



## Extra Vigilance Needed With New Legislature

By Corey Graff, Executive Director

Their motivations are completely different from that of grassroots gun owners, often diametrically opposed, and so the notion that we gun rights activists need to join their “team” is merely a way for them to remove any opposition to their future acts of betrayal. We join their team, they tell us the “way things are going to work,” get it?

**Now that republicans control the legislature, our gun rights will finally be restored, right?**

**W**rong. In fact, we might be entering a very dark period of time where vigilance wanes and we risk losing even more firearm freedoms. The devil dressed in white would just love to exploit our implicit trust in him.

How can that be? Didn't we just elect an army of “pro-gun” republicans who'll march forth into Madison on our behalf to dismantle decades' worth of gun control?

Not exactly. To explain what I mean, here are three reasons why gun owners need to remain vigilant and ever-watchful as the new session begins in January.

### Politicians Are Anti-Gun

All politicians claim to support the Second Amendment. Some make a big deal about the fact that they like to deer hunt. Republican, democrat or independent, it doesn't mean a thing. Even if a new legislator is sent to Madison with a modicum of principle, it doesn't take long for that person to be co-opted into the “way things are done.”

### Candidates Sport Failing Grades

Since our inception, WGO has issued a tough, independent survey to all candidates running for the legislature. And while there may be a renewed wave of interest in Constitutional Carry (Vermont-style carry) nationwide, WGO was using this issue as our litmus test while most others derided us for even bringing it up.

I remember sitting in the office of one republican legislator discussing how he would introduce and sponsor a Constitutional Carry bill, a promise he'd pledged on our survey. “I never said any such thing,” he retorted.

“Here,” I said, handing him a copy of his survey. “This *is* your signature, *isn't it?*”

That made him mighty angry. But the voters of his district were even angrier later on, and he was not re-elected.

Such accountability is not possible if the gun lobby allows itself to fall into an access-based posture, where the politician runs the show. The best you can hope for under such

a scenario are a few scraps thrown under the table from time to time, and a few sharp kicks to the teeth.

### They Have a Vested Interest in Gun Control

There are many players who'll rally against an outright repeal of the ban on carrying concealed weapons — *and many will be republicans.*

Constitutional Carry has always been the bane of the institutional gun lobby, who seems to see its role as they who must fashion the chains that bind us. They give us pro-gun gun control (whatever that means).

In addition, those who teach concealed carry classes (many are friends of mine) make a good living teaching such classes, and it's not uncommon to see them pushing for “mandatory training.”

And state government itself wants a licensing system to justify its own existence and expansion into revenue streams created by the licenses, background checks and accompanying bureaucracy.

So as you can see betrayal can come at us from so many corners, we must not let down our guard. Thankfully, we'll be watching politicians — not from under the desk, but at arm's length, where the view is much clearer.

Published by  
Wisconsin Gun Owners, Inc.  
PO Box 329  
Waupaca, WI 54981  
tel 888.202.1645  
fax 866.208.1346  
[www.wisconsin-gunowners.org](http://www.wisconsin-gunowners.org)

Wisconsin Gun Owners, Inc. is a non-profit, 501(c)4 tax exempt organization and is a registered lobbying principle with the Wisconsin Ethics Board.

# The Wisconsin Gun Owner

A Publication of Wisconsin Gun Owners, Inc. Fall 2010 Vol. VI No.3

### Mission

To restore and defend the right to keep and bear arms through on-target strategy, and to hold accountable all those who surrender that right through compromise.



*“Wisconsin Gun Owners (WGO) has been pushing for Vermont-style — now known as Constitutional Carry — since our inception over six years ago”*

— Read more page 3

### Inside

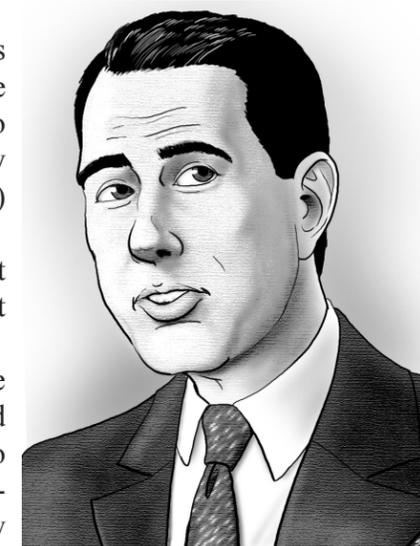
- Walker: Hero or Villan?
- Why NRA Compromises
- Judge Strikes CCW Ban
- On Constitutional Carry
- WGO's NRA Challenge
- Extra Vigilance Needed

## Governor-Elect Scott Walker and NRA: Still Silent on Constitutional Carry

Will Walker and the NRA stand united with grassroots gun owners to restore real right-to-carry?

