

THE Gun Owners

30 YEARS OF NO COMPROMISE – 1975-2005

2005: The Year in Review

GOA Performs Valuable Watchdog Role for Gun Owners

by Erich Pratt

Who would have thought that it would happen in 2005?

Law-abiding citizens having their guns stolen ... not by looters or hoodlums, but by officials acting under color of law.

The video was shocking. American troops were going house-to-house, smashing through doors and confiscating firearms. One would have thought it was video tape from Cuba or Cambodia, not from the state of Louisiana.

Many heard about it or saw it here first. GOA posted several videos on its website to document the illegal taking that was occurring in New Orleans this past September.

Our website traffic spiked tremendously. For two months in a row, the GOA site set an all-time record for information downloaded in a 30-day period.

For many gun owners, the GOA website became the place to view the outrageous events that were occurring. Most people did not see guns being confiscated on their own TV sets, because the mainstream media dropped the issue rather quickly after the initial reports.

That's where the Internet made such a difference. Gun Owners of America was able to sound the alarm at a rate that Samuel Adams and Paul Revere could have only dreamed about doing in their day.

So thanks to the worldwide web — and thanks to the generous support from GOA members across the country — the GOA website was in operation, allowing many Americans to see gun confiscation occurring on their computer screens at work or home.

GOA petitions Attorney General to prosecute crooked cops

In addition to educating the world on what has happening behind the scenes in Louisiana, GOA has also tried to hold the

GOA Pressing to Punish Crooked Cops



Gun Owners of America has petitioned Louisiana Attorney General Charles Foti (left) to investigate and prosecute officials who confiscated firearms from law-abiding citizens in New Orleans this past September. On the right, police in the Big Easy evict a woman from her home after tackling her and confiscating her weapon. See the entire scuffle on the GOA site at <http://www.gunowners.org/notb.htm>.

guilty parties accountable.

GOA has petitioned both the Inspector General in the U.S. Justice Department and the Attorney General of Louisiana to this end.

The letters cite newspaper articles and TV news broadcasts to demonstrate that National Guard troops, police and U.S. marshals were confiscating firearms in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

The letters also reminded both Generals that the U.S. District Court of the Eastern District in Louisiana had issued a restraining order to stop authorities from confiscating firearms on September 23.

In light of this overwhelming evidence, GOA urged Louisiana Attorney General Charles C. Foti, Jr. to bring "legal charges against the guilty parties who authorized and perpetrated these harmful acts against innocent Americans."

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Inside:

- See how GOA helped kill the semi-auto reauthorization this year (page 4)
- How to give to the Gun Owners Foundation through the United Way (page 6)

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While U.S. Inspector General Glenn Fine does not have authority to prosecute, he can investigate civil rights abuses and refer such cases for prosecution to U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez.

Not surprisingly, both Generals Foti and Fine have been dragging their feet on this request — which is why GOA has asked members and activists to contact both of these men.

GOA is hopeful that Foti, who is elected by the people of Louisiana, will feel the “heat” and, thus, see the “light” — especially as his next campaign for reelection approaches.

Readers can review GOA’s letters to Generals Foti and Fine, and see the videos of illegal confiscation, by going to <http://www.gunowners.org/notb.htm>.

This will be a continuing story. So be ready to hear more on this next year.

GOA helps nix Feinstein gun ban

Perhaps one of the most significant victories this year was making sure that the ban on semi-automatic firearms was not reauthorized.

Gun owners will remember that this ban sunset in September 2004, but its renewal has remained one of the anti-gunners’ top priorities.

When Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) wanted to offer the semi-auto ban renewal as an amendment to the gun makers liability bill (S. 397), GOA jumped “feet first” into the fray.

