GOA Members Defended 2A Rights in 2022

By Aidan Johnston

Thanks to the activism and support of GOA members this past year, gun owners have stronger representation in our nation’s capital.

With more pro-gun Senators and Representatives headed to the 118th Congress, GOA is ready to fight to restore our Second Amendment rights which have been so grossly infringed over the past two years.

Because of the generous support of our members, Gun Owners of America was able to spend over $2 million to support over 60 candidates in the November federal elections.

The list of GOA-backed candidates who won includes Second Amendment leaders like Senators Mike Lee of

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Abolish the ATF

By Erich Pratt

Who would think that these three words — Abolish the ATF — would generate such a firestorm! GOA is coming under fire from the anti-gun Left because that’s precisely what we want to do.

In June, Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL) openly mocked GOA during a congressional hearing because we favor defunding the ATF.

This was followed by a hit piece in the left-leaning The Guardian newspaper. The author stated that “Gun Owners of America [is] a group so extreme that it calls for abolishing the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.”

“Extreme?” Well, let’s look at what is really extreme:

• Extreme is the ATF admitting to breaking federal law to compile 1 BILLION records on gun owners.
• Extreme is the ATF bypassing Congress to create its own gun laws.
• Extreme is the ATF decreeing arbitrary rules that turn innocent gun owners into felons overnight.

Let’s also not forget the countless horror stories of the ATF harassing and intimidating honest gun owners for merely exercising their constitutionally protected rights.

In July, the ATF showed up at a gun owner’s home in Delaware demanding information on his firearms, apparently without a warrant.¹

That same month, an Arizona gun dealer caught an ATF agent on tape photocopying gun buyers’ records.²

We also know the ATF has been going to gun owners’ doors to confiscate certain triggers after the agency whimsically determined these items to be machine guns.³

And after December, the agency will potentially begin confiscating millions of pistol-braced firearms that are not registered as NFA items or destroyed.

These efforts at confiscation are just the tip of the iceberg. Gun Owners of America uncovered a “secret internal guidance” that directed ATF to confiscate solvent traps as “unregistered silencers.”⁴

So what once was legal has now been unilaterally determined to be illegal by a bunch of anti-gun bureaucrats.

Not only that, the ATF has increased its rate for revoking gun dealers’ licenses by 200 percent.⁵

Of course, how could we ever forget

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Utah and Rand Paul of Kentucky, as well as Senators-elect Eric Schmitt of Missouri and Ted Budd of North Carolina — who even owns his own gun store!

These newly-elected, pro-gun legislators are badly needed. After all, anti-gunners in Congress have mounted one of the greatest campaigns against the Second Amendment in decades.

But while the House of Representatives was able to pass nearly any gun control provision they desired with an anti-gun majority, gun owners pushed back and stopped most of the worst gun controls from passing the U.S. Senate and from being signed into law.

Democrat leader Rep. Jim McGovern slammed GOA on the House floor, citing the work of GOA members in pressuring legislators to vote against gun control.

McGovern cried: “House Republican leaders told their members to vote against eight gun safety bills citing opposition from the NRA and Gun Owners of America.”

Similarly, Democrat Rep. Sylvia Garcia was asked by MSNBC why Republicans usually end up failing to get enough votes on gun control compromises. She attributed a lack of gun control compromises to “Gun Owners of America” because GOA has instilled a “fear of retaliation” (her own words) in Senators who even consider shredding the Second Amendment.

In total, GOA sent over 50 national calls-to-action in this year. And GOA members responded!

In just one gun control battle this year, GOA generated more than 100,000 letters, emails, and phone calls to the Senate. We couldn’t do the work we do without the support of loyal GOA members and activists.

Indeed, 78% of Republicans who lost their primaries this year were incumbents who had voted for “red flag” gun confiscation orders in the annual National Defense Authorization Act. It was exciting to see GOA members and constitutionalists holding the Republican compromisers accountable. And thankfully, we were able to work with pro-gun legislators to get the red flag language stricken from the bill.

But certainly, this was a difficult year for national gun rights:

- President Biden banned DIY gun kits by executive fiat;
- Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) compromised our rights away to pass the biggest gun control bill in decades; and,
- The Violence Against Women Act was reauthorized with unrelated gun controls included.

