

Testimony before the House Judiciary Committee on July 15, 1998 on House Bill 1484  
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Director of the Free the People Committee, Loganville, PA

The Bill of Rights was drafted in 1789 and ratified by the individual states two years later. Its separate amendments were intended exactly as they were written, with no exceptions, stipulations, conditions or arguments. The Second Amendment states ". . .the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." It came as the result of previous oppressive government behavior and couldn't have been written any plainer.

In his most famous address, Patrick Henry stated, ". . .a well regulated militia, composed of gentlemen and freemen, is the natural strength and only security of a free government." This principle of freedom was true then and it is still true today. We as Americans owe our liberty and freedom to the brave and determined colonists and "minutemen" who armed themselves with their own guns and risked their lives to fight the tyranny of King George III. The American Republic would not exist today had it not been for a conviction among the early patriots that they had a right to keep and bear arms. In 1982 the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee released a report on the Second Amendment stating, "Together with freedom of the press, the right to keep and bear arms became one of the individual rights most prized by the colonists."

The U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights were established as a result of tyrannical usurpations by Britain. The Founding Fathers wanted to guarantee that future governmental officials would not repeat the despotic actions of the past. Founding Father Richard Henry Lee said, "To preserve liberty, it is essential that the whole body of the people always possess arms, and be taught alike, especially when young, how to use them." Samuel Adams added, "The said Constitution shall never be construed to authorize Congress to prevent the people of the United States who are peaceable citizens from keeping their arms."

Also, let there be absolutely no confusion regarding the reference in the Second Amendment to a "well regulated militia." Militia was defined by the Founding Fathers as *every able-bodied male*, and had nothing whatsoever to do with an army or a national guard.

The same 1982 U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee report referred to previously concluded, "The conclusion is thus inescapable that the history, concept, and the wording of the Second Amendment . . ., as well as its interpretation by every major commentator and court in the first half-century after its ratification, indicates that what is protected is an individual right of a private citizen to own and carry firearms in a peaceful manner."

In my opinion House Bill 1484 will further the restraints upon law abiding citizens to keep and bear arms. In fact, according to section 6185 on Enforcement, subsection (b) Seizure of noncompliant handguns, broad powers are granted to police officers to confiscate firearms *beyond* constitutional restraints. In short, I believe that this bill is nothing more than a gun confiscatory act in violation of "we the peoples" rights. Instead of "Trigger-Lock" perhaps a

better title for this bill could be the "Lock-Down" Bill. Whenever the authorities of a prison want to control their population they institute "Lock-down." This bill is designed to further control the masses by restricting the ready use of their firearms, even for the purpose of self-defense, even within their own homes. Being forced by government mandate to use such devices reduces the right of self-protection in an emergency to the equivalent of having no gun at all.

Our Founding Fathers knew well, a government that does not trust its honest, law-abiding citizens with the means of self-defense is not itself to be trusted.

Some legislators in their attempts to convince Americans they will be safer with more gun control are virtually advocating the disarming of a nation without a thought given to who'll take responsibility for rampant crime and carnage, and especially government oppression, when private citizens no longer have the ability or means to protect themselves. And yet, the benefits afforded by guns in saving lives, preventing injuries and protecting private property exceed the negative statistics on firearms by at least 25 to one. The attached graph illustrates that a gun is the safest and most effective tool which can be used in self-defense. Here we find that using a gun against a would-be attacker results in a safe resolution 83 percent of the time. Gun controls such as HB1484 helps the state grow stronger at the expense of individual rights as the government itself creeps toward authoritarian rule.

In addition, the Knee-Jerk reaction of "*protect the children*" by the media, anti-gun lobby groups and government officials bent on promoting a socialistic agenda seriously ignore the facts that children are far more likely to suffer accidental death by traffic accident, drowning, burning, or suffocating than by gunshot. The attached graph is illustrative of the real facts. If guns are to be outlawed because of 236 accidental deaths a year, so should bicycles (400 child deaths a year), automobiles (3,260 children annually) and swimming pools and bathtubs (350 deaths per year). 432 children die each year by accidental fires caused by adults falling asleep while smoking. Probably no other cause of childhood death has fallen more sharply than death by accidental shooting. See attached charts from the Second Amendment Project at the Independence Institute in Golden, Colorado. In light of such statistics, voting for bills such as 1484 on the guise of "protecting the children" certainly reveals a glaring hypocrisy on the part of legislators. And, in addition, raises suspicions about a possible sinister agenda of a continued push for total disarmament and subjection of the people.