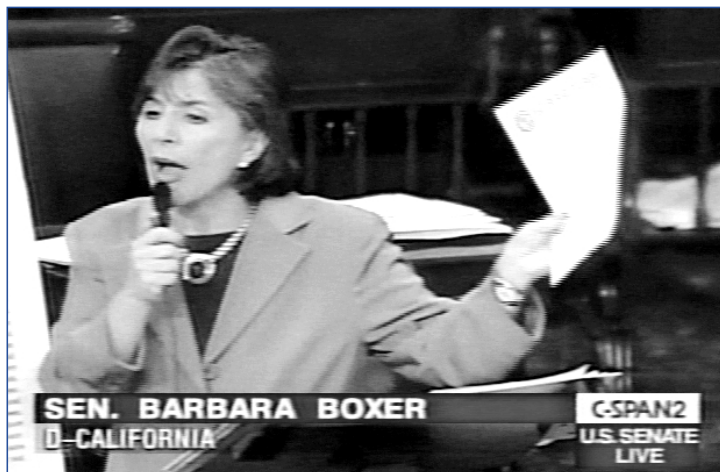
GOA asked Majority Leader Bill Frist to use parliamentary procedures to block her amendment. At first, Sen. Frist was reluctant. He didn’t want to be seen as obstructionist. He dragged his feet. His staff even claimed “it couldn’t be done.”

But after the Senator received several thousand emails, faxes and phone calls from GOA members, Frist *changed his mind*. He used the parliamentary procedure GOA had recommended — a strategy known as “treeing the bill” — to block Sen. Feinstein from offering her semi-auto gun ban to S. 397 in July.

Democrats were outraged. They protested on the floor of the Senate. Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) complained about the GOA-induced strategy Frist had employed:

I have nothing in my memory that [Sen. Frist] has ever done this before; that is, immediately going to a bill and *filling the tree so no other amendments can be offered*. I have never, ever known him to do this. It is so unusual. It is not in keeping with how he has done business here during his tenure as majority leader. While filling the tree is within the rules, it is done very rarely. And again, I am surprised

GOA Flashback: Five Years Ago...



Holding a letter from Gun Owners of America in her hand, Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA) attacks GOA on the floor of the Senate after this organization refused to support her gun control “compromise.” Boxer’s anti-gun amendment subsequently failed by one vote.

that Senator Frist did this.” (*Congressional Record*, July 27, 2005, pp. S9104-5)

Sen. Reid may have been surprised, but GOA members and activists were not. It was a *tremendous victory* that was achieved through grassroots lobbying. GOA has frequently seen that the hard work its members exert in contacting elected representatives carries huge weight on Capitol Hill.

One can expect Sen. Feinstein to continue pressing to get her semi-auto ban reinstated. However, GOA will continue to monitor her efforts. Please stay tuned.

Gun Owners Foundation wins key Supreme Court battle

In April, GOF won a key victory when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a foreign conviction in a foreign court does not ban an American from owning a gun.

The decision in *Small v. United States* was a tremendous victory for GOF, since the foundation had made a substantial contribution to the legal defense work that helped secure the winning result.

Gary Small had been convicted under Japan’s draconian laws for illegally importing firearms and ammunition into the

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anti-gun country. Small was sentenced to three years in a Japanese prison, as a result.

This case is especially significant because, for years, Congress has prohibited the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives from restoring the rights of persons who have been unreasonably or illegitimately denied their rights.

The *Small* decision will protect gun owners like Gary Small from losing their rights due to convictions under oppressive laws found in other countries.

Readers of *The Gun Owners* will remember the story of Thomas Bean, who was deprived of his Second Amendment rights in this country because of what Mexican authorities did to him. Bean, a federally licensed firearms dealer, was convicted in the Mexican courts in 1998 for inadvertently having a box of ammunition in his pick up truck.

The *Small* decision will now protect gun owners such as

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What They're Saying About GOA

"The anti-gun provisions in S. 397 would probably be stripped out in the House if all the gun groups were working together with GOA."

— **Rep. Ron Paul (R-TX), Sept. 15, 2005**

"Actually, the organization that does a better job of [keeping me informed] is Gun Owners of America. I'm on their mailing list, and we know when something pops up and we're informed as to what's going on so we can write our emails and make phone calls to our respective representatives."

— **C-Span caller from Pensacola, Florida (October 20, 2005)**



Sen. David Vitter (R-LA)

"GOA is a very effective national grass-roots lobbying organization that can mobilize gun owners from all across America, uniting them into a single powerful voice that politicians in Washington dare not ignore."

— **Senator David Vitter, October 2005**

"Gun Owners of America is considered the most aggressive pro-gun lobbying organization."

