

FREEDOM IS NOT FREE

THE CALL FOR A **FIREARM SUMMIT** IN CONNECTICUT

To whom it may concern:

The landscape of firearm acquisition and ownership is changing across the country and here in Connecticut. For those of us who are involved in, or effected by, the changes taking place, (regardless of the topic), we as law abiding citizens have issues that we are currently or may in the future become involved in.

Whether you are a sportsman who only acquires or possesses long guns for hunting, a recreational shooter who only fires a weapon at formal firing ranges for sport, or an individual who obtains a handgun for use self defense in the home or while going about your daily activities, the State of Connecticut and many members of Connecticut law enforcement believe that they have jurisdiction and authority to control every aspect of the ownership and use of our weapons.

As owners of firearms, we should not be left to wonder what is going to happen while legally exercising our individual and collective right of self defense or when one of us finds ourselves confronted by members of law enforcement who do not understand or respect our rights.

Connecticut firearm owners have found themselves the subject of firearm seizures where the law has not been followed or arrested for openly carrying a firearm legally while in possession of a State Permit to do so.

Most of our elected and appointed state and local officials have been unable to effectively stop the abuse and have failed to address and/or explain our rights to those who have the power.

Lip service by those seeking public office must be followed up with action!!

The three branches of Connecticut government better known as the Legislative, Executive and Judicial branches all have a responsibility to the citizens of Connecticut and the provisions of the Connecticut Constitution. Each branch of government has an obligation to review the general statutes and address any needed changes that result in violations of rights.

Here in Connecticut, the current Governor, Attorney General, Department of Public Safety and countless local police departments and their officers regularly ignore the current mandates of the law pertaining to firearms, and often make up their own laws to suit their personal or political beliefs.

In the past three years, the issue of whether or not a person may **OPEN CARRY** a handgun while in possession of a Permit to Carry has been addressed in several civil and criminal cases that have added to the confusion of exactly what is or is not permitted and whether openly carrying a firearm can constitute an element of a criminal offense.

During the past three years, with the assistance of Attorney Rachel Baird of Torrington, CT there have been several instances where Connecticut gun rights have been questioned administratively and in the courts. Attorney Rachel Baird has provided to numerous Connecticut residents her uncanny understanding of Constitutional protections regarding the manner in which government implements and enforces a variety of firearms laws. Attorney Rachel Baird of Torrington, CT, has in fact immersed herself in protecting the rights of many individuals who could not resolve their issues alone.

There are other attorneys in Connecticut who have in the past and currently do offer legal advice and represent those who find themselves on the wrong side of a firearm allegation, but there are not enough firearm attorneys practicing in Connecticut, and those that do can't advocate for free.

Collectively there are over 150,000 Permits to Carry Pistols and Revolvers issued by the State of Connecticut together with countless individuals who own firearms that do not require a permit or license. The current privacy provisions contained in the Connecticut State Statutes prevents anyone except the state from knowing the names of all those who own firearms in Connecticut. This simple fact prevents the

owners of firearms in Connecticut from interacting with each other to advocate our beliefs and voicing our concerns about existing or proposed legislation.

There are several well know groups of individuals who own firearms nationally, in New England or here in Connecticut. The problem I see is that there is no single advocacy group or working collective of groups that is willing to share their membership information or form a single organization to protect our collective rights and advocate in behalf of ALL firearms owners in Connecticut.

With the recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions in **Heller v. The District of Columbia** and **McDonald v. Chicago** along with the Second Circuit Court of Appeals decisions in **Kuck v. Danaher** and **Goldberg v. Danaher**, I am now convinced that we must somehow find a way to consolidate, raise funds and support the various civil cases that attempt to address and protect our rights to obtain, own, transfer and carry firearms for the purpose of self defense, hunting, recreation or investment.

There are several extremely important civil cases moving through the courts here in Southern New England that need the collective financial support of those of have the financial means to do so. One of the most interesting cases involves the seizure of firearms under the **AT RISK** provisions of section 29-38c of the Connecticut General Statutes which is currently under appeal in the Connecticut Courts.

Regardless of your financial situation, if you own or expect to purchase and possess a firearm you have a vested interest in supporting the cases which attempt to protect our collective firearm rights. Every time you read, hear or view a news report of someone being shot by an armed assailant, ask yourself why the news reports do not include or emphasize the fact that the most of the victims were unarmed.

As a liberal Democrat, former U.S. Marine and police officer for a very brief period in my life, I have chosen to get involved by defending my Federal and State firearm rights and our collective Right to Keep and Bear Arms for self defense. I am fortunate enough to have been able to invest my personal time and money to fight those who infringe upon the right to bear arms here and in the State of California, but know that the fight must involve others.

For those individuals who belong to a firearms advocacy group such as **The National Rifle Association**, **The Second Amendment Foundation**, **Gun Owners of America**, **The Connecticut Coalition of Sportsman**, **The Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association**, **The Connecticut Association of Firearms Retailers**, **Ye Connecticut Gun Guild** or the **Connecticut Citizens Defense League**, I implore you to ask these organizations to hold a **CONNECTICUT FIREARM SUMMIT** to exchange information and find the common ground necessary to advocate our **FIREARMS RIGHTS** with one voice.

I've found myself looking to see who else is involved in Connecticut Firearm issues or supporting those that are, and can't help but wonder where the big organizations are when it comes to offering financial support of important issues.

It's one thing to offer verbal support for firearm issues and yet another to become an active participant in the fights that are currently being waged by individuals who go involved voluntarily or by circumstances beyond their control.

Mark my words, this legal and legislative fight will not end anytime in the near future. There are still those amongst us who truly believe that disarming American citizens is the only way for everyone to get along without fear.

Before you read further, consider the fact that the recent incident in Manchester involved eight unarmed Connecticut residents who were gunned down by an armed assailant. Now start thinking how this incident will be used to justify more restrictions on the rights of honest law abiding citizens to obtain, own and carry weapons of self defense in CT.

If every person who owns a firearm in Connecticut was to donate \$1.00 or more per month towards our Second Amendment issues, everyone would take notice and think twice about current and future laws that may restrict the rights of honest law abiding citizens.

If you agree with this information and have a possible desire and/or ability to **FINANCIALLY SUPPORT Second Amendment legal issues in Connecticut**, please find the time to drop me an email with your **REAL NAME** and contact information to edperuta@ctgunrights.com

This is not a solicitation for money, but is a request for support.

Respectfully,

Edward A. Peruta