

TESTIMONY OF TECHNICAL SERGEANT BRUCE A. BEATTY, USAF (Retired)
in favor of
CONSTITUTIONAL CARRY
BEFORE THE FEDERALISM COMMITTEE
of the
OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mister Chair, Members of the Committee, My Fellow Citizens;

- 1.) Oaths of Office** (every member)
- 2.) Second Amendment** (A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed)
- 3.) Article 1, Section 4** (The people have the right to bear arms for their defense and security; but standing armies in time peace, are dangerous to liberty, and shall not be kept up; and the military shall be in strict subordination to the civil power.)

My question today is: Why are we even having this conversation? The reason, as I see things, is that in the past We, the People, have allowed our SERVANTS to grossly infringe upon our Creator-granted Rights. For DECADES, We, the People, have been taken to task, blamed, held to account for, and PUNISHED for the unlawful actions of the criminal element. We have suffered the loss of our Freedom to be peaceably armed, as was the intent of the Founders. This Great Nation was BORN INTO FREEDOM BECAUSE of “gun control” efforts by the Crown.

Today, we are facing a similar dilemma; our Rights are being taken bit by bit, inch by inch. There are those running for high office today that have made it crystal clear that it is their intent that we be totally disarmed. It is time to not only STOP this process; it is time to reverse it. Hence, our cause to restore our Right to Keep and Bear Arms guaranteed under our Constitution(s). “Constitutional Carry” is a very good step in this direction. I have long been an ardent supporter of the Right to Keep and Bear Arms. I actively and emphatically supported Concealed Carry, although I found it abhorrent that one would be forced to beg “permission”, be required to possess a state-granted “permission slip/concealed carry license”, and be TAXED, in the way of fees, to be able to exercise a RIGHT. Such a process converted that RIGHT into a state-granted PRIVILEGE, revocable by the state upon demand. I try to be pragmatic and a realist. By agreeing to state-controlled concealed carry, we have had the opportunity to prove, BEYOND DOUBT, that law-abiding citizens are not worthy of the scorn heaped upon us by, in many cases, well-intentioned but misguided politicians and a CERTAINLY dishonest mass media.

The courts have ruled that our law enforcement agencies have NO LEGAL OBLIGATION TO EVEN RESPOND TO A CALL FOR HELP from a citizen, and that they also have NO LEGAL OBLIGATION TO PROTECT AN INDIVIDUAL CITIZEN FROM HARM. Having been a LEO myself, I know that the great majority of peace officers will do their best to assist and protect our citizens, and that they are worthy of our support. Our goal is to restore these RIGHTS so as to be able to defend ourselves should the occasion arise, wherever and whenever necessary, without unreasonable restrictions and conditions thrust upon us by the state.

As I stand here today, 17 states, including our neighbors in Kentucky and West Virginia, have restored the Right to Constitutional Carry for all law-abiding adults. On a side note, I would defy any of our opposition to show one, JUST ONE, instance of a law-abiding citizen committing a violent crime with a firearm. Just ONE. The time has come for restoration of these Rights for the citizens of Ohio.

True Meaning of the Second Amendment

For those who do not understand the TRUE MEANING of the Second Amendment in the Bill of Rights, and Article 1 Section 4 of the Constitution of the State of Ohio, let me explain it for you:

The Second Amendment and Article 1, Section 4 does not apply to “semiautomatic assault weapons”. Pistols, rifles, shotguns, revolvers or high capacity magazines”. The Second Amendment and Article 1, Section 4 **APPLIES TO AND RESTRICTS GOVERNMENT.**

The technology of the firearm is IRRELEVANT; the restrictions upon government remain the same, regardless of the firearm. The Second Amendment and Article 1, Section 4 were not written to “grant permission” for citizens to Keep and Bear Arms; they FORBID GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE in the Right to Keep and Bear Arms, PERIOD. THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS SHALL NOT BE INFRINGED.

This concept applies to all other Rights. Rights are not “granted” by “government”; they are stipulated, inherent Rights that pre-exist the written word, and, as with all Rights, government shall not prohibit the lawful exercise thereof.

Does anyone here find it ironic that in those areas where strict “gun control laws”, such as outright prohibition on the carrying of arms, are in place, there is also an attendant high level of violent crime with committed with firearms? Is it not also ironic that since 1990, the level of firearms ownership in this nation has almost DOUBLED? Why is the “typical” response to a violent crime is the proposed “solution” is to further restrict the Rights of those in society that have done no wrong? Why the “default demand” for more “gun control”, when “gun control” has been shown to be nothing more than an absolute, abysmal FAILURE as a crime-fighting tool? At this moment, depending upon which set of numbers one were to use, somewhere between 80 and 150 MILLION citizens possess possibly as many as 500,000,000 privately-held firearms, and BILLIONS, if not TRILLIONS of rounds of ammunition. If we were a problem, you’d have know about it by now.

We have had decades and decades of the implementation of these failed policies, with the ONLY RESULT being the loss of more and more Freedom This MUST end, and end NOW!

Every time we have this conversation, our opposition proclaims that “more guns equals more crime”. We’ve all seen the predictions of “shootouts over parking spaces”, “road rage leading to gunfights”, and blood running in the streets. NONE OF THESE PREDICTIONS HAVE COME TO FRUITION, EVER.

In fact, as we have witnessed in the case of “concealed carry”, is that at the very least, crime rates have remained unchanged. However, quite often we have seen violent crime levels DECREASE proportionately with the level of law-abiding citizens carrying defensive weapons. There can be no argument regarding these facts. As things stand today, my Right to openly carry a firearm is CONSTITUTIONALLY PROTECTED in the State of Ohio. This has NOT been a problem, by any objective measure. Also, lawful “concealed carry” has been the Law of the Land in Ohio for going on 2 decades, and has been very successful, and SAFE.

Therefore, the time has long-since passed that we must restore our RIGHTS to Keep and Bear Arms as conceived by the Founders. “Constitutional Carry” simply amounts to doing away with the requirement that a law-abiding citizen MUST obtain a “state-issued permission slip”, and pay TAXES, in the form of fees, to exercise that Right. Our Right to Keep and Bear Arms is the ONLY RIGHT to have such restrictions placed upon it. I do not have to successfully complete a journalism class and pay a “fee” to write a letter to the editor, nor be approved by the clergy before being allowed to attend church. The Right to Keep and Bear Arms is NO DIFFERENT, and this Right MUST BE RESTORED. Why should I be considered a criminal simply because I put on my cloak?