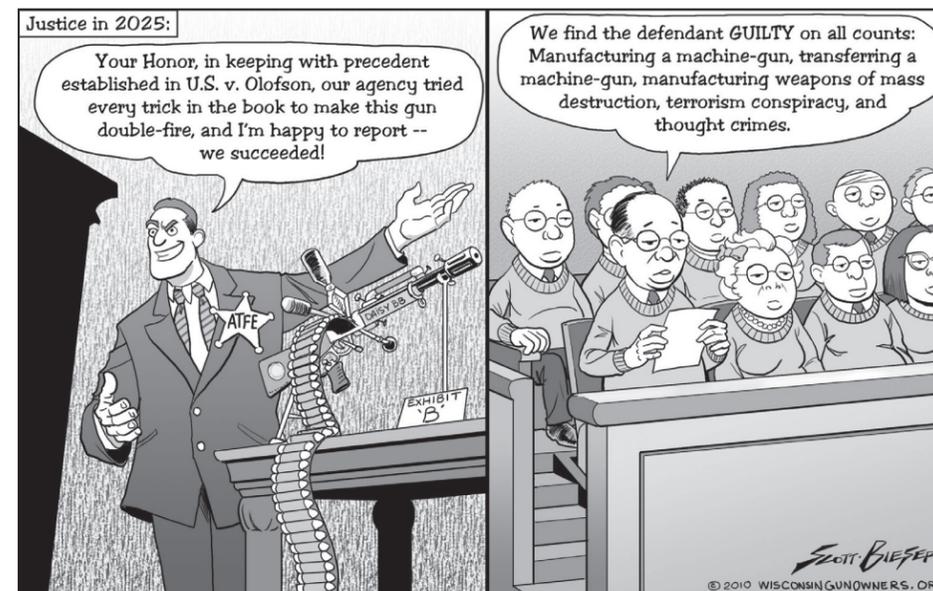
Madison, Wis. — Despite republicans taking control of Wisconsin's legislature in the Nov. 2 mid-term elections, no commitment on Constitutional Carry (concealed carry with no permit system) has been forthcoming as of press time from either Governor-elect Scott Walker (R) or Wisconsin NRA lobbyist Jordan Austin.

The newly-elected legislature — where republicans now control the assembly and state senate — has breathed new life into growing momentum in Wisconsin to bypass a “Shall-Issue” concealed carry law in favor of one modeled after Vermont's or Alaska's laws.



**Wisconsin Governor-elect Scott Walker (R) has said he will sign a concealed carry bill if it makes it to his desk. But will he sign a Constitutional Carry bill?**

*Continued Page 2*



© 2010 WISCONSIN GUN OWNERS. ORG

## Walker and Concealed Carry

Continued from Page 1

If successful, the reform would mean anyone who may legally purchase a firearm may legally carry it. Similar legislation was passed in Arizona this year, and several other states — Texas, Utah and Iowa — are on the cusp of rolling back permit-to-carry requirements.

While WGO has been in contact with Governor-elect Walker's press secretary, Cullen Werwie, no statement on Walker's position on Constitutional Carry has been received. Walker did earn an F rating due to his failure to answer the WGO candidate survey, which asks candidates their position on no-permit carry. The survey was re-issued to Walker giving him the opportunity to tell gun owners his views.

Meanwhile, four organizations — Gun Owners of America (GOA), National Association for Gun Rights (NAGR), Wisconsin Carry, Inc., and the United States Concealed Carry Association (USCCA) — have joined the public push by stating their support for “Constitutional Carry.”

### WGO Reaches Out to NRA-ILA

In an e-mail to Jordan Austin, NRA-ILA's Wisconsin lobbyist, WGO issued an official inquiry to determine if Badger State gun owners could “count on NRA-ILA's support of Constitutional Carry?”

