who has never even fired a gun or received proper training on how to safely handle one can receive a permit" (referring to a concealed carry weapon permit)
<https://www.10news.com/news/san-diego-area-lawmakers-announce-bill-aimed-at-concealed-carry-firearm-permits>
3. "it would even allow teenagers to buy weapons"
<https://www.10news.com/news/san-diego-city-council-to-consider-resolution-opposing-nationwide-concealed-carry-permit-law>
4. "17 school shootings in 45 days"
<https://www.cnbc.com/2018/02/14/florida-school-shooting-brings-yearly-tally-to-18-in-2018.html>

5. "These weapons are meant for use on the battlefield." (referring to AR15s)
https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/ar-15-style-weapons_us_5a84cf09e4b0ab6daf45ab2d
6. "...has angered gun control advocates who point to an Obama-era gun checks regulation he repealed last year"
<http://fortune.com/2018/02/15/trump-shooting-mental-illness/>
7. "Of course, with those weapons at home, you also might shoot a family member or yourself." (Referring to handguns and shotguns)
<http://www.latimes.com/politics/la-pol-ca-skelton-florida-shooting-gun-control-20180219-story.html>

As these examples show, gun owners cannot have a conversation because elected officials, reporters, and protestors are grossly uninformed and/or misinformed.

My favorite English professor used to say, "We can have a philosophical conversation, but not if you haven't done the reading first." This was the professor's polite way of telling young students that their opinions do not matter if they aren't based on knowledge and fact. The above news stories are full of false information. Americans cannot have a meaningful conversation if the foundations for the conversation are based on falsehoods. Discourse hasn't been effective because so much time has been spent educating on realities and the very basics of gun ownership, gun laws, and the Second Amendment. The causes of this misinformation are groups whose opinions come from an irrational bias against firearms and whose agenda is not public safety or a true solution for violence; rather it is simply to ban guns.

Despite the frustrations, San Diego County Gun Owners will continue to be available to have the conversations even after reporters, politicians, and anti-gun activists move on to whatever story is next in the news cycle. We will continue to advocate for the sane, trained, law-abiding gun owners who want to be able to defend their lives and protect their families. We will continue to support our candidates financially and with volunteers. We will continue to support groups like Active Valor and BoysToMen.org because they help troubled kids who are in danger of falling through society's cracks. We will continue to support laws that respect the rights of the law-abiding, punish criminals harshly, and prevent dangerous criminals from getting a gun.

For example, in December the House of Representatives passed H.R. 38 (S. 446 in the U.S. Senate) which included language to improve reporting to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS). NICS is a system maintained by the FBI and used by firearms sellers to determine if prospective firearms buyers are prohibited by law from owning a firearm. All sides agree that dangerous criminals should not have access to firearms, but the National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics reported in 2013 that at least 25% of felony convictions are not available to the NICS background check system.

Currently stalled in the U.S. Senate, H.R. 38 would force accountability by implementing penalties and incentives so that state governments, local governments, and federal departments do what is required by reporting felons and other prohibited people to NICS so they cannot purchase a firearm. Due to the inability to compromise or reach across party lines, anti-gun groups like Moms Demand Action and The Brady Organization oppose the bill. At the direction of these anti-gun groups, on January 31st San Diego City Council members Barbara Bry, Chris Ward, and David Alvarez voted for a resolution opposing H.R.

38. Their resolution passed out of San Diego's Economic Development Committee and will go in front of the full San Diego City Council in March. Let's hope council members leave partisan politics behind and go against the special interest groups who urge them to oppose H.R. 38.

Despite receiving no news coverage, over 100 of the over 1,000 San Diego County Gun Owners members meet every month across the county as a way of protesting the disintegration of our liberty. We donate our money and our time to support political candidates who protect our rights. We do this because this is how a democratically elected representative republic system works. Still, small mobs of the marching uninformed who reiterate nonsensical, inaccurate statements are what grabs the headlines. After the emotional fervor subsides, we will still be here waiting for them to have an educated conversation.

#

Founded in 2015, the San Diego County Gun Owners is a registered political action committee (FPPC ID #1379388) and advocacy organization focused on organizing the gun industry and community and protecting the U.S. Constitution's Second Amendment right to bear arms. While every U.S. state has a Second Amendment PAC, along with several nationwide gun rights PACs, SDCGO is one of America's only local, countywide Second Amendment advocacy organization.

* * *
* * *
* * *
* * *
* * *
* * *
* * *
* * *
* * *