— **Roll Call, a Capitol Hill newspaper covering Congress and politics**

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Bean and Small from losing their constitutional rights in this country because they violated one of the egregious laws found in another country.

GOA fights for key appointments

Thanks to your support, GOA has been involved in several other battles in 2005. GOA pushed hard for John Bolton's nomination as ambassador to the United Nations.

Without a doubt, Bolton is the most pro-gun ambassador to the United Nations that we have had in years. Yes, GOA supports the Ron Paul legislation (H.R. 1146) that would remove this country from the anti-gun U.N.

But until that happens, we want to have a pro-gun stalwart who will keep the United States from signing onto an anti-gun treaty.

GOA also spent a good part of the year fighting the battle to get good judges nominated to the courts and to make sure that Senators had all the ammunition they needed to defeat bad nominations.

GOA opposition to anti-gun Supreme Court pick pays off

One of the most troubling candidates, who spent most of the year on President Bush's "short list" of potential nominees, was Attorney General Alberto Gonzales. He is a good friend of the President's and has been considered a likely pick for the Supreme Court.

But Gonzales is also an avid supporter of gun control. So GOA issued several alerts to the grassroots and was able to inform Senators and their staffs of the abysmal gun record of Gonzales.

Lighting the fire in the grassroots paid off handsomely. GOA was happy to see the *Associated Press* report in October which stated that Gonzales was no longer a potential nominee to the court.

"Nominating Gonzales also would re-ignite the very opposition Bush is trying to dampen on the Republican right, which doesn't think Gonzales is a reliable conservative vote," the AP story said.

In addition to opposing bad nominees, GOA also lobbied for — and was pleased to see — the nomination of Judge Samuel Alito, Jr. to the Supreme Court.

Judge Alito, who has worked in the Third Circuit, has a strong record in support of the Constitution. Gun Owners Foundation was involved in the *Rybar* machine gun case in

In April, the Gun Owners Foundation won a key victory when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a foreign conviction in a foreign court does not ban an American from owning a gun.

1996 which we ultimately lost in the courts. But Judge Alito offered a strong dissenting opinion to the majority report and argued that Congress has no right to regulate the private possession of machine guns.

GOA hammers anti-gun legislation

Thanks to your support, GOA also marshaled its tremendous grassroots forces against legislation that would grant the FBI unlimited access to gun sales records, thus allowing the agency to compile a gun registry. As this issue of *The Gun Owners* goes to press, S. 1266 is still pending.

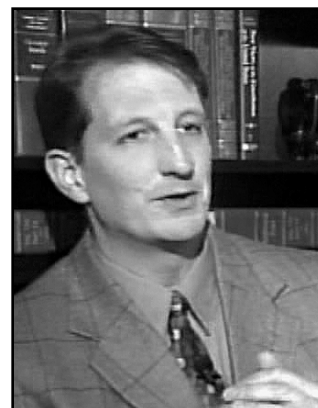
Another bill that GOA strongly opposed would impose extreme penalties for some who use guns in self-defense. H.R. 1279 came up rather quickly and passed the House. But GOA flew into action at that point and generated thousands of complaints, all directed to the U.S. Senate.

Thousands of postcards and letters poured into Senate

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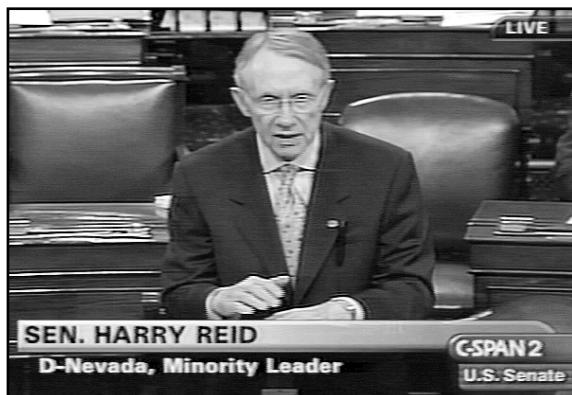
FOX Cable News. GOA Executive Director Larry Pratt (top right) debated the Brady Campaign in March over proposals to allow the FBI to unilaterally deny law-abiding gun owners their right to purchase firearms.