That request was initially met with evasiveness, when Austin shot

back by answering the question with a question. “Do you have any language available for the bill you are proposing?” he asked.

In response, WGO re-issued the question, seeking NRA-ILA's

**“I'd be very surprised that a constitutional carry bill could be passed without a permit...” — “Eric” from NRA-ILA**

position on Constitutional Carry. “We are reaching out to NRA to give them a chance to be the pro-gun group they claim to be,” said Corey Graff, executive director of Wisconsin Gun Owners. “We are positively hopeful that they will abandon these divisive tactics and stand united with all the organizations and grassroots gun owners who recognize that now is the time to completely restore our right-to-carry in Wisconsin.”

“Given how the elections turned out, asking the Wisconsin legislature for a “shall-issue” concealed carry bill will be like kissing your sister,” wrote Tim Schmidt, president of the United States Concealed Carry Association.

Wisconsin Carry, Inc. has reported that the Wisconsin Republican Party has adopted no-permit carry into its official platform, and that Governor-elect Walker has stated that if a repeal of state statute 941.23 makes it to his desk, he will sign it.

It is not precisely known if Walker's statement to sign legislation will

apply to a no-permit bill or only Shall-Issue.

“Why does the NRA make sure the right to keep and bear a concealed firearm is the only constitutional right you need government permission to exercise?” asked nrawol.net. “Why do NRA lobbyists regard a vote in favor of Vermont-style concealed carry an ‘anti-gun vote?’”

“It's because opposing the original intent of the Second Amendment, the free exercise of firearms rights without government permission or regulation, is the price of admission into higher political circles.

“The NRA figures if they throw you a few bones, you'll keep the checks coming and look the other way while gun-grabbing politicians get the main course.”

One concerned citizen reported to WGO that they were told by someone named “Eric” at NRA-ILA (who refused to give his last name), that, “In most states, you're not gonna pass constitutional conceal-carry ... I'd be very surprised that a constitutional carry bill could be passed without a permit provision as kind of a trial period. We have a better chance, but it's probably not likely. It's not politically feasible (to pass a constitutional bill).”

*Editor's Note: Page 6 of this newsletter provides contact information for NRA-ILA representatives. And be sure to sign up for WGO's eNewsletter for late-breaking action alerts on this issue. Visit [wisconsin-gunowners.org](http://wisconsin-gunowners.org)*

## Is Constitutional Carry Right For Wisconsin?

By Tim Schmidt



Now that Scott Walker has become the new governor of Wisconsin, and pro-constitution conservatives have taken back the majorities of both the state senate and state assembly, we have an unprecedented opportunity to pass the kind of concealed carry legislation that is already starting to pick up steam across our country.

I'm talking about “Constitutional Carry” legislation.

While The Constitutional Carry movement started in Vermont, it has since picked up significant steam. Alaska enacted “Constitutional Carry” in 2003 and Arizona did the same in 2010. Texas and Utah are both in the process of enacting similar legislation.

Now some people will have questions and concerns about “Constitutional Carry.” So I've decided to address a few of those here.

### What Is Constitutional Carry?

“Constitutional Carry” simply means that you don't have to have a “permit” or “permission slip” from the government to exercise your natural-born and unalienable right to self protection.

Yep, that's right... you don't need to get a concealed carry permit. If you're a law-abiding citizen, you can carry a gun. Period. To some this may sound extreme. But can you imagine if the government required a person to get a “permit” to publish a book?

### Why Not Have a Permit System Like Most of the Other States?

Two reasons. The first reason is the “idealistic” reason. As free men and women, we shouldn't have to get permission from the government to carry a gun. The founders of our country got it. Heck, they included an amendment to the Constitution that affirmed our natural-born and inalienable right to keep and bear arms. Truly free people don't have to ask permission to carry a gun.

The second reason is a bit more political. Seventeen years ago, it made sense to try and pass a “shall-issue” concealed carry bill. Seventeen years ago, shall-issue concealed carry bills were on the “cutting edge” of self-defense freedom. That is NOT the case anymore. The “Constitutional Carry” movement has already started and NOW is the time for Wisconsin to make up for it's poor performance of the last decade. Given how the elections turned out, asking the Wisconsin legislature for a “shall-issue” concealed carry bill will be like kissing your sister.

