

Crime - Colorado Referendum Event (4/12/00)

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

As Columbine Anniversary Nears, G.O.P. Leaders Push Through Gun-Crime Bill

By ERIC SCHMITT

WASHINGTON, April 11 — Conceding vulnerability on a hot campaign issue, House Republican leaders today sent to the floor a popular gun-crime bill, written by Republicans, and passed it so they would have something to show before next week's anniversary of the fatal shootings at Columbine High School.

Lawmakers voted 358 to 60 to send \$100 million in block grants to states that imposed mandatory jail sentences for gun crimes. Only six states would now qualify for the grants, but supporters said that number would grow. All but three Republicans voted in favor of the measure.

Republican leaders expressed confidence that today's vote would give rank-and-file members heading home for a two-week recess on Friday ammunition against accusations that the Republican-led Congress was bottling up a separate, wide-ranging gun-control bill opposed by

the National Rifle Association.

But in a sign of the party's anxiety over the issue, House Republican leaders railroaded the gun-crime bill to the floor under a time-saving procedure that bars amendments, even though the measure had only one hearing and no votes in the House Judiciary Committee.

"Our leadership wanted this bill on the floor because the Columbine anniversary is coming up next week," Representative Bill McCollum, a Florida Republican who sponsored the bill, said in an interview.

Senator Mike DeWine, an Ohio Republican, today introduced a similar bill in the Senate that has broad Republican support, but would probably become a magnet for Democratic amendments.

The White House spokesman, Joe Lockhart, said today's House vote was "a political trap" for Democrats and "a cruel political trick on the American public" because it failed

to authorize 500 additional federal agents and 1,000 prosecutors that President Clinton had called for.

In the next week, Mr. Clinton and other gun-control supporters plan to use the April 20 anniversary of the high school shootings in Littleton, Colo., where two teenage boys killed 12 fellow students and a teacher before killing themselves, to spotlight a months-old stalemate over the stalled gun-control legislation.

Mr. Clinton went to Annapolis today for a ceremony for a law that made Maryland the first state in the country to require built-in safety locks on handguns and other stringent gun controls.

On Wednesday, Mr. Clinton and Representative Richard A. Gephardt, the House Democratic leader, will travel to Colorado to support a state ballot initiative to require that all sales at gun shows, including those by unlicensed dealers, be subject to background checks.

Today's vote came at a time when the Federal Trade Commission has joined five states in an antitrust inquiry into whether gun makers are conspiring against Smith & Wesson, the nation's largest gun maker, which has agreed to restrict how it makes and distributes handguns.

House Republican leaders today defended the gun-crime bill and their tactics. "The Republican Congress wants to make sure it is offering a clear, comprehensive approach to reducing gun crimes at the same time when President Clinton is offering an approach based on rhetoric rather than results," said Jonathan Baron, a spokesman for Representative Tom DeLay of Texas, the House majority whip.

Under the House measure, states would qualify for grants if they agreed to set mandatory minimum five-year sentences for criminals convicted of using or possessing a gun during a violent crime. The five-

year sentence would be in addition to the sentence provided for the underlying crime. States would also have to agree to coordinate with federal prosecutors and law-enforcement officials.

The provisions are patterned after Project Exile, a federal program started in 1997 in Richmond, Va., by a United States attorney appointed by Mr. Clinton. Since then, violent crime has fallen 35 percent in Richmond. The six states that have adopted similar laws since then, and that would be eligible for the grant money, are Virginia, Texas, South Carolina, Louisiana, Colorado and Florida.

But critics said the House bill added new, unnecessary mandatory minimum jail terms, and relatively small financial incentives to states that change their laws.

The bill, for example, calls for \$100 million in grants over the next five years, including \$10 million next year and \$15 million in 2002. The bill

broadly defines how states can use the money to include the police, prosecutors, courts and expansion of prisons.

Representative Robert C. Scott, Democrat of Virginia, said the grants would cover the incarceration costs of only half a dozen new inmates. "Although it sounds good and makes a good slogan, it's not a good policy," said Mr. Scott, who added that other cities in Virginia like Norfolk and Virginia Beach had reduced their violent-crime rates with Project Exile-type programs.

Proponents retorted that the program was a proven success. "It may not be the gun-control agenda of the left, but it works," said Representative Robert L. Ehrlich Jr., a Maryland Republican.