Coast-to-Coast. GOA Commu Pratt defends 50 caliber firearm broadcast in February. In all, G year appeared in hundreds of TV newspaper articles, editorials, and



GOA puts the heat on Sen. Frist. After saying it couldn't be done, Majority Leader Bill Frist listened to GOA members and moved to block Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) from offering an amendment to renew the semi-auto ban. At GOA's request, Sen. Frist used a parliamentary move known as "filling the tree" to block Sen. Feinstein, who wanted to attach her gun ban to the gun makers' liability bill this past summer. (See page 2 for a fuller explanation as to how this



Democrats Protest. On the floor of the Senate, Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) complained about the GOA-induced strategy Frist had employed: "I have nothing in my memory that [Sen. Frist] has ever done this before; that is, immediately going to a bill and *filling the tree so no other amendments can be offered*. I have never, ever known him to do this. It is so unusual. It is not in keeping with how he has done business here during his tenure as majority leader. While filling the tree is within the rules, it is done very rarely. And again, I am surprised that Senator Frist did this." (*Congressional Record*, July 27, 2005, pp. S9104-5)



Communications Director Erich Pratt during a TV-news conference. GOA representatives this week on TV and radio broadcasts, and web-related stories.



Meet the Press. GOA's Larry Pratt and former Congressman Bob Barr get ready to speak to the media during an October press conference. Pratt focused his remarks against legislation that would grant the FBI unheralded powers to access business records, thus forcing gun stores to surrender their gun records for building a national gun registry.



Concealed carry rights. GOA lobbyist John Velleco meets with pro-gun Rep. Steve King (R-IA), who is one of the cosponsors of H.R. 1243, a bill that would require every state to honor the concealed carry permits issued in other states.



Freedom to purchase handguns. GOA's Erich Pratt met with Rep. Rick Renzi (R-AZ) earlier this year. Renzi will soon be introducing legislation repealing the federal ban on the interstate sales of handguns, thus allowing private individuals to purchase handguns from out-of-state gun dealers.



Supreme victory. The Gun Owners Foundation won a major battle in April when the U.S. Supreme Court held that a conviction in a foreign court does not permanently bar an American from owning a gun. This decision was a major victory for gun owners — some of whom have found their right to keep and bear arms in this country eviscerated after being convicted under severely draconian firearms restrictions in foreign countries. GOF made a substantial contribution to the legal defense work that produced the successful outcome.



Free speech for gun owners. In February, GOA's Larry Pratt testified on Capitol Hill in support of legislation — introduced by Rep. Roscoe Bartlett (right) — that would exempt organizations like Gun Owners of America from the draconian restrictions on free speech that were signed into law by President Bush in 2002. Should H.R. 689 become law, GOA would no longer be restricted from using TV or radio to criticize public officials in the days leading up to an election.

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offices, putting legislators on notice that there were serious Second Amendment concerns in the bill.

GOA is pleased to report that H.R. 1279 has now stalled in the Senate.

Gun Owners plugs pro-gun legislation in the states

One of the most tremendous new laws this year was enacted in the Sunshine State. Florida strengthened its self-defense laws in two significant ways:

- Citizens are no longer required to retreat when assaulted outside of their home. Their first option can now be to use deadly force if their lives are threatened.
- In their homes, residents now have a stronger presumption of innocence if they shoot someone who has unlawfully and forcibly entered the home.



GOA pushed the Senate Majority Leader to use parliamentary rules that blocked Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) from offering a semi-auto gun ban amendment to the gun makers' protection bill this summer.

GOA hit the airwaves and plugged this law on radio talk shows all over the country. This is an important first step, because GOA plans to push similar legislation in other states next year.

In Arizona, a GOA member in the state senate introduced — and successfully pushed into law — a bill to allow students to take gun safety and handling classes.

Senator Karen Johnson (R) sponsored the legislation, which was originally drafted by gun author Alan Korwin, and successfully guided it to Governor Janet Napolitano's

desk. Gov. Napolitano (D) signed the bill in April.

GOA is now working to export this idea to other state legislatures. Already, Ohio state representative Ron Hood (R) is working with Gun Owners to bring this legislation to the Buck-

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HIT THE RIGHT TARGET! Give to Gun Owners Foundation

In many federal offices there are subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) pressures to give to the Combined Federal Campaign. Your boss may think his prestige depends upon getting everyone to kick in. The same thing happens in all too many corporations during the United Way fundraising drive.