In addition to all this, GOA discovered ATF has been turning Forms 4473 into permanent searchable, gun registration forms. And now federal law includes funding for state “red flag” gun confiscation laws, a mandatory delay period for 18-20 year old gun owners, and an expanded misdemeanor prohibited person category.

Despite all the gun control that passed while anti-gun Democrats controlled the levers of power in Washington, gun owners were successful in stopping the worst gun control.

**GOA Testifies in Congress**

During the battle against the so-called “Assault Weapons” Ban, GOA’s Antonia Okafor was invited to testify before the House Oversight Committee as an expert witness.

Of course, Antonia strongly defended “the rights of millions of American gun owners to own and maintain AR-15s for self-defense.”

In response, a Democrat on the committee attacked Antonia and GOA for “scandalously” posting “Defund the ATF” on social media.

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what happened during the Waco massacre where more than 80 Branch Davidian members DIED following ATF and FBI raids?

The ATF simply cannot be “reformed.”
The ATF cannot just be “held accountable.”
GOA stands by its mission 100%. The ATF’s days of waging war on gun owners’ God-given rights must come to an end.

Here’s our plan to make it happen:
1) Eliminate the NFA and all firearm registration associated with it.
2) Eliminate the ATF’s unconstitutional gun and gun owners database.
3) Get rid of the Gun Control Act’s unconstitutional regulations.
4) Overturning all previously instituted unconstitutional rules.
5) Eliminate the federal government’s role in unconstitutionally regulating the firearm industry.

And while the ATF must certainly be defunded, ending their stream of taxpayer funds is not enough to completely end its power over your God-given rights.

The ONLY acceptable path forward is for the ATF to be ABOLISHED.

At a fundamental level, the ATF simply should not exist. Its very purpose is to infringe upon the constitutionally protected right of Americans to keep and bear arms.

And as we’ve witnessed over the years, not only does the ATF regulate your right to defend oneself, but it does so in abusive, tyrannical, and, sometimes even, deadly ways.

In 2023, GOA will use every tool at our disposal to dismantle the ATF. That includes, but is not limited to:

- Legislative means by overturning unconstitutional laws like the “Gun Control Act.”
- Taking the ATF to court over its abuses of power like GOA is currently doing in our lawsuit over their new ghost gun and registry rules.
- Working with the true pro-gun allies in Congress who will strip the ATF of its powers, defund it and ultimately abolish it.

But to carry out our mission to abolish the ATF, GOA will need the sustained support from all of our members.

Thank you for standing with GOA.

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5 Barton, Champ. “New data shows ATF gun store revocations at highest rate in 16 years.” USA Today, 5 October 2022.
Four States Enact GOA-backed Constitutional Carry in 2022

What a year this was for Constitutional Carry! The four states in red adopted permitless carry this year, while the blue states enacted their laws in years past with the help of GOA members. The two yellow states were the first two Constitutional Carry states in the Union.

As a Good News flashback: Politico reported this year that the biggest state to adopt Constitutional Carry, Texas, only did so last year after a massive outpouring of support by GOA activists. Politico documents how grassroots pressure turned Governor Greg Abbott away from pursuing gun control as a response to several mass killings, to instead supporting and signing permitless carry.

GOA fighting to Enact 2A Sanctuaries

Gun Owners of America is dedicated to protecting and restoring the Second Amendment on every level. Our work with states and passing GOA-backed Second Amendment Protection Acts (SAPAs) across the country is unprecedented. Mark Jones, GOA’s Wyoming State Director, is at the podium and is joined by many Wyoming Senators, Representatives, and law enforcement officials who supported Wyoming’s SAPA. This GOA-backed legislation passed in March 2022 and provides the nation’s strongest criminal penalty for state or local officials who enforce federal gun control. GOA is also working in several other states to pass SAPA laws and push back against federal infringements.

Goa’s Dick Heller and Stephen Willeford on Capitol Hill

Stephen Willeford, better known as the “Barefoot Defender” for ending a mass shooting in Sutherland Springs, Texas in 2017, joined the GOA staff this year. He is a true testament to the fact that the only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun, is a good guy with a gun. Stephen’s first-hand experience is an asset to the GOA team and you can see him here addressing current congressional members against gun control and further infringements on the Second Amendment. He is joined by Dick Heller, Gun Owners Foundation’s Senior Policy Advisor (on the right).