### Won't It Be Easier for Criminals to Get Guns?

Criminals don't follow “shall-issue” concealed carry laws. The ONLY people that follow “shall-issue” concealed carry laws are the good guys like you and I. The ONLY thing that “shall-issue” concealed carry laws do is make the good guys jump through a

bunch of ridiculous government hoops to exercise a supposed natural-born, freedom.

### Shouldn't Training Be Required?

Should parents be required to have “parent” training before they have kids? Should people have to get a “permit” before they can check out books at the library? I'm confident that I can make a legitimate argument that poor parenting and poor education choices have caused MANY more problems in our society than guns have!

The bottom line here is that you CANNOT legislate common sense. The majority of “shall-issue” states require a PALTRY amount of “training” in order to get a concealed carry permit. If anything, these laws lull people into a false sense of confidence that they are properly trained.

My position is that when responsible people decide to carry a gun for self protection, they will go out and get proper training. The government is NOT needed to offer some pathetic guideline of “proper training.”

### What About Reciprocity with Other States?

I think the ideal “Constitutional Carry” bill would allow for the issuance of an ‘optional’ physical permit that would be used for State reciprocity purposes.

*Tim Schmidt is the founder and president of the United States Concealed Carry Association (USCCA - [usconcealedcarry.com](http://usconcealedcarry.com)) and [wisconsinccw.org](http://wisconsinccw.org). Visit [nocarrypermits.com](http://nocarrypermits.com) to learn more.*



## Constitutional Carry

Continued from Page 3

Clark continued: “The last time conceal carry was in the legislature, the *reality was* [emphasis mine] a shall issue law or no concealed carry. That has changed. NOW with a republican senate, assembly, and governor the two choices facing Wisconsin are a shall-issue permit system OR constitution carry.”

WGO has long argued that concessions like those spoken of by Clark, even in a democrat-controlled legislature, are neither the “political reality” nor good strategy. Clearly, in hindsight, we see that such compromises did not result in political success in passing a shall-issue bill. But I will take the matter further: those concessions not only ensured defeat then, but hurt us now as we go into this fight.

That’s because it will be much more difficult for those who have conceded in the past to argue against moderate republicans and the institutional gun lobby now for a clean bill. The real political reality is that you either have access to politicians and play on their terms or you stand your ground and remain loyal to the grassroots. It remains to

be seen how all the groups now championing Constitutional Carry will hold up under pressure if politicians begin to threaten them to “tow the line.”

WGO has, under intense political pressure, remained loyal to Constitutional Carry. We’ve maintained this high ground consistently even as snipers within the gun community have hurled attack after attack at us, insinuating that we were being “divisive.” They screamed at us that gun owners need to “stand united” when it was them, in fact, who were deviating from the right plan of attack. I raise these issues not to open old wounds, but to help equip you with the realities of political confrontation, so you can be better armed to stand your ground.

However, unlike those who’ve conceded ground in the past, we can enter this fight with a position of strength — it’s what we’ve always done and will continue to do.

So, as a new session begins, let’s welcome Wisconsin Carry, Inc., [wisconsinccw.org](http://wisconsinccw.org) and the USCCA to the right side of this issue and offer our support. The NRA, on the other hand, may be a different matter.

## WGO Issues the NRA Challenge

What we’ve always heard from the institutional gun lobby is that they “support Vermont-style carry, but it’ll never happen here. Not the political reality.” But they can’t make that excuse in a legislature controlled by republicans who claim to be pro-gun.

So, with Constitutional Carry’s newfound popularity, and a renewed spirit of unity, WGO humbly challenges NRA-ILA — Chris Cox and Wisconsin’s NRA lobbyist Jordan Austin — to put their money where their mouth is and stand united with us and Constitutional Carry when there is no reason in the world to accept any less.

Below is contact information for NRA representatives. Contact them immediately and urge them to stand united with Wisconsin Gun Owners (WGO) and support no-permit Constitutional Carry. 