Washington, D.C. enacted stringent gun control laws in 1976. The homicide rate then was 26.9. It then tripled to 80.6 by 1991 *despite or due* to the law.

Some 130,000,000 documented cold blooded murders have been committed by totalitarian governments during the 20th century. Most of this butcherous slaughter was carried out by those nation's police or armies. These millions of defenseless victims had just two things in common: their governments had unchecked and unrestricted power, and they had no means of defense but garden tools, household utensils or rocks. They were subject to indiscriminate robberies and rapes, tortures, killings and involuntary servitude. Destruction and loss of life due to crime and accidental shooting is miniscule as compared to the enormity of

government-sponsored murders and genocide throughout the world. Millions of lives could have been saved if their right to bear arms had been diligently protected. Because of a well armed citizenry, a dictatorship has not happened in America.

Anti-gun fools are more threatening and dangerous to our liberty than criminals and foreign spies. Cowards and gun-haters don't deserve to live in America. The Soviet Union would be a better place for them to take up residence.

As the New World Order marches through country after country implementing bureaucratic regulatory controls, rapidly seizing private property rights and granting government doled privileges, and governmental socialists hope for a smooth transition into a perceived utopia, there is only one thing that will keep America free: Gun-toting, red-blooded American citizens.

Noah Webster wrote, "Before a standing army can rule, the people must be disarmed; as they are in almost every kingdom in Europe. The supreme power in America cannot enforce unjust laws by the sword; because the whole body of the people are armed." This is why Federal and State legislatures are trying incrementally to do away with gun ownership. I believe that is exactly what HB1484 is actually designed to do.

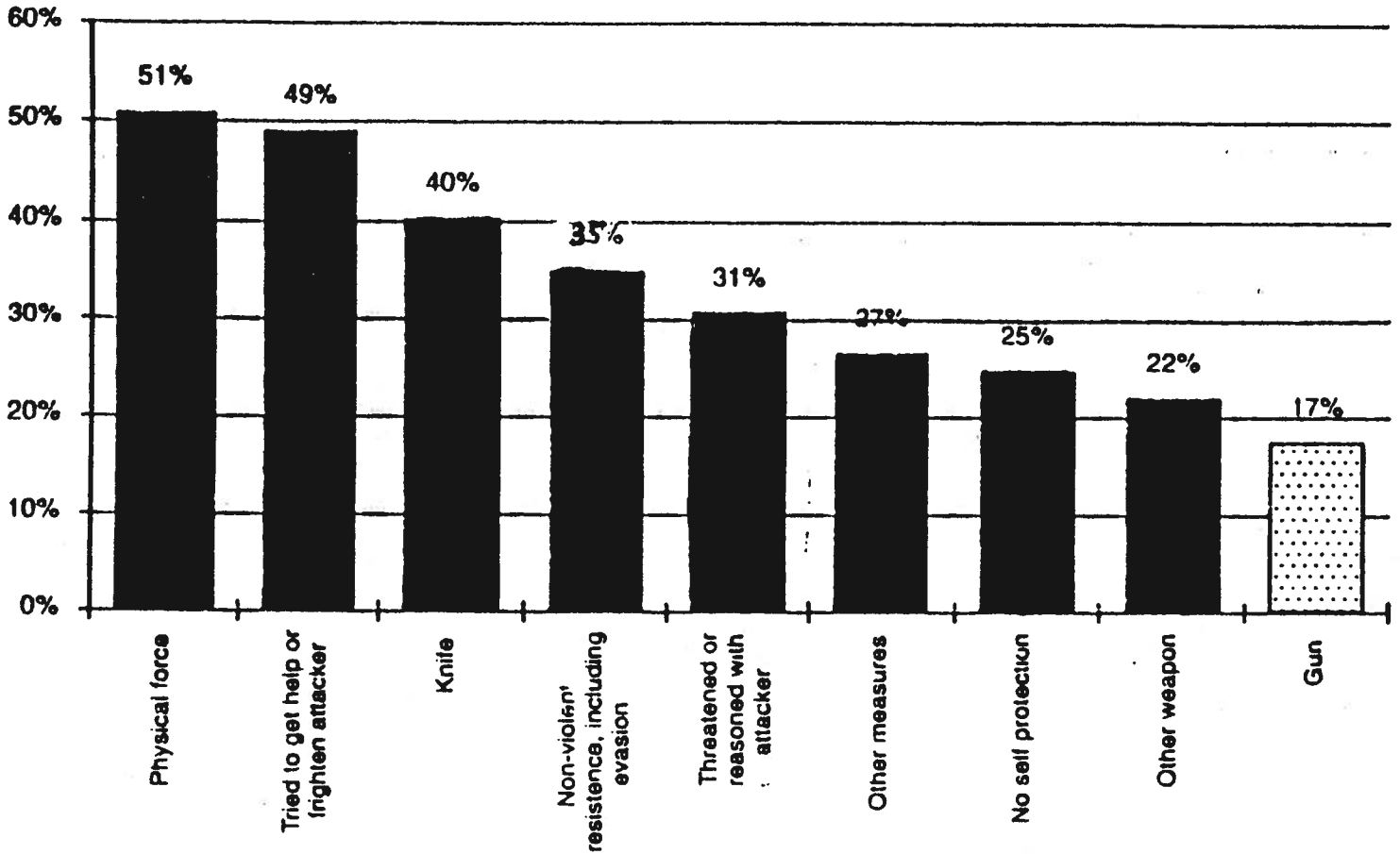
Why is it that our legislators are afraid to trust the people with arms? Could it be that representatives *know* that they have "betrayed" their constituents, and intend to further do so. Our Founders did not preserve the right to bear arms just for deer-hunting, trapshooting, beer drinking and story telling. Having the firepower capable of resisting government tyranny and oppression was their supreme intention.