GOA Works Hand-in-Hand with the 2A Industry

We work hard at GOA, but a weekend at the range is always a nice treat — especially when we get to hang out with our members and partners in the gun industry. Here, the GOA team joined Rifle Dynamics at their annual GOA “Red Oktober” fundraiser in Las Vegas. From Left to Right: GOA Pacific Region Director Monte Bowen, a civilian who won GOA’s gun giveaway, GOA Federal lobbyist Ben Sanderson, GOA Industry Relations Specialist Shelby Wilson and GOA Director of Communications Felisha Bull.

GOA’s Strategic Partnership Program is a groundbreaking coalition of industry partners who share our “No Compromise” mission. We help involve the Second Amendment industry in the actual fight for our gun rights. Their lives and livelihoods depend on our right to keep and bear arms and with GOA’s help, the 2A industry is more involved than they’ve ever been.
GOA Battles Back Against ATF Regulations

Monte Bowen, GOA’s Pacific Regional Director, is sporting a soon-to-be-banned firearm according to the Biden Administration and the ATF’s unconstitutional executive orders regarding pistol braces. GOA is actively suing the federal government to prevent this rule from becoming law. Seventeen state Attorneys General have signed onto GOA’s case, and we will keep fighting to block every attempt to infringe on our Second Amendment rights.

Victory in GOA’s Philly lawsuit!

After a runaway anti-gun mayor attempted to prohibit citizens from lawful carry at Philadelphia parks and recreational facilities, GOA quickly filed a lawsuit. We won a permanent injunction against the city and the mayor and helped law-abiding citizens continue to be able to carry their firearms for self-defense. Pictured here is Pennsylvania State Director Dr. Val Finnell, speaking at the state capital.

GOA Clamoring for Constitutional Carry

Luis Valdes, GOA’s FL State Director, attended many Constitutional Carry events in Florida this year. He succeeded in making Constitutional Carry a priority of the Florida Republican Party and helped pass resolutions in favor of supporting the restoration of Second Amendment rights. Luis frequently wears an empty holster to protest the ban on open carry in the state and his work is helping to bring Florida up to par with other Liberty-loving states.

Helping Elect Pro-gun Legislators

GOA supported more than 60 pro-gun House and Senate candidates in November’s election. Pictured here: GOA’s Erich Pratt meets with pro-gun Senator-elect Ted Budd (R-NC), and GOA’s Jordan Stein and Megan Browning door knock for Budd on the streets of North Carolina.
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But Antonia didn’t back down one bit.

At GOA, we don’t believe the federal government should spend another taxpayer dollar infringing on the rights of law-abiding citizens.

No more David Chipmans or Steve Dettelbachs as Director of the ATF. No more enforcing unconstitutional gun laws. No ATF at all.

And that’s why we’ve worked to introduce bold new legislation this Congress to eliminate infringements and restore the Second Amendment.

When Congress passed the Cornyn-Murphy gun control compromise in June, GOA allies in Congress stood beside dozens of House Republicans to introduce a total Cornyn-Murphy repeal.

And while the Biden Administration plotted to weaponize the National Firearms Act (NFA) to ban millions of pistols, GOA plotted the demise of the NFA’s infringements — working with Senator Roger Marshall (R-KS) to introduce a repeal of the regulations on Short Barreled Rifles, Short Barreled Shotguns, and Any Other Weapons.

But we don’t only react to attacks from the anti-gun crowd. GOA is the only No Compromise watchdog in Washington, and it’s our duty to discover what the Swamp and Fake News Media aren’t telling you.

GOA Combats the Anti-gun FBI

That’s why when GOA discovered the FBI had illegally created a form to allow Americans to sign their gun rights away, we fought back.

GOA demanded the FBI remove those names from the background check system — which is their statutory duty — and when the FBI ignored us, we worked with Congresswomen Marjorie Taylor Greene and 14 other Members of Congress to back us up.

Then, when Gun Owners of America and our Congressional allies discovered that the ATF had collected nearly a billion gun and gun owner records, we dug deeper with a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request and a lawsuit to the ATF.

In our research, compiled in a 30-page report, we found that these records are kept illegally in a digital, searchable, and centralized registry!

So what did GOA do? We sounded the alarm and worked with Rep. Michael Cloud of Texas to introduce legislation to delete this digital registry and certify its destruction before the American people.

Whatever the infringement, GOA is proud to fight against it.

GOA Fighting the White House

GOA’s lobbying efforts aren’t restricted to Congress.