**Be sure to share this story with anyone who wants to pass concealed carry in Wisconsin. And encourage them to join WGO in this fight! Sign up online at [wisconsin-gunowners.org](http://wisconsin-gunowners.org)**

## THE NRA CHALLENGE: SUPPORT CONSTITUTIONAL CARRY

NRA Director:  
Buster Bachhuber  
[bustergun@aol.com](mailto:bustergun@aol.com)  
2603 Julip Drive  
Wausau, WI 54401  
(715) 675-9230

NRA Field Representative:  
Scott Taetsch  
[staetsch@nrahq.org](mailto:staetsch@nrahq.org)  
PO Box 157  
Gleason, WI 54435-0157  
Office: 715-873-3360  
Fax: 715-873-3361

NRA-ILA Representative:  
Jordan Austin  
[jaustin@nrahq.org](mailto:jaustin@nrahq.org)  
National Rifle Association  
11250 Waples Mill Road  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
702-267-1222

NRA-ILA Grassroots Coordinator:  
Katrina Ruminski  
[KRuminski@nrahq.org](mailto:KRuminski@nrahq.org)  
NRA-ILA Grassroots Division  
11250 Waples Mill Road  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
Phone: (703) 267-1194  
Fax: (703) 267-3918

## Constitutional Carry: A Call to Action

**The compromisers always claim they support Constitutional Concealed Carry, but won’t fight for it. But despite republicans taking power, can we expect any different?** By Corey Graff

The freelance writer was doing a story for a national gun magazine about the prospect of Wisconsin becoming the next state to pass a concealed carry bill. His first question was simple enough.

“Now that republicans have the majority in Wisconsin, how likely do you think passage of a concealed carry bill will be?” he asked.

“The question isn’t whether we can pass a concealed carry bill,” I responded. “The question is, will we pass a *good* bill, one that respects our freedoms,” I said. The battle line will be drawn between moderate neo-cons who’ll try to offer us a shall-issue permit-to-carry bill, and the wishes of gun owners who want an outright repeal of Wisconsin’s ban on carrying concealed weapons — no permit thank you very much.

You see, as I went on to explain, the fight that will take place over concealed carry during the next session won’t be between us and the anti-gunners. Instead it’s likely to be between us and the institutional gun lobby —

those sniveling compromisers whose mantra of failure earns them access to politicians who run their show.

### The Newfound Popularity of Constitutional Carry

As I write this article, I’ve just responded to an e-mail that was sent to me from a group known as “[icarry.org](http://icarry.org).” They wanted to know if they could “mark us down” on a list of groups in Wisconsin who support Constitutional Carry.

“I’ve heard that WGO supports aiming for a no-permit system,” wrote Shaun Kranish, executive director of the group.

“Wisconsin Gun Owners (WGO) has been pushing for Vermont-style — now known as Constitutional Carry — since our inception over six years ago almost entirely alone,” I wrote in my response. “And we’ve proudly taken heat for it every year during that time from the institutional gun lobby. Too, every

year we survey state candidates and Constitutional Carry is the issue upon which their rating pivots. So, mark us down.”

Other groups have suddenly become loud proponents of “no-permit” carry. One such group is Wisconsin Carry, Inc., which just deployed an e-mail announcing it and the United States Concealed Carry Association (USCCA) see no reason to accept anything less than Constitutional Carry.

They are correct to join us in a push for an all-out repeal of the ban on carry. However, there is much to learn from the rationale expressed by Wisconsin Carry, Inc. and how that will affect this fight.

“With republican control of both state houses the realities have DRASTICALLY shifted,” wrote Nik Clark, chairman of the group. “Those concessions are NO longer necessary.”

Continued Page 6

## Judge Rules WI Concealed Carry Ban Unconstitutional

According to a story on [wrn.com](http://wrn.com), Wisconsin could soon usher in a new era of firearm freedom not through



**Clark County Judge Jon Counsell**

legislative wrangling, but thanks to judicial action by one Clark County judge.

Judge Jon Counsell said “Wisconsin’s ban on carrying concealed weapons is unconstitutional,” according to the report. “In the case, authorities charged a Sauk City man

with carrying a concealed weapon, after he admitted he had a knife in his waistband. He never threatened anyone.

“In light of the landmark Supreme Court ruling in *McDonald v. City of Chicago*, attorney William Poss filed a motion to dismiss the case on constitutional grounds. Judge Jon Counsell obliged Wednesday, ruling the law is overly broad and violates both the Second and Fourteenth Amendments of the Constitution.