If it had not been for the clarion call resounding from Colonial pulpits in the 1740's, 1750's, and the 1760's to inform the masses, America would never have become "One Nation Under God." Those preachers sounded the call to resist the coming tyranny of a government gone mad, intoxicated with its own self-imposed power. I sense in my being today the same spirit that resided in my predecessor preacher brethren of days gone by. I, too, as a community leader and one who has influence upon the people will do my best to walk in the foot steps of those gone on before me. If bills such as HB1484 designed to leave only minute vestiges of our God given liberties continue to flow to and through the legislature, a day of reckoning is inevitable. Hopefully a modern day Patrick Henry would arise before the Armed American people are turned into a mass of helpless pathetic "disarmed sheeple" with no means or will to resist.

I am vehemently opposed to HB1484. At the very least, bills which are brought into Pennsylvania from an outside source, as this one, should be suspect. And, at the worst, it should reveal an ulterior agenda of total subjection of "we the people." Elected representatives of the people should think twice before placing their names and influence for support on such proposed legislation. Those who have done so are: ROONEY, CARN, HENNESSEY, MICHLOVIC, THOMAS, ITKIN, CURRY, YOUNGBLOOD, JAMES, JOSEPH, TRELLO, CORPORA, CLYMER, RAMOS, AND C. WILLIAMS.

