



Democrats, Looking to 2016, Mostly Mum on Gun Control

By John Blosser

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Despite President Barack Obama's vow to keep fighting for stricter gun control measures, and despite gun control groups' heavily funded anti-gun efforts, expect Democrats to duck the divisive issue as the 2016 election season approaches.

With 70,000 people gathered in Nashville to hear leading Republicans like former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, and Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker address the National Rifle Association's (NRA) 144th annual convention that began Thursday, Democrats are staying hushed on the issue, recognizing that for them, it's a political loser, [The Washington Times](#) reports.

Robert A. Levy of the Cato Institute told the Times, "It is a loser for the Democrats and so they shy away from it, except in Washington, D.C., or New York, where they have a strong liberal constituency and where it is not going to cost them voting-wise."

Even as gun-control groups — like former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg's Everytown for Gun Safety, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, and Americans for Responsible Solutions — try to rally support, the 4.5-million member NRA is amassing a war chest of \$60 million-\$70 million to fight them in the coming elections, the Times reports.

Obama, pledging "I haven't given up" on gun control, told [ABC News](#), "What we've done is try to do as much administratively to tighten up how background checks are run, to go after illegal drug runners. But I tell you that trying to get something through Congress has proven to be very difficult. And it's heart-breaking."

However, even Obama admits, "The power of NRA and the gun lobby in Congress is formidable. And you know, we're going to keep chipping away at this, but until you get intense public demands for this, it's probably not going to happen because some special interests and

lobbyists in Washington are really, really strong and their membership feels very intensely about the issue.

"Whereas the general public is concerned about it, but doesn't make it their top priority."

That "intense public demand" is unlikely to happen. In December, a [Pew Research study](#) found, "For the first time in more than two decades of Pew Research Center surveys, there is more support for gun rights than gun control.

"Currently, 52 percent say it is more important to protect the right of Americans to own guns, while 46 percent say it is more important to control gun ownership."

Dave "Mudcat" Saunders, a Democratic strategist currently advising former Sen. Jim Webb, D-Virginia, a possible presidential contender in 2016, told the Times, "Every time a Democrat starts talking about guns, they lose numbers because it is the Second Amendment.

"There is just less talk (about gun control) now than there has been in forever."