

NRA: Anti-High-Capacity Clip Bill Just A Scheme To Impose 'Gun Ban'

Ryan J. Reilly | January 15, 2011, 9:53AM

Six days after a gunman attempted to assassinate Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D-AZ) and killed six others in a mass shooting, the National Rifle Association (NRA) broke its silence, pledging to fight off any and all attempts to impose harsher regulations on guns and high-capacity magazines.

An unattributed statement posted on the NRA website late Friday, written in the rhetorical style the powerful association has come to be known for, dubbed gun control supporters "gun ban advocates" and the proposals mentioned in the wake of the mass shooting "schemes."

"There's no question that the debate over gun control will continue after the Tucson attack," the NRA's statement said. "Please rest assured that the NRA will, as always, stand front and center in defense of the rights of gun owners."

The association took a pre-emptive strike at legislation which would ban the future sale of transfer of high-capacity magazines like the one allegedly used by Jared Lee Loughner. That bill will be proposed next week by Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY), who **told TPM that the legislation is gaining momentum**. The Senate version will be **introduced** by Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ), who **said this week** that America's problem is not that there are more madmen, but that guns are too readily available to them.

But the NRA argues that such high-capacity clips are "standard equipment for self-defense handguns and other firearms owned by tens of millions of Americans."

"Law-abiding private citizens choose them for many reasons, including the same reason police officers do: to improve their odds in defensive situations," the NRA said. The NRA's statement did not include an example of an situation where an individual acting in self defense would need to get off 30 rounds without reloading.

Even Robert A. Levy, a member of the libertarian Cato Institute who served as co-counsel in the Supreme Court case establishing a Second Amendment right to bear arms, **told** NBC's Michael Isikoff he'd be okay with banning high-capacity magazines. He said there was no reason why high-capacity clips would fall under the court's decision in that case.

"I don't see any constitutional bar to regulating high-capacity magazines," Levy said.

"Justice [Antonin] Scalia made it quite clear some regulations are permitted. The Second Amendment is not absolute." Levy said it was a close call, but said that that a restriction of 10 to 15 rounds made sense.

"It may stop a few of these looney tunes," Levy said.

Here's the NRA's full statement:

Tucson Tragedy Prompts Renewed Calls For Gun Control Friday, January 14, 2011 Yet while those of us who defend the Second Amendment were respecting the heartache of the people of Tucson and waiting to learn the full facts of the case, anti-gun activists were renewing their push for more gun control laws. ("In the wake of these kind of incidents, the trick is to move quickly," the Violence Policy Center's Kristen Rand told MSNBC.)

Rand and other gun ban advocates were quick to push several schemes.

The most widely publicized is the proposal by Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.) and Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-N.Y.) to re-impose the 1994 ban on new manufacture of ammunition magazines capable of holding more than 10 rounds of ammunition, and to criminalize the transfer of existing magazines between law-abiding gun owners. These magazines are standard equipment for self-defense handguns and other firearms owned by tens of millions of Americans. Law-abiding private citizens choose them for many reasons, including the same reason police officers do: to improve their odds in defensive situations.

Also, Rep. Peter King (R-N.Y.) proposed to ban possession of firearms within 1,000 feet of the President, Vice President, Members of Congress or federal judges. Obviously, this proposal would be ignored by anyone who intends to harm a government official. But it

would impose extraordinary burdens on honest gun owners, creating potentially hundreds of square miles of roving "gun free" areas throughout the United States.

There's no question that the debate over gun control will continue after the Tucson attack. Please rest assured that the NRA will, as always, stand front and center in defense of the rights of gun owners. And, as always, watch your NRA-ILA alerts for the latest news and calls to action on these critical issues.