You may have wanted to give but couldn't find a group that wasn't attacking your rights, let alone defending them, on the list of participating organizations. But that has all changed!

Federal employees now are able to designate **Gun Owners Foundation (GOF)** as the recipient of their gifts to the Combined Federal Campaign. Use **Agency Number 1054** for **Gun Owners Foundation** when you make your Combined Federal Campaign pledge or donation. Your gifts will go toward helping our legal assistance program protect the Second Amendment rights of Americans across the nation.

Also, if you work for a company that participates in the United Way, you too, may be able to designate that your gift be to **Gun Owners Foundation**. Many local United Way Campaigns allow **Gun Owners Foundation** to participate through their Donor Choice Programs. Some, however, do not. Check with your local United Way Agency. You will not only be helping people and protecting your rights, but you will also get a tax deduction.

Of course, anyone can always make a tax-deductible donation at any time to **Gun Owners Foundation** by sending the contribution directly to 8001 Forbes Place, Suite 102, Springfield, VA 22151.

One additional note. If you are employed by a corporation or organization which has a Matching Gift Program, please keep **GOF** in mind when making your donation. Thank you very much.



Congress Passes Gun Control Amidst Gun Industry Protect Act

Trigger Lock Requirement Added as Amendment

By John Velleco

(Washington, D.C.) - Legislation aimed at protecting the firearms industry from frivolous lawsuits brought by cities, municipalities, and radical anti-gun interest groups passed both the U.S. House and Senate this year.

Unfortunately, the bill was amended on the Senate floor in July by anti-gun Democrat Senator Herb Kohl (WI), who added language requiring licensed gun dealers to supply a trigger lock device with every handgun sold.

The Kohl amendment would effectively impose a "gun tax" on all handgun purchases.

Worse, the amendment leads gun owners to the verge of mandatory trigger lock usage, which would actually endanger lives by rendering self-defense firearms useless.

While the amendment does not require that gun owners use trigger locks at this point, it does provide immunity from lawsuits for those who use a trigger and have their gun stolen and misused. Gun owners who choose not to use a locking device are offered no such protection.

Congress has, in contradiction to its Constitutional authority, carved out a class of individuals for special protection. It is easy to see how trigger locks, like automobile seatbelts or motorcycle helmets, can quickly become compulsory.

Pro-gun Rep. Geoff Davis (R-KY) spoke out against the trigger lock amendment on the House floor.

"I regret the legislation we are voting



"The anti-gun provisions in S. 397 would probably be stripped out in the House if all the gun groups were working together with GOA."

— Rep. Ron Paul, Sept. 15, 2005

on today contains the [mandatory trigger lock] amendment. We need to protect the firearms industry ... [b]ut responsible gun owners should not have further limits placed on their second amendment rights," Davis told his colleagues.

A mandatory trigger lock law has long been part of the agenda of anti-gun zealots. Though masquerading as a modest step, the amendment will inevitably serve as a stepping-stone to more onerous legislation.

The Senate also passed an amendment that could give impetus to adopting a "penetration standard" for armor piercing bullets by commissioning a Justice Department study of the issue. If a "penetration standard" were adopted, a gun-adverse administration could probably use it to ban many common types of ammunition.

After the Senate passed its version of

the bill, which then contained gun control, the bill moved to the U.S. House, where the leadership was pressured by many within the pro-gun community to quickly adopt the Senate version of the bill instead of taking up its own bill, which contained no gun control.

Gun Owners of America was the only national pro-gun group urging passage of the clean House bill. After all, the House bill garnered over 250 cosponsors and would have passed the House easily if the leadership decided to bring up this bill rather than its Senate counterpart.

In that case, the bill would either have gone to a joint House-Senate conference, where the different bills would be reconciled, or back to the Senate, forcing that chamber either pass a clean bill or explain to voters their refusal to protect the beleaguered gun industry.

But instead of fighting for a clean bill, the House leadership (after pro-gun Majority Leader Tom DeLay stepped down from his position) decided to take the 'easy' road and adopt the Senate gun control-laden bill.