Representative Heather A. Wilson, Republican of New Mexico, added, "It's time to stop the revolving door of justice and put these people away."

The New York Times

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2000

PRESIDENT CLINTON: STANDING WITH COLORADO VOTERS TO CLOSE THE GUN SHOW LOOPHOLE

April 12, 2000

Today in Denver, President Clinton will participate in a citizen rally sponsored by SAFE Colorado in support of a statewide ballot initiative to close the gun show loophole. The President will highlight the leadership that Colorado and other states are now demonstrating on gun safety -- but he will also point out that national legislation is needed to address this national problem. For over nine months, Congress has failed to act on the gun legislation passed by the Senate last May. That legislation includes a measure requiring background checks for all sales at gun shows, and it served as the model for the Colorado ballot initiative. The President today will again challenge Congress to put the interests of American families above those of the gun lobby and to pass common-sense gun legislation before departing for recess at the end of this week.

THE GUN SHOW LOOPHOLE: PROVIDING CRIMINALS WITH EASY ACCESS TO FIREARMS. Every year, an estimated 5 million people attend over 4,400 gun shows in convention centers, school gyms, and on fairgrounds across our nation. While most people who buy and sell guns at gun shows are law-abiding citizens, a dangerous trend is emerging: criminals, juveniles and other restricted persons are exploiting a loophole under current law that allows unlicensed individuals to sell guns at gun shows without conducting background checks or keeping the records necessary to help law enforcement trace a gun used in a crime. Since unlicensed individuals account for up to 50 percent of all sellers at gun shows, this loophole has made gun shows a prime location for illegal activities. In response to a presidential directive, the Departments of Treasury and Justice released a study last year documenting 314 gun show investigations linked to over 54,000 crime guns; 46 percent of the investigations involved the purchase or sale of firearms by felons and 34 percent involved the sale of firearms later used in serious crimes, including homicides.

COLORADO CITIZENS: TAKING ACTION TO CLOSE THE DEADLY GUN SHOW LOOPHOLE. Citizens working with SAFE Colorado filed the state ballot initiative to close the gun show loophole in March after the Colorado state legislature failed to pass gun show legislation supported by Governor Bill Owens. SAFE (Sane Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic) Colorado is a bipartisan organization that lobbies in support of reasonable gun laws. The gun show ballot initiative is modeled on the Administration's gun show measure that passed the Senate last May, requiring background checks and recordkeeping for all firearms sales at gun shows and providing law enforcement up to three business days to complete background checks. In order to get the initiative onto the ballot this November, SAFE Colorado must collect at least 62,000 signatures in support by August. But the gun lobby has vowed to block the initiative and its stalling tactics at every turn have cut the amount of time available to collect the needed signatures. The President today will remind the people of Colorado of their power to make their voices heard, and he will urge them to stand up to the gun lobby and its allies. A recent survey shows that the gun show ballot initiative has the support of 83 percent of Colorado voters.

CALLING ON CONGRESS TO CLOSE THE GUN SHOW LOOPHOLE NATIONWIDE BEFORE RECESS. The President's participation at today's rally comes just one day after he joined Governor Parris Glendening for the signing of a new comprehensive gun safety law in

Maryland requiring built-in child safety locks on all handguns. The President will note that action on the state level is making a powerful difference. At the same time, he will also underscore the importance of pursuing a strong national framework for our gun laws. He will point out that a patchwork of inconsistent state gun laws enables criminals to exploit loopholes in states with weaker laws and commit crimes in states with stronger laws. He will also point out that Congress can pass lifesaving new gun laws far more quickly than all 50 states. Yet for over nine months, Congress has failed to act on common sense gun safety legislation that would require background checks at gun shows; mandate child safety locks with every handgun sold; ban the importation of high capacity ammunition clips; and bar the most violent juvenile offenders from possessing firearms when they become adults. The President today will once again urge congressional leaders to take action on this legislation before they recess this week.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 11, 2000

S.A.F.E. COLORADO RALLY

DATE: April 12, 2000
LOCATION: Colorado Convention Center
MEET & GREET TIME: 10:35am – 10:55am
EVENT TIME: 11:00am – 12:00pm
FROM: Bruce Reed

I. PURPOSE

To show your support for S.A.F.E. Colorado's state ballot initiative to close the gun show loophole, and to urge the Congress to pass federal gun safety legislation.