“The government has to have a compelling state interest to do so (restrict the right to carry) and they have to have the least restrictive means of doing that,” said Poss. “Public safety

obviously is a state interest, but there’s all kinds of ways to do that in this regard.”

“In his decision, Counsell states the law forces citizens to ‘go unarmed (thus not able to act in self defense), violate the law or carry openly,’ but notes displaying weapon’s openly isn’t a ‘realistic alternative.’” 



**Listen at [wisconsin-gunowners.org](http://wisconsin-gunowners.org)!**

# Why NRA is Bent On Snatching Defeat From the Jaws of Victory

By Paul Valone



*Editor's Note: While much of this article's focus on candidates may seem more relevant to the pre-election period, we are running it to provide necessary insights into how the institutional gun lobby may operate when the new Wisconsin legislature begins.*

As conservatives battle to wrest control of Congress back from the left, liberal news organs like The Washington Post, National Public Radio and even "The Gray Lady" herself have cheered the NRA as it endorses Democrats across the country.

And rest assured the NRA's efforts are systematic. Take, for example, an e-mail I got yesterday from "Marge":

*"Isn't it strange that the NRA has supported Shuler, but you, based only on the answers to a survey can support some one [sic] else. Perhaps you should do your 'due diligence' and look at the voting record of the incumbent. Or, is that too much trouble. Anyone can say anything in a survey — voting record stands for all to see. Organizations like yours do nothing but dilute the effectiveness of the 'real' gun support activists. Get your act together!!!!"*

This was in response to a multi-thousand-piece postcard mailing done into North Carolina's 11th Congressional District against incumbent Democrat Heath Shuler and for opponent Jeff Miller. I explained to Marge that Shuler's low marks weren't based on just a survey and that he didn't really have a voting record on a strictly gun-related bill, but had brokered House passage of HR 5175, the misnamed "DISCLOSE Act," a piece of legislation designed to muzzle gun groups by requiring them to disclose membership information if they so much as mention a candidate prior to an election.

I also explained that Shuler cut language to exempt the NRA — and only the NRA — while leaving other gun groups to hang, after which the NRA sat on its hands and cheerfully withdrew opposition to the bill. But I doubt I made much impression: The "NRA do or die" crowd is not often swayed by logic.

## The Roots of NRA Compromise

In recent weeks, pro-gun forums have buzzed with complaints about NRA endorsements. Fellow Gun Rights Examiner David Codrea questioned how the NRA could endorse California's Dan Lundgren, despite his having been the architect of one of the original "assault weapon" bans. David also wrote, "Gun owners must consider more than NRA grades," while Jews for the Preservation of Gun Ownership branded NRA ratings as "illogical."

And although flawed NRA ratings are just now becoming a common topic of concern, they have been lamented among hardened gun rights activists for years. Indeed, an entire site, called NRAWOL, on which you can find an excellent (albeit dated) piece by former NRA board member Russ Howard

called "Sleeping with the enemy? No more A grades for gun-grabbers."

In my sixteen years of gun rights leadership, I can cite myriad examples. Misleading NRA ratings were, in fact, the reason my organization, Grass Roots North Carolina, created its "Remember in November" system of objective candidate evaluations. I've been nose-to-nose with Tanya Metaksa at the Velvet Cloak Inn in Raleigh when she came to North Carolina to tell (yes, tell) gun rights leaders to support anti-gun Governor Jim Hunt. (I think her words were, "Do you want a war? Is that what you want?")

**"The NRA relies principally upon access-based lobbying which, of course, depends on access. If one alienates the host politician, one quickly finds himself out of the loop. The net result is that access-based lobbyists are forced to constantly curry favor with the politicians."**

And then, of course, we had the endorsement of incumbent NC Governor Mike Easley. Having been promised by then-NRA state and local representative Jeff Freeman that the NRA would never support Easley, he did indeed get an "F" on his first run. Once elected, however, he signed a bill for (get this) NRA commemorative license plates and his "F" magically morphed into an "A" and endorsement, even against proven gun rights defender (and eventual Congressman) Robin Hayes.

**Four Reasons the NRA Endorses Anti-Gun Candidates**

*Continued Page 5*

## NRA Defeat Strategy

*Continued from Page 4*

### Larry Kissell and the 'Friendly Incumbent Policy'

Despite touting grassroots support, the NRA relies principally upon access-based lobbying which, of course, depends on access. If one alienates the host politician, one quickly finds himself out of the loop. The net result is that access-based lobbyists are forced to constantly curry favor with the politicians whose behavior they should, in theory, be controlling. In the end, the lobbyist ends up telling constituents what they must accept rather than telling the politician what he must do.

