

3/17/2009 We Must Protect our Second Amendment Rights

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March 17, 2009

Mr. Speaker, I come this afternoon to the House of Representatives to bring a message from Kansans and those who support the Second Amendment.

The United States Supreme Court ruled last year that the Second Amendment guarantees an individual's right to own firearms and that Washington DC's gun ban is unconstitutional. This decision was a win for all Americans and sent a message to governments across the country in support of Second Amendment freedoms.

Unfortunately in recent weeks we have heard from administration officials and gun control advocates that they are pushing to restrict an individual's gun rights, the rights guaranteed by our Constitution. Discussing escalating violence caused by drug cartels in Mexico, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder last month called for reinstating the so-called assault weapons ban.

This is the wrong approach. Instead of punishing law-abiding American gun owners, our citizens, our country should be working to enforce existing gun laws that outlaw illegal purchases. We should secure our borders, and we should work to increase the cooperation between the United States and Mexican authorities.

Many Kansans are also concerned about H.R. 45, legislation that has been proposed to license gun owners and track firearms sales. I am hopeful that this bill does not have the support to be approved by this Congress.

An article in today's Wichita Eagle, our newspaper at home, highlights an ironic twist. The article reports that news of gun control efforts, along with concerns that crime will increase with a troubled economy, has ramped up the demand for firearms and ammunitions. Shortages are now common as retail stores are having trouble keeping guns and ammunition on the shelves.

I want to restate that our Founding Fathers established a Bill of Rights to our Constitution to make sure that American citizens can live in freedom without government intrusion. Human liberty and limited government are principles I hold in high regard.

I stand with Kansans in opposing efforts that violate the Second Amendment, and I will continue to cast my votes where it's necessary to protect our rights, including those provided for by the Second Amendment.