II. BACKGROUND

Today in Denver, you will participate in a citizen rally, of approximately 3,000 people, sponsored by S.A.F.E. Colorado in support of a statewide ballot initiative to close the gun show loophole. You will highlight the leadership that Colorado and other states are now demonstrating on gun safety – but you will also point out that national legislation is needed to address this national problem. For over nine months, Congress has failed to act on the gun legislation passed by the Senate last May. That legislation includes a measure requiring background checks for all sales at gun shows, and it served as the model for the Colorado ballot initiative. Today you will again challenge Congress to put the interests of American families above those of the gun lobby and to pass common-sense gun legislation before departing for recess at the end of this week.

In September, Governor Bill Owens and Attorney General Ken Salazar announced their support for a bipartisan five-point plan to reduce gun violence that included a provision to close the gun show loophole. House Minority Leader Ken Gordon championed the initiative in the House, but there was no sponsor in the Senate. The bill passed out of the House Judiciary Committee in late January by one vote, but failed later in mid-February to pass out of the House Appropriations Committee by one vote when a previously undecided member caved into pressure from the gun lobby and voted against the measure. On March 8, 2000, SAFE Colorado filed their ballot initiative to require background checks at gun shows that is largely based on the Administration's gun show

bill. In order to get the measure on the ballot in November, SAFE Colorado must collect 62,000 signatures by August. The Rocky Mountain Gun Owners has vowed to stall the referendum by filing a lawsuit on procedural grounds with the Colorado Supreme Court. This tactic will postpone signature collection until early May, but SAFE expects to easily win the case.

The Gun Show Loophole: Providing Criminals With Easy Access To Firearms.

Every year, an estimated 5 million people attend over 4,400 gun shows in convention centers, school gyms, and on fairgrounds across our nation. While most people who buy and sell guns at gun shows are law-abiding citizens, a dangerous trend is emerging: criminals, juveniles and other restricted persons are exploiting a loophole under current law that allows unlicensed individuals to sell guns at gun shows without conducting background checks or keeping the records necessary to help law enforcement trace a gun used in a crime. Since unlicensed individuals account for up to 50 percent of all sellers at gun shows, this loophole has made gun shows a prime location for illegal activities. In response to a presidential directive, the Departments of Treasury and Justice released a study last year documenting 314 gun show investigations linked to over 54,000 crime guns; 46 percent of the investigations involved the purchase or sale of firearms by felons and 34 percent involved the sale of firearms later used in serious crimes.

Colorado Citizens: Taking Action To Close The Deadly Gun Show Loophole.

Citizens working with S.A.F.E. Colorado filed the state ballot initiative to close the gun show loophole in March after the Colorado state legislature failed to pass gun show legislation supported by Governor Bill Owens. S.A.F.E. (Sane Alternatives to the Firearms Epidemic) Colorado is a bipartisan organization that lobbies in support of reasonable gun laws. The gun show ballot initiative is modeled on the Administration's gun show measure that passed the Senate last May, requiring background checks and recordkeeping for all firearms sales at gun shows and providing law enforcement up to three business days to complete background checks. In order to get the initiative onto the ballot this November, S.A.F.E. Colorado must collect at least 62,000 signatures in support by August. But the gun lobby has vowed to block the initiative and its stalling tactics at every turn have cut the amount of time available to collect the needed signatures. Today you will remind the people of Colorado of their power to make their voices heard, and will urge them to stand up to the gun lobby and its allies. A recent survey shows that the ballot initiative has the support of 83 percent of Colorado voters.

Calling On Congress To Close The Gun Show Loophole Nationwide Before Recess.

Your participation at today's rally comes just one day after you joined Governor Parris Glendening for the signing of a new comprehensive gun safety law in Maryland requiring built-in child safety locks on all handguns. You will note that action on the state level is making a powerful difference. At the same time, you will also underscore the importance of pursuing a strong national framework for our gun laws. You will point out that a patchwork of inconsistent state gun laws enables criminals to exploit loopholes in states with weaker laws and commit crimes in states with stronger laws. You will also point out

that Congress can pass lifesaving new gun laws far more quickly than all 50 states. Yet for over nine months, Congress has failed to act on common sense gun safety legislation that would require background checks at gun shows; mandate child safety locks with every handgun sold; ban the importation of high capacity ammunition clips; and bar the most violent juvenile offenders from possessing firearms when they become adults. Today you will once again urge congressional leaders to take action on this legislation before they recess this week.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Briefing Participants:

Karen Tramontano
Bruce Reed
Joe Lockhart
Leanne Shimabukuro
Jeff Shesol

Meet and Greet Participants:

See attached list.