While it has long been imperative that the Congress pass legislation to protect the firearms industry from being bankrupted by politically motivated lawsuits, this bill should never have been used as a vehicle for a misguided gun control proposal.

Rep. Ron Paul (R-TX) echoed a frustration of many congressmen, stating that, "the anti-gun provisions in S. 397 would probably be stripped out in the House if all the gun groups were working together with GOA." ■

THE
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Brazilians Say No to Gun Ban

by Larry Pratt

Brazilians voted on October 23, 2005 against a government-endorsed gun ban. It was not even close; the final vote was about two to one against the ban.

At one time, with the media and the government all pushing for the ban, the referendum

had 80 percent of the voters in favor of it. But in the end, defeat for the gun banners was everywhere — in all 26 of Brazil's states plus its federal district of Brasilia.

The proposal would have banned all gun and ammo sales except to security firms, sport clubs, and of course, the government.

Then a law requiring free air time for both sides of a referendum kicked in and the 80 percent support in the polls became 34 percent of the voters on election day. This swing occurred during a mere thirty days prior to the election.

A political scientist, David Fleischer of the University of Brasilia, commented on the opposition campaign: "They ask the question: 'Do you feel protected and do you think the government is protecting you?' and the answer is a violent no."

The anti-ban campaign used images of Tianamen Square and the Berlin Wall to link owning a gun with freedom. One unhappy wannabe banner, a carpetbagger from California, Jessica Galeria, had this complaint: "Now, a lot of Brazilians are insisting on their right to bear arms. They don't even have a pseudo right to bear arms. It's not in their Constitution."

Notice what Ms. Galeria is saying about our own Sec-

ond Amendment right to keep and bear arms. By calling it a "pseudo right," she believes that the amendment does not apply to individuals. And to the extent that folks like her concede there is some sort of right that is being protected, they believe it is one established by the Constitution (read: the government) which means that it could be withdrawn by government.

A Brazilian proponent of the ban, Denis Mizne, of the anti-self defense group, Sou da Paz, was more honest about what happened. "We didn't lose because Brazilians like guns. We lost because people don't have confidence in the government or the police." This distrust was all the more intense because the socialist President of Brazil, Luiz Inancio Lula, is up to his eyeballs in scandal. Interesting, no? Corrupt, socialist politicians such as Chicago Mayor Richard Daley and New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin in the United States are some of our most vocal proponents of domestic disarmament.

It turns out that some two thirds of the folks in Brazil understand why the U.S. has a Second Amendment — the American colonists did not "have confidence in the government or the police." Seems like the average guy in Brazil has a lot more on the ball than most of the U.S. Congress and nearly all of the politically correct types of academe.

One development in Brazil points to an important similarity with the United States. President Lula marshaled many of the stars of the entertainment industry on behalf of disarming the people. Looks like these stars better not give up their day jobs. Hopefully their U.S. counterparts will learn from the experience of Brazil.

Moral of the story? Buy a gun. Enrage a corrupt, socialist politician who rightfully does not trust the people with guns. ■

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eye State.

GOA is working for you

For 30 years, GOA has been your "no compromise" voice in Washington, DC. And your activism makes a difference, for without it our rights would be in greater jeopardy.

GOA plans to keep delivering the same no-compromise message to the Congress and across the nation.

But we need your help to stay here in Washington, DC on the front lines.

Because of your support, GOA staff appeared on hundreds of media outlets this year, and in 2006, we will continue to educate the public in hopes of changing hearts and minds.

Because of your support, our website has provided helpful information — not just for activists who want to lobby their congressmen, but for students and interested readers who have been indoctrinated to the anti-gun view.

With your support, GOA will remain committed to fighting for the hearts and minds of the next generation.

We saw many good things happen in 2005. And with your help, we will continue to push for the Hostettler concealed carry bill, the Bartlett self-

defense bill, and some surprises that we will tell you about next year. We know that you're going to be excited about some of the new legislation that has been offered in the Congress, and you'll be hearing about here first from Gun Owners of America.

Finally, next year's elections will be very important. You can count on Gun Owners of America to provide you with a Congressional scorecard before the election so that you can hold your legislators accountable.

Thanks to you, GOA will continue to be here in Washington, D.C., fighting for your right to keep and bear arms in 2006. ■