GOA led the efforts against Biden’s anti-gun U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service when it proposed a lead ammo ban on certain federal lands for hunters and recreational shooters — a ban that could be a precursor to similar and more widespread bans across the country.

And GOA also produced the most thorough response to the ATF’s unconstitutional proposed ban on millions of braced pistol firearms.

We have yet to see how the ATF will respond to GOA’s comments in their final rule on pistols, but our track record on ATF proposed rules has been strong so far this year!

When the Biden Administration announced its unconstitutional ban on DIY firearm kits and gun registry expansion rule, it was GOA attorneys who led the No Compromise fight during the public comment period.

The initial rule was so full of flaws, that GOA’s legal team ripped it to shreds, resulting in several key victories.

During the rulemaking process, ATF edited the final rule so that:

✔ You will not have to serialize (read: register) every new magazine, barrel, or trigger that you use to upgrade your existing firearm

✔ You will not have to register a firearm simply because you Cerakote or color your firearm

✔ And you will have greater protection when having a gun dealer check out or modify your privately made firearm — as now, the requirement to serialize a homemade firearm has been limited to only apply when a dealer takes that gun into his inventory overnight.

And when ATF did publish their final rule, we slapped those anti-gun bureaucrats with a 168-page lawsuit.

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GOA Litigation & Briefs in 2022

(This represents just a partial listing of GOA’s case work.)

Victories

- Stickley v. Winchester, where GOA forced a repeal of various gun free zones in Winchester, Virginia.
- GOA v. Philadelphia (I), where GOA convinced a judge to force the timely issuance of carry permits.
- GOA v. Philadelphia (II), where GOA challenged an executive order banning guns in parks.
- Antonsuk v. Hochul, where a federal judge sided with GOA and against New York, forcing the state to obey the Second Amendment with respect to concealed carry.
- GOA v. McFadden, where anti-gun sheriffs in North Carolina are now prohibited from infringing on the right to purchase handguns and delaying concealed carry permitting.
- Elhert v. Settle, where GOA won an injunction prohibiting Virginia from enforcing the state’s Universal Background Check law against 18-20-year-olds.
- And GOA won a huge battle in Oregon, where we opposed a legal challenge to a County’s Second Amendment Sanctuary Ordinance that was brought by Everytown and Bloomberg’s big money lawyers!

In Process

- Roberts v. U.S. Department of Justice, to force the FBI to allow Michigan concealed carry holders to be exempt from background checks in accordance with federal law. So far, GOA won a partial victory since we got the trial court decision reversed and remanded.
- Morehouse Enterprises v. ATF, to strike down Biden’s unlawful ban on DIY firearm kits and gun registry expansion.
- GOA v. Philadelphia (III), challenging the City’s ban on homemade firearms.
- USA v. Missouri, an amicus brief defending Missouri’s Second Amendment Sanctuary law.
- Duncan v. Bonta, where GOA submitted several amicus briefs to fight California’s magazine ban.
- Cargill v. Garland, two amicus briefs opposing a bump stock ban, which is similar in nature to GOA’s legal challenge in GOA v. Garland.
- Jewel v. NSA, an amicus brief to oppose warrantless surveillance.
- Yukutake v. Hawaii, where GOA filed two amicus briefs challenging Hawaii’s gun registration and permit law.
- Torcivia v. Suffolk County, where GOA filed an amicus brief challenging New York’s warrantless seizure of firearms.
- Rhode v. Bonta, where GOA filed an amicus brief challenging California’s ammunition background check.
- Plus, GOA filed nearly a dozen Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests against the ATF, FBI, DOJ, DHS, Department of State, and Secret Service to protect gun rights. These FOIA’s included: the secret monitoring of gun purchases, “voluntary” abandonment of gun rights, Biden’s ban on Russian ammo, and ATF’s secret database containing one billion records of gun sales.

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GOA Fighting in the Courts

Gun Owners of America didn’t only fight and win in Washington, D.C., this year. We sued the ATF in federal court — as well as several states in their respective state courts — and took New York State to “the cleaners.”

The most significant legal victory for gun owners in 2022 stemmed from a GOA brief before the Supreme Court.

GOA encouraged SCOTUS to adopt the correct conclusion with our Amicus Curiae brief in NYSBPA v. Bruen — a conclusion that the Court ultimately adopted. Namely, there is a right to bear arms for self-defense and the “text, history, and tradition” test is the proper one for striking down gun control.