Stage Participants:

Former Governor Richard Lamm (D-CO)
Representative Diana DeGette (R- CO)
Attorney General Ken Salazar (D-CO)
Mary Estill Buchanan, Former Secretary of State (R-CO), S.A.F.E. Colorado Board of Directors
J.D. MacFarlane, Former Attorney General (D-CO), S.A.F.E. Colorado Board of Directors
Steven Foster, S.A.F.E. Colorado Board of Directors
David Spreace, S.A.F.E. Colorado Board of Directors
Michael Barnes, President, Handgun Control, Inc.

Note: Representative Gephardt will be in the VIP section of the Rally.

Program Participants:

YOU

Mayor Wellington Webb (D- Denver, CO)
Arnold Grossman, Co-President, S.A.F.E. Colorado
John Head, Co-President, S.A.F.E Colorado
Tom Mauser, Political Director, S.A.F.E. Colorado, and father of Columbine shooting victim

IV. PRESS PLAN

Open Press.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- **YOU** will be greeted by the stage participants and proceed backstage.
- **YOU** will greet S.A.F.E. Colorado representatives and supporters backstage.
- Representative DeGette, Governor Richard Lamm, Attorney General Ken Salazar, Mary Estill Buchanan, J.D. MacFarlane, Michael Barnes, Steven Foster, and David Sprecaze will be announced onto the stage.
- **YOU** will be announced onto the stage, accompanied by Mayor Wellington Webb, Arnold Grossman, John Head, and Tom Mauser.
- Mayor Wellington Webb will make remarks and introduce Arnold Grossman.
- Arnold Grossman will make remarks and introduce John Head.
- John Head will make remarks and introduce Tom Mauser.
- Tom Mauser will make remarks and introduce **YOU**.
- **YOU** will make remarks, work a ropeline, and depart.

VI. REMARKS

To be provided by Speechwriting.

VI. ATTACHMENT

List of Meet and Greet Participants.

S.A.F.E. Colorado Meet & Greet Participants
April 12, 2000

David Bailey, Norwest Bank, Denver, CO
Robert L. Cohen, Insurance Management Associates, Denver, CO
Steve Farber, Attorney, Brownstein, Hyatt, and Farber, Denver, CO – lives in Englewood, CO
Joyce Foster, City Councilwoman, Denver, CO
Steven Foster, Rabbi, Temple Emanuel, Denver, CO
Carl Friedman, Repertoire Capital Ventures, Englewood, CO
Ben Gelt, S.A.F.E. Students, Denver, CO*
Arnold Grossman, Co-President, S.A.F.E. Colorado
Pat Hamill, CEO Oakwood Homes, Castle Pines, CO
John Head, Co-President, S.A.F.E. Colorado
Marshall Kaplan, Executive Director, Institute for Policy, University of Colorado, Denver, CO
Donald Kortz, CEO, Fuller & Company, Denver, CO
Steve Leatherman, Investor/Entrepreneur, Denver, CO
Randi Lee, Randi Lee Goldworks (Guest of Arnold Grossman), Englewood, CO
Tom Mauser, Political Director, S.A.F.E. Colorado
Paul Mirage, CEO, Chef America, Englewood, CA
Eddie Robinson, Robinson Dairy, Denver, CO
Mary Rossick-Kern, Volunteers of America, Castle Rock, CO
Jared Schutz, Proflowers.com, Boulder, CO
Mike Shaw, CEO, Shaw Buick Saab Chevrolet, Englewood, CO
Linda Shoemaker, Brett Family Foundation, Boulder, CO
Charles Steinbrueck, Retail Venture Partnership, Denver, CO
Michael Smith, Basin Exploration, Englewood, CO
Terry Vitale, New West Publishing, Englewood, CO
David Winkler, S.A.F.E. Students, Denver, CO*
Daniel Yohannes, President, US Bank, Denver, CO

*NOTE: You met the youth co-leaders of S.A.F.E. students when they visited Washington, D.C. to lobby Congress on gun legislation in July 1999.