In the NRA's case, this includes inflating the ratings of allegedly "friendly" incumbents, many of which are not so friendly — the apparent mechanism of NRA support for incumbent Larry Kissell in North Carolina's 8th Congressional District. Kissell has exactly zero gun votes under his belt, and not only voted for the DISCLOSE Act described above, but actually cosponsored it. Thus, the NRA gives Kissell an "A" and endorsement, supporting him against a better candidate, Harold Johnson.

### The NRA Penchant for Bad Deals

I have seen the NRA merge the entirety of legislation designed to shutter gun shows into its own bill in a "Jekyll and Hyde" bid to get a committee hearing. (See "Strange bedfellows and the 'gun show loophole'".) I have seen the organization endorse the very politician who gutted NRA-supported legislation in return for a bone thrown at them by said legislator.

In short, I have seen the NRA cut very bad deals, often because they fear losing a particular battle and therefore, appearing weak. (See items 3 and 4 below). Perhaps you think Nancy

Pelosi and Harry Reid love the Second Amendment. I don't. When you factor in statements by both Mr. Obama and Attorney General Eric Holder favoring reinstatement of the "assault weapon" ban, one begins to wonder what sort of deal the NRA cut to avoid a committee hearing on that and other gun control legislation. In this Congress, you see, if those bills got hearings, the NRA would lose. Most recently, they seem to have struck a deal with Congressman Heath Shuler, who cut the deal to exempt the NRA from DISCLOSE.

While some might argue that such are good deals because they avoid passage of gun control, a deal which perpetuates anti-gun politicians willing to endure delay of gratification also perpetuates future gun control. At legislative seminars, I tell students: "Bad bills are better." The worse a piece of legislation (or in this case, the politicians in Congress), the more people will join you in opposition. The worst thing you can do is to weaken an anti-gun bill — or in this case, endorse anti-gun politicians. Rewarding bad behavior only encourages more of the same.

### The NRA Expects to Lose

During one of her visits to quell local rebellion, Tanya Metaksa once told me she expected to lose. Her vision for defending the Second Amendment was akin to the doctrine of flexible defense, ceding territory where necessary to prolong the fight. Even if Metaksa was right (which I doubt, particularly in light of recent Supreme Court decisions), I would be loath to adopt a policy of preemptive surrender.

### Success is Not an Option

If gun laws were suddenly declared unconstitutional or otherwise repealed, the NRA would be unnecessary. Given the salary and benefits accrued by NRA chief executives, overwhelming success (and obscurity) is not an option.

According to the 2008 IRS Form 990 for the NRA, Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre raked in \$1,263,101 per year; NRA Institute for Legislative Action EVP Chris Cox made \$661,059; Treasurer Wilson Phillips made \$649,463; General Operations Executive Director Kayne Robinson benefitted to the tune of \$602,608; and last, Secretary Edward Land, Jr. trails the pack with a measly \$509,186.

Hmm. Worth remembering the next time you get that desperate appeal for money, no?

### What To Do?

If you answered "reform the NRA," rest assured that the best have tried — including former NRA vice president Neal Knox, who made the organization the legislative juggernaut it is today.

One obvious answer is "don't use NRA ratings," of course. But that is more easily said than done.

Our organization has created an objective candidate evaluation system we encourage others to emulate (see "Remember in November") plus the means to reach more gun-owning voters than the NRA can. Right now in North Carolina, the GRNC Political Victory Fund is outnumbering the NRA in terms of election alerts mailed in 15 political districts, including one US House district. Radio spots are running in NC House 81 against NRA-endorsed Hugh Holliman, and will air shortly in another as-yet announced district.

We are covering only our own, limited territory. Hopefully, you will do the same in other states. It won't be easy, but it is the only way to change NRA behavior and elect candidates who will defend your rights. If you want help, let me know. 

*Editor's Note: F. Paul Valone is the president of Grassroots North Carolina, and writes a regular online column as the Charlotte Gun Rights Examiner (<http://bit.ly/CharlotteGunRightsExaminer>)*