



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on January 27, 2014

Connecticut Gun Owners Fail to Register; Officials Push “Amnesty”

After Connecticut enacted one of the [most draconian gun-control regimes in America](#), official estimates suggest that the overwhelming majority of the citizens targeted by the latest assault on gun rights failed to comply. Indeed, analysts say it appears that most people largely ignored the new statute, which purports to ban numerous non-registered “assault” weapons and standard-capacity magazines. Now, despite resistance by the governor, state lawmakers are reportedly “scrambling” to come up with a possible amnesty plan allowing gun owners to register past the deadline.



According to [news reports](#), some 50,000 newly mislabeled “assault weapons” and 40,000 so-called “high-capacity” magazines (10 or more rounds) targeted under the scheme were registered with state officials by the January 1 deadline. However, estimates and an [official report](#) by the Connecticut Office of Legislative Research issued before the new law suggest there are many, many more that went unregistered. Massive non-compliance with gun-registration schemes has been the norm in the United States and abroad, experts pointed out — and analysts say that is likely what happened in Connecticut.

Noting that the real number of “large-capacity” magazines in the state was unknown, the 2011 Connecticut Office of Legislative Research report [said](#) that it “could be in the tens of millions.” Estimates on the number of guns subject to the legislation, meanwhile, indicate that there may be as many as 500,000. Based on those figures, analysts suggested that perhaps less than 10 percent — possibly even less than five percent — of the items subject to the draconian new gun-control regime were registered with authorities by the deadline.

“Governor Dannel Malloy and the government of the state of Connecticut are having their own ‘Oh, poop’ moment, now that they’ve tallied the number of citizens who have registered their ‘assault weapons’ and ‘high-capacity magazines’ required by the state’s unconstitutional gun laws, compared that to the estimated number of applicable weapons and magazines in the state, and realize they’ve been ignored,” [observed](#) Bob Owens, editor of the pro-Second Amendment website BearingArms.com.

“Historically speaking, 90-percent or more of those required to comply with gun registration laws in the U.S. refuse to do so, and there is no reason to suspect that this registration attempt in Connecticut is any different,” Owens continued in comments about the radical new registration scheme. “I’ve seen estimates of 1,000,000 firearm magazines that should have been registered under the law, but the state reports registering only 40,000 ... just 4 percent.”

Other analysts came up with similar non-compliance estimates, suggesting that the new anti-gun scheme — widely lambasted as unconstitutional and currently being fought in court — has been largely



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ignored by the public. “In past cases of firearms bans, noncompliance with registration is not uncommon,” pointed out Chris Eger in an [analysis for Guns.com](#), another popular pro-Second Amendment website. “In California in 1990, out of an estimated 300,000 guns classified as ‘assault weapons’ just 7,000 were registered.”

Even in other nations without strong gun rights traditions and constitutional guarantees for the unalienable right to keep and bear arms, citizens have balked at registration. After all, historically, tyrants have almost always tried to force subjects to register their weapons prior to confiscation and eventual totalitarianism. When the Canadian government tried to register guns, Eger said, there was massive civil disobedience, with estimates indicating that the compliance rate was less than a third. Even in Austria and Germany, the number of guns registered was drastically below what authorities had estimated.

As *The New American* [reported](#) a year ago, in the state of New York, a radical assault on gun rights dubbed the “SAFE Act” was met with open calls for defiance. Setting the stage for what some analysts said might be the largest act of civil disobedience in New York history, countless gun-rights activists and owners vowed never to register their weapons. Even some lawmakers took to the floor of the legislature and said they would not comply with the draconian law. Sheriffs and other law enforcement officials also vowed to fight it as unconstitutional.

In Connecticut — ironically, also known as the “Constitution State” — lawmakers are now reportedly seeking to offer “amnesty” in an apparent bid to raise compliance levels. “It had come to my attention and the attention of others that many people who were attempting in good faith to comply with the law ... were not able to because of what I would argue were circumstances not under their control,” Senate Minority Leader John McKinney (R-Fairfield) was [quoted as claiming](#) by the *Hartford Courant*.

In the state House, Rep. Rob Sampson is also working to extend the registration period, and other lawmakers have been involved in the discussions. News reports, citing officials, said that “many citizens” had tried to register their purportedly banned property by mail on December 31. However, because post offices closed, the documents were postmarked January 2 and were returned by state officials due to being past the statutory deadline. Pro-amnesty lawmakers are hoping an extension would encourage more citizens to obey.

The Democrat governor’s office, however, opposes the so-called “amnesty” effort, sending a letter to legislators saying that gun owners who failed to comply by the deadline were just “too late” to do anything about it. “Individuals whose late registrations were not processed,” the message to lawmakers says, “can render their magazine or firearm inoperable, sell it to a licensed gun dealer, remove it from the state, or turn it over to law enforcement.”

The penalty for being found with an “unregistered” standard-capacity magazine or semi-automatic firearm misclassified as an “assault” weapon under the new scheme is a fine — the first time. Further violations of the unconstitutional statute can result in up to five years in prison. While the [long lines to register guns](#) by the deadline drew numerous comparisons to historical instances of tyranny — as well as sympathy from gun owners across America — it remains unclear how many citizens failed to comply, and for what reasons.

Suggesting that some gun owners may have simply not known about the purported registration requirements, the Connecticut Citizens Defense League is [calling on authorities](#) to extend the deadline for compliance. “There are still too many gun owners that either do not know about this new law, or do



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not realize that it applies to them,” said CCDL President Scott Wilson. “I would ask the governor and state legislators what there would be to gain by punishing persons that are otherwise law abiding that do not legitimately know about this law?”

In addition to extending the deadline, the organization, which represents more than 10,000 members and has challenged the statute in federal court, is also urging officials to adopt an open-ended “amnesty” scheme to avoid criminalizing potentially massive numbers of everyday citizens. “CCDL also suggests that the state should consider an ongoing amnesty program in the future, for those that discover they own banned firearms or magazines that are not registered,” Wilson said. “This would likely alleviate some of the concerns people may have about the intent of the state.”

Gun rights proponents, meanwhile, ridiculed state officials for expecting citizens to comply with the oppressive gun-control regime — and for efforts in the legislature to save it. “They’re calling for an amnesty period because their internal estimates likely show that their attempt to browbeat the citizenry into registering their arms for future confiscation has been an abject failure, and they are desperate to do anything they can do to encourage compliance now that their threats have failed,” [wrote](#) Bob Owens at BearingArms.com.

Other pro-Second Amendment commentators made similar remarks. “So, tens, if not hundreds of thousands of people waited until the last absolute second to send in this paperwork? I’m thinking not,” [said](#) Dan Cannon at GunsSaveLives.net. “I think this ‘amnesty’ deal is a chance for anti-gun politicians to try and save face after a massive civil disobedience movement was discovered.”

At the federal level, the Obama administration has [continued to issue unconstitutional decrees](#) on gun control after failing spectacularly last year in its push for Congress to approve more infringements on the human right to keep and bear arms. Ironically, however, as *The New American* [reported](#) this month, the nationwide assault on gun rights by Obama, the establishment media, and certain extremist Democrats has backfired, big time. In addition to sparking record firearm sales across America, dozens of state laws easing restrictions were enacted — almost double the number of laws purporting to impose new infringements. Efforts [to fight the radical new scheme](#) in Connecticut are ongoing.

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