

House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

December 3, 2007

CC Jack I
Bill R
Kim SLehigh Valley Firearms Coalition
P. O. Box 734
Allentown, Pennsylvania 18105

Dear Members of the Lehigh Valley Firearms Coalition,

Benjamin Franklin, Philadelphia's native son and one of our nation's Founding Fathers once said: "Where liberty dwells there is my country," and, furthermore, "They that give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty or safety."

How far has the majority of state and local government officials from the City of Philadelphia strayed from Franklin's concept of "essential" Second Amendment liberty? Look no further than former Philadelphia District Attorney, Philadelphia Mayor, and current Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell's most recent verbal tirade when he blasted the Pennsylvania General Assembly for protecting our right to keep and bear arms. "For far too long, this Legislature has been in the control of the National Rifle Association," said Rendell, as he pounded the podium. "For far too long, this Legislature has done things favored by lobbyists, not the people of Pennsylvania," the governor added, before demanding that Pennsylvania state lawmakers "bite their lip, suck it up and do the right thing in Harrisburg."

Not surprisingly, the governor delivered these remarks during a May 22 press conference in support of previously considered and overwhelmingly defeated legislative proposals such as rationing hand gun purchases to one per month; leveling criminal penalties against law-abiding gun owners for failing to report lost or stolen firearm(s); and giving Pennsylvania cities the unchecked authority to pass their own gun laws.

Once again, neither history, violent crime statistics from around the globe, nor most importantly, the truth, are on the side of Governor Rendell and his ever-growing list of unsubstantiated claims about gun control:

- Guns aren't even very successfully used for protection. Guns are used for killing people."
— Ed Rendell, ABC Nightline, May 26, 1998

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Just The Facts: The record and results from no less than 19 consecutive studies unanimously indicate that each year 700,000 or more Americans effectively use guns for self-protection. Furthermore, these results overwhelmingly suggest that victims who use guns defensively are less likely to be harmed than those using other forms of self protection.

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- "I believe with all my heart that we need more gun control."
— Ed Rendell, Press Conference, October 3, 2006

Just The Facts: The longer the waiting period, the longer law-abiding citizens have to wait to defend themselves against violent criminals. The recent tragedy at Virginia Tech further illustrates the futility of waiting periods, gun-free zones and other commonly touted gun control measures. Especially, when you consider that the campus of Virginia Tech was already a gun-free zone and that Virginia has been a "One Gun A Month" state since 1993. However, private gun owners legally and freely executing their inalienable right to keep and bear arms were able to prevent similar massacres from occurring in Pearl, Mississippi, Springfield, Oregon and Edinboro, Pennsylvania.

- "People who buy 18 Smith and Wessons at one time are not buying the guns for themselves."
— Ed Rendell, Press Conference, May 22, 2007

Just The Facts: Despite the ongoing increase in private firearm ownership, the United States does not even rank in the Top 10 nations in terms of violent crime. Since 1991, the number of privately owned firearms has increased in the U.S. by no less than 70 million guns and the number of states with right to carry laws has more than doubled from 17 to 38 states, including Pennsylvania. Yet violent crime has decreased by 35 percent—dropping every single year during this time frame to a 30-year low.

Law-abiding gun owners across this Commonwealth are justifiably outraged any time they are mandated by government to endure a loss of Constitutional freedom and personal security. When government is not properly enforcing the laws that already exist to curtail violent crime, it is nothing short of tyranny in the first degree to place additional restrictions on law-abiding citizens whose only desire is to defend their lives, their loved ones and their property. Based on

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the Second Amendment, which clearly states that our right to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed, it is safe to say that Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and the rest of our nation's founding fathers would not endorse One-Gun-A-Month waiting periods; permanently registering the addresses and Social Security numbers of law-abiding firearm owners; or Philadelphia City Council's equally ridiculous lawsuit against the Pennsylvania General Assembly for the right to write and enforce their own gun control policies. Neither should any branch or agency of Pennsylvania state government, especially the Office of the Governor.

Sincerely,

Samuel E. Rohrer
State Representative
128th Legislative District

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