



Senator Manchin to Reintroduce Failed Compromise Background-Check Bill

By: John Haughey – April 30, 2013

Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV) plans to re-introduce the gun control bill he co-sponsored with Sen. Pat Toomey (R-Pa.) that was shot down in the Senate on April 17.

“I’m willing to go anywhere in this country, I’m going to debate anybody on this issue, read the bill and you tell me what you don’t like,” Manchin said on Fox News Sunday on April 28, confirming his intention to bring his measure back to the Senate floor.

He did not say when he will re-submit the measure, which calls for criminal and mental health background checks for gun buyers at shows and online. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) has shelved gun legislation for the foreseeable future.

The Manchin/Toomey compromise bill -- called the Public Safety and Second Amendment Rights Protection Act -- was among seven amendments to the first gun control bill debated on the Senate floor since 1994 that failed to get the necessary 60 votes to proceed.

Manchin told Fox News that co-sponsor Toomey remains "totally committed to this bill," although Toomey has said he is focusing on fiscal issues and immigration reform.

Despite Toomey's perceived ambivalence, there is some enthusiasm for reviewing the bill again, including from surprising sources such as Robert A. Levy, chairman of the board of the Cato Institute.

In an April 28 editorial in the New York Times, the chairman of the libertarian Cato Institute implored gun owners and other opponents that the compromise bill might be the best deal they can get -- and that it is needed.

"Gun-rights advocates should use this interval to refine their priorities and support this measure, with a few modest changes," Levy writes. "If they don't, they will be opening themselves to accusations from President Obama and others that they are merely obstructionists, zealots who will not agree to common-sense gun legislation. The focus on background checks should not distract gun owners from the positive provisions in the Manchin-Toomey proposal."