

Russ Fulcher RE: elected officials concealed weapons perk (3.14.14):

I am thankful for this opportunity to clarify my statements during a recent debate over a "concealed carry" bill in a senate committee. Law abiding citizens have a right to bear arms. But that right has been eroded by government rules and special interest groups who want to see every tragedy as an excuse to take away our 2nd Amendment rights.

I refuse to give up any further erosion of this right, and I will resist any effort to do so. This includes eroding those rights by adding requirements back on state officials and judges. I resist giving up any further freedoms to the government, including the right to carry concealed weapons that elected officials and judges have had since 1906. I not only believe in the right of all people to defend themselves, but I believe people are inherently responsible in how they do so. That is one reason why I have a 100% rating with the National Rifle Association.

In my comments during a senate state affairs hearing, I noted that elected officials must consider their own security. As an elected official myself, I am well aware that sometimes we need to make controversial decisions. These decisions can be far-reaching, impacting our state significantly. This can sometimes inflame passions, leading in very rare cases, to physical harm. Thus, I believe there is a defensible position for lawmakers when it comes to their own security.

But none of this should dismiss the need to restore 2nd Amendment rights for all law-abiding citizens. Let me give some examples. The Biden Commission on Gun Violence is trying to get the Consumer Product Safety Commission to require things like trigger locks be included with the purchase of a gun. I support their use, but not as a requirement to buy a gun. Gun owners tend to be very responsible people. I trust they will do what is best for the safety of themselves and their families. The Obama Administration also wants to "code" ammunition and require gun safes as part of gun ownership. Are they going to require people certify that they have gun safes in their home to buy a gun in the future? Where do these rules end and will they prevent people from getting a gun to protect themselves, their families, and their property? For me, this is not an issue about "special privileges;" it is about reclaiming those 2nd Amendment rights law-abiding citizens have already lost.

Instead of having lawmakers, elected officials, judges, or anyone else relinquish their rights, why don't we consider extending those same rights to all law abiding citizens? Instead of adding requirements, we should be cutting those requirements for everyone who abides by the law. Taking away rights from some people is not a wise strategy if you want to restore them for everyone. Law abiding citizens should have the right to keep and bear arms. We should be focusing on increasing the rights of everyone, not stripping away the rights we already have.

Thank you.