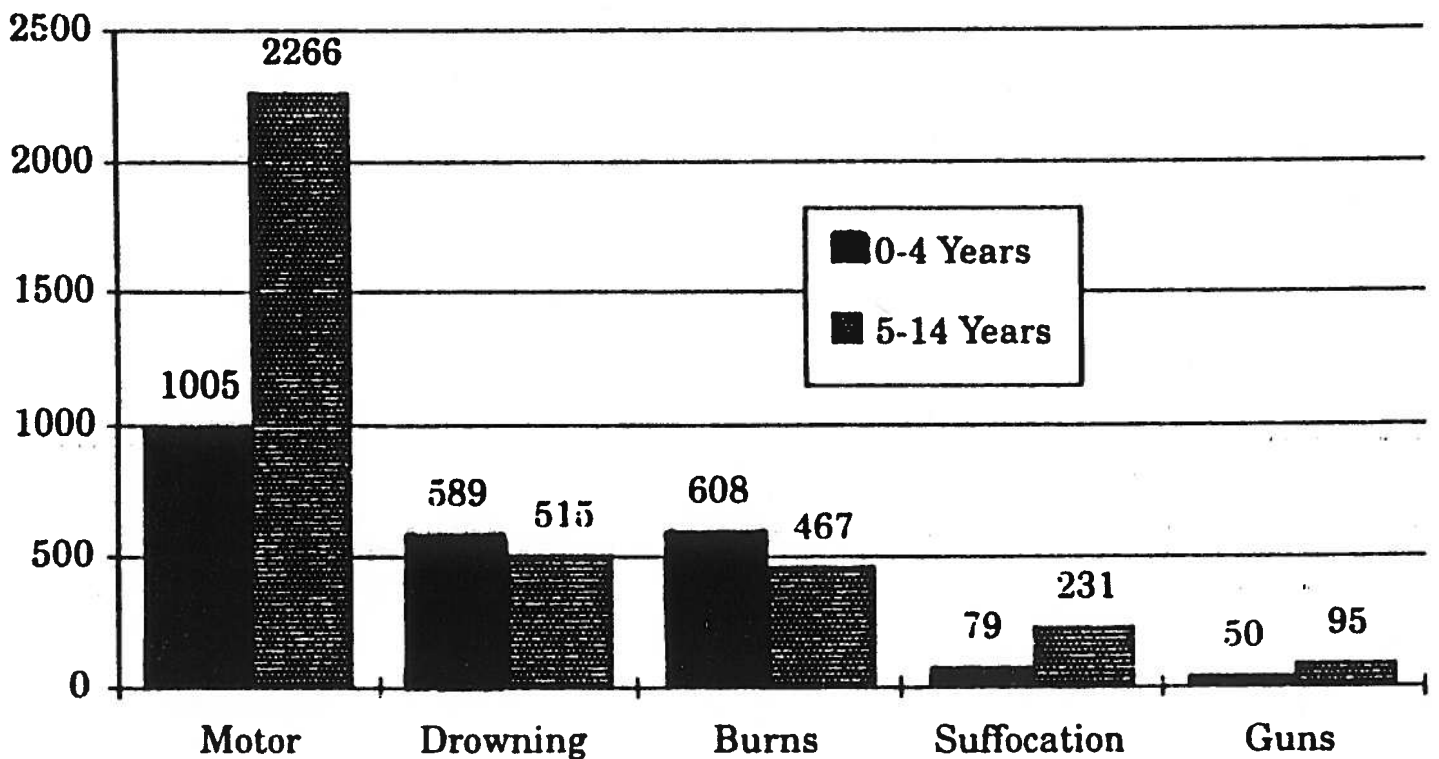
# Rates of Injury by Victim's Method of Protection

from Kleck G. *Point Blank: Guns and Violence in America*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter. 1993. Table 4.4.

