

January 17, 2013



I have been contacted by many people in the last few days concerning encroachments on the rights afforded by the Second Amendment of our Constitution. Many of those contacts include questions as to my intention to support my Oath of Office and the Constitution along with questions about my role as Sheriff in protecting those rights.

I apologize in advance that I can't answer each inquiry individually due to the volume, but I do want to more widely state what I've said many times regarding this issue.

I'd like to assure everyone that as your Sheriff I've always taken my Oath of Office seriously, and have no intention of following any unlawful orders, nor do I have any tolerance of efforts to disarm law-abiding citizens. If you have followed me at all through my career you will know that I remain consistently supportive of our Constitution, and most specifically in this conversation, the Second Amendment.

Having just spent a week with nearly all of Colorado's Sheriffs in conversations that included this important topic, I want to assure you that I see Sheriffs closely following the national conversation and listening to their constituents. I am fully ready to use my influence appropriately to represent common interests of all in protecting our Second Amendment rights.

I have always been supportive of keeping guns out of the hands of violent criminals and measures to deal with those that would do things that threaten all of our rights, as long as those measures don't tread on the rights of honest, law-abiding American citizens. I have never been in favor of creating solutions that are in search of a problem. I am frustrated that the national conversation is focused more squarely on firearms than mental health issues. Like most Sheriffs in America, my jail has far too many people that cycle through with mental health issues that are unaddressed, undiagnosed, or have fallen through the cracks to receive the care they need. Improving our behavioral health system, plugging holes within it, and sharing information about people posing a risk across a wide spectrum of disciplines is the most fertile ground for addressing the kind of mass violence that has sparked the national level of emotion currently seen.

I also hold the belief that instead of talk of disarming law-abiding citizens, we should be talking about allowing those working in schools and public places who want the ability to protect themselves to be able to do so by carrying their personal firearm discretely but confidently with the training that would allow them to make a

difference with an active shooter. Again, I view this area as fertile ground of public policy making that could help save lives.

I will also, however, respect the lawful and properly conducted business of federal law enforcement agencies and continue to be good partners in solving community problems that have served well the public safety interests of our community. Frankly, those federal partners I work with have children in our schools, share these same concerns with the rest of us, and are no less patriotic than any of us. To be clear though, I will support the Constitution, enforce the laws of my state, and fulfill my statutory responsibilities as required. If an agent of the federal government violates a state law in my county we will take appropriate enforcement actions, and I will resist, appropriately, efforts by the federal government to manage my agency or unduly and unlawfully infringe upon the rights of our citizens.

Finally, I feel blessed that I've had the opportunity to be a Sheriff in this great country, state and Mesa County. As an elected official who has worked an entire career knowing that it is my job to earn and keep your trust, I know, very well, who I work for...It is something that I will never forget. Thank you for that opportunity.



Sheriff Stan Hilkey