Indeed, GOA has led the fight for this No Compromise interpretive method since before D.C. v. Heller, and we were proud to see the Supreme Court follow suit.

While the ruling that the Second Amendment protects the right to carry a firearm for self-defense was a critical victory for gun owners, the importance of the High Court overruling strict and intermediate scrutiny — and implementing a No Compromise test — cannot be overstated.

And while GOA sometimes files “friend of the court” briefs in cases like Bruen, we also spearhead numerous legal battles in the courts to restore gun owners’ rights.

For example, when our challenge to the unconstitutional bump stock ban came before the Supreme Court, 22 state Attorneys General filed a brief in support of GOA’s lawsuit.

And more than 17 state Attorneys General joined our case against the Biden Administrations “Ghost Gun” and Gun Registry rule as plaintiffs.

Our attorneys also stand ready to file suit as soon as the Biden Administration launches its ban on up to 40,000,000 lawfully-owned, pistol-braced firearms.

GOA will defend our Second Amendment rights at any cost, especially in the courts.

In 2023, we pledge to continue leading the pro-gun movement with our impeccable legal work and hope to bring you even more legal victories.

But while long drawn-out lawsuits are an expensive way to defend our constitutionally-protected rights, we know it is more important than ever before that GOA take the fight to the courts.

We are very grateful for the generous donations of all GOA members which are helping to keep us in the fight.

GOA wouldn’t be here if it weren’t for our faithful members. Because of our activists, we’re bigger and stronger than ever … ready to take the fight to Washington D.C. in 2023 … and prepared to continue our strong defense of the Second Amendment. ■
The IRS is the Only Assault Weapon We Should Ban

By John Velleco

Joe Biden is hiring approximately 87,000 new IRS agents, with a job description that originally said, in addition to being ok with using weapons, that they “must be willing to use deadly force.” At the same time, as part of his ongoing war on law-abiding gun owners, Joe Biden is pledging “to ban assault weapons in this country.”

How convenient. That way he could take your AR-15 away, and hand it to the IRS agent coming to chat with you about your latest tax return.

This is at least the second time Joe Biden has been part of weaponizing the IRS against us, the citizens of the United States. Back when Joe Biden was VP, the Obama Administration of which he was the second-in-command launched a deep-state attack on conservative groups. During that assault, Lois Lerner — embedded deep within the IRS — spent years using red tape to muzzle voices speaking out in opposition to the Obama-Biden agenda, part of an effort that included using search terms like “tea party” to choose nonprofits to target.

But that wasn’t enough for lifetime-politician Joe Biden. Today he’s going much farther than Obama by hiring 87,000 Lois Lerners in a move that more than doubles the current number of IRS agents, equipping too many of them with weapons, and sending them out to say “hi.” Despite an IRS acknowledgement that the language “was mistakenly taken down,” the original job listing stipulated that new IRS special agents should be “willing and able to participate in arrests, execution of search warrants, and other dangerous assignments,” as well as carry “a firearm and be willing to use deadly force, if necessary.”

Guns for me (and my agents) but not for thee, the President says. At the end of June, Joe Biden signed the first major gun control bill in 30 years. Moreover, by his own admission, “I promise you, we’re not stopping there.” I’m determined to ban assault weapons in this country. I did it once before and we will do it again.” Earlier this year, Joe Biden’s ATF green-lit a rule cracking down on homemade firearms, a practice that dates back to before the founding of the Republic.

Granted, at Gun Owners of America, we’re not taking this assault lying down. We’ve been busy, and in many ways successful, in defending the American people against these attacks on our rights. We’ve gone up against Joe Biden’s ATF and helped fight off the worst of his attacks on homemade guns. We’ve fought against Joe Biden’s Fish and Wildlife Service’s ammo ban on federal lands. And we’ve opposed Joe Biden’s fellow Democrats in Congress who want to impose a towering 1,000% federal tax on semi-automatic rifles, pistols, and shotguns.

Now we’re raising the roof on Joe Biden’s plan to add 87,000 IRS agents, arming too many of them with the firearms he doesn’t want you to own. Here’s an idea: If Joe Biden really wants to ban guns, why doesn’t he start with disarming the tax collectors at the IRS?

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10 Jones, Mark. “Gun Owners of America Opposes the Biden Administration’s Attempt to Ban Lead Ammunition on Federal Lands.” GOA.