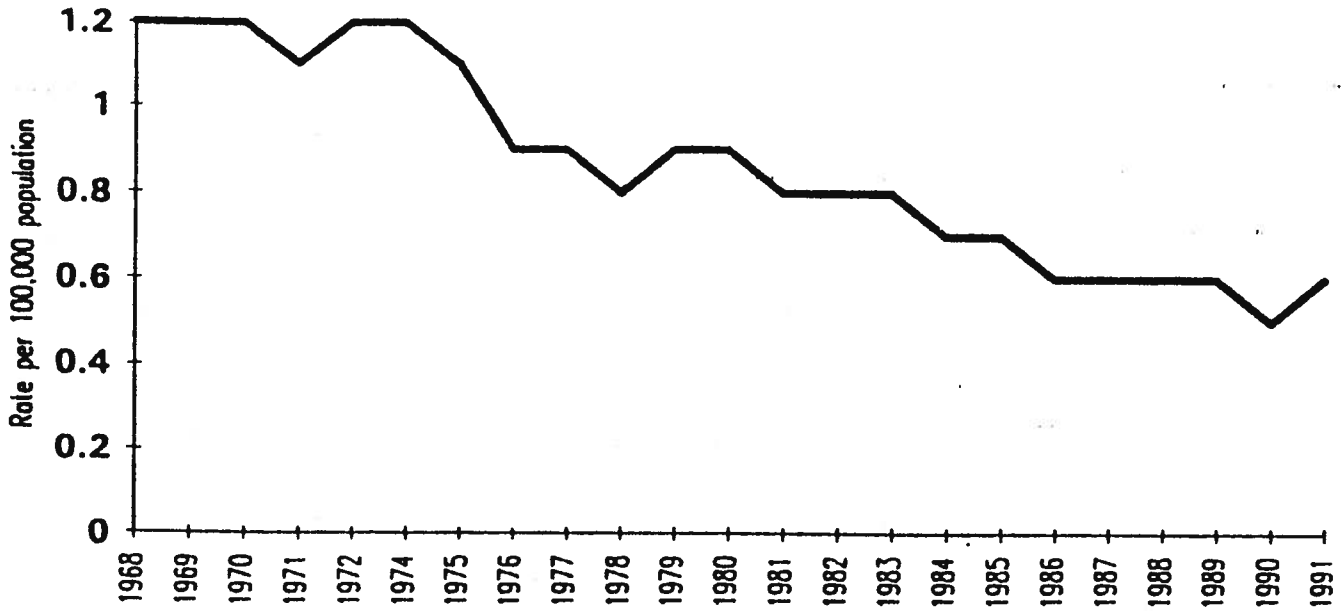


# Children's Accidental Deaths, 1991

from National Safety Council. *Accident Facts 1991*. 1992.



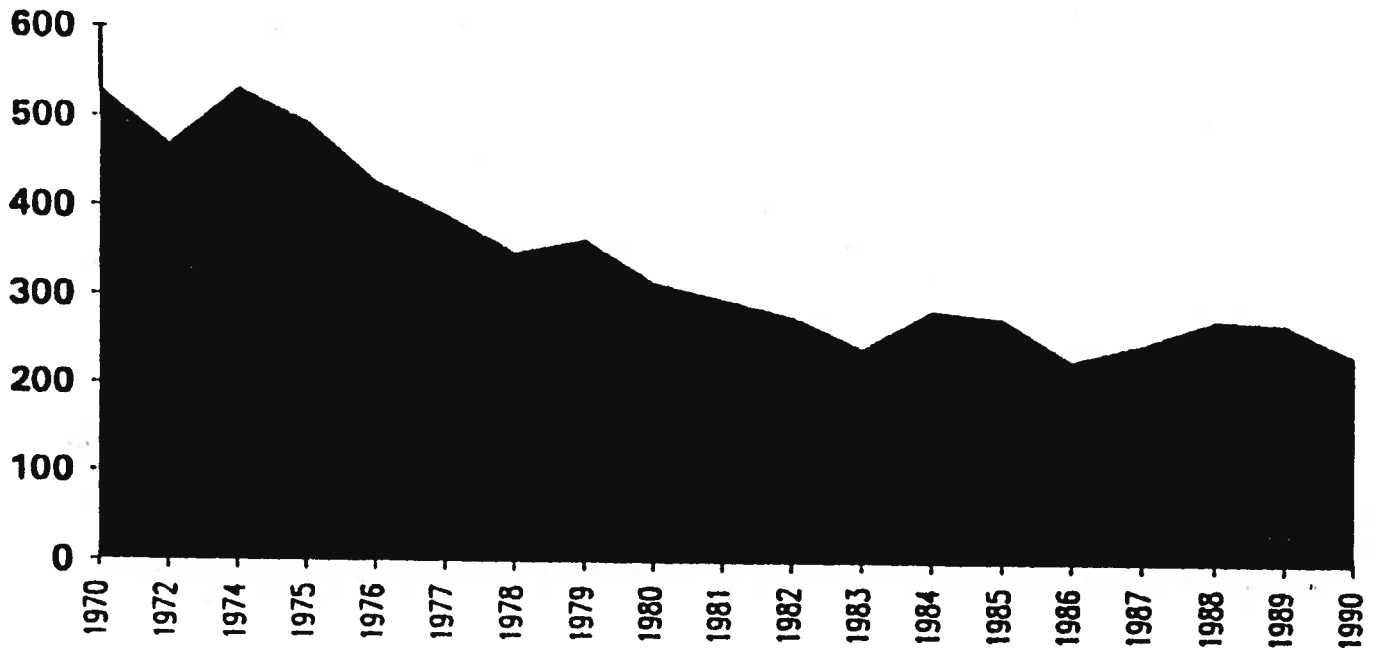
## Accidental Firearms Death Rates



The overall rate of fatal gun accidents has fallen by 50%. About one person in 200,000 will die in a gun accident in an average year.

Second Amendment Project at the Independence Institute, Golden Colorado

## Decline in Accidental Childhood Gun Deaths



The number of fatal gun accidents involving children has fallen by over 50%, even as the number of guns and the number of children have increased.