



Obama Planning Gun-control Legislation

In the aftermath of Jared Loughner's shooting spree in Tucson, many Americans took the understandable step of evaluating whether they should take further steps to see to their own personal safety: [Many decided that it was time to purchase a firearm](#). But even as the crime led the public to realize that law enforcement had proven itself impotent to avert one man's evil intentions, many of the nation's elected representatives appear to think that the best way to stop future violence is to further hamper the ability of law-abiding citizens to exercise their Second Amendment right to self-defense. Rep. Peter King, a Republican legislator with [a history of exploiting crises for policy aims](#), rushed to the fore with [his scheme to create gun-free "bubbles" around "prominent politicians"](#)— a nonsensical notion that would have done nothing to protect Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D-Ariz.), and [which has already been rejected](#) by Republican leadership on Capitol Hill.



A *Newsweek* article, "[White House to Push Gun Control](#)," outlines the cynical mentality which reigns in the White House regarding its plan to push for further intrusions on the right of Americans to defend themselves:

At the beginning of his State of the Union address, President Obama tipped his hat to Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, who's now recuperating in a Houston medical facility. But throughout the hourlong speech, he never addressed the issue at the core of the Giffords tragedy — gun control — and what lawmakers would, or should, do to reform American firearm-access laws.

That was intentional, according to the White House. An administration official says Obama didn't mention guns in his speech because of the omnipresent controversy surrounding the Second