



Eric Deaton, U.S. Senate

1387 Crawford-Tom's Run Road
New Lebanon, OH 45345
www.deatonforsenate.com
937-751-6670

Gun Rights

Let's make it immediately clear that I am a gun owner. I am tired of the infringement by my government at the federal, state and the local levels on my right to keep and bear arms as outlined in the Constitution. The Bill of Rights was not written as an afterthought to the Constitution. These precepts, the first ten amendments to the Constitution, called the Bill of Rights, were written on a separate piece of parchment because of their importance. These items were so important to the founders of our country, that to call special attention to them, they were written separately from the Constitution. The intent of the Bill of Rights and the Constitution as a whole is clear by the writings in the Federalist papers and the period writings of the drafters of the document in their own words. Many of these letters and newspaper articles of the time are stored in the Library of Congress to this day. You don't need to interpret the intent of the constitution or have a judge trying to legislate from the bench to interpret it either. The very fiber of what the founders meant is already recorded, explained and rationalized in their own words. As law-abiding citizens, we were meant to be allowed to own the arms of current technology for the purpose of protection from criminals, foreign invasion and tyranny within our government. In addition to this, other legitimate uses of firearms were for hunting and the general enjoyment of the shooting sport hobby. The second amendment clearly was meant to protect our individual gun rights when reviewed in the context of the founding fathers' own words.

The Supreme Court has ruled in favor of the second amendment as being an individual right as recently as 2008. The second amendment says the right to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. Well, wouldn't taxing guns, taxing ammunition, limiting how many guns citizens can own, limiting transportation of guns across state lines, limiting use of guns and limiting the ability to carry a gun to protect oneself be considered infringement? There are so many antigun laws already passed and many others sitting at the ready in Washington right now that the anti-gunners want to ram down our throats. These "laws to be" are just waiting for the proper political climate to implement them regardless of the intent of and protection afforded by the Constitution. The antigun crowd is just waiting for a massacre, or for the right party to be in power at the right time to be able to pass their authoritarian laws upon the rest of us free people. It will give the government the ultimate power to control us if we can't arm and protect ourselves from it. The Second Amendment is our liberty teeth; without it all the other amendments and the entire Constitution mean nothing. If we can't protect ourselves from foreign invasion, home invasion and, most importantly, tyranny within our own government, then the Constitution is meaningless. We can never waiver on the Second Amendment and must remain constantly vigilant of the attacks upon it.

I am a lifetime member of the N.R.A. and I have been disappointed with them many times as they have wavered and worked with the anti-gunners to craft common sense gun laws and sold our rights down the river as they've done so. I think we should be able to own guns that are of modern make and guns that are used currently by our military including machine guns or assault rifles. I'm tired of guns that are not assault rifles being called such. Our own Department of Defense definition for an assault rifle is that they are select fire, fully automatic weapons. So



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why do our politicians try to pass off semi-automatic rifles as assault weapons? When we had a national assault weapons ban in 1994 for 10 years, it did not ban machine guns, it banned semi-automatic rifles that just looked like true assault rifles. I have no problem with automatic weapons in civilian hands. I think we should all be allowed to own them, use them and not be harassed. Currently you can buy them if you pay a \$200 transfer tax and go through an FBI background check, but they are heavily policed and no more can be manufactured for civilian ownership. The amount of fully automatic weapons that we citizens can own is set in stone and it's driving the price of them through the roof. I think that is an infringement upon our second amendment rights. These guns are no more expensive to build than most semi-automatic rifles. These fully automatic arms merely have a few extra pieces in them to make them work. A guy can make these pieces in his machine shop, but he immediately would be a criminal in the eyes of the BATF.

To protect the 2nd Amendment, law-abiding citizens should not be treated as criminals for exercising their firearms rights. If you are a criminal, you have already opened yourself up to have lots of life's rights infringed upon. Throw the book at them, incarcerate them, and use the true common-sense gun law that says felons should not have guns. Criminals by their very nature are criminal and don't follow the law. When they do get caught they need to be incarcerated. Maybe they'll decide not to use guns once they've seen how bad the penalties are for doing so.

I am a gun owner and the home I grew up in always had firearms around as well as my home now. I'm a member of the Ohio Gun Collectors Association and I've been in the N.R.A for many years and became a lifetime member a few years ago. I had my first BB gun at age 10 and my first .22 caliber rifle about age 14. Since then I have owned many fine handguns, shotguns and rifles of many calibers and for many different purposes. I enjoy target shooting, hunting and sometimes just going out and plinking around at cans. It is hard to find more fun than shooting a concrete block with a .45-70 trap-door rifle, a bowling ball with a 8mm Mauser or a watermelon with a .30-06 M1 Garand. I most certainly keep guns for protection and I've trained my children about the dangers of and safe handling of firearms. I keep my guns locked away from the children, but the boys have already been taught to shoot a gun and my daughter will join them in a few years.

I will fight for the gun rights of law abiding citizens of this country until the day I die, whether I am in the Senate or not. I hope to pass on the rich heritage of gun ownership and some valuable family heirlooms to my children. Remember constant vigilance is needed by all of us to protect our rights. We all need to stay on target, up to date and continue to support our shooting clubs and gun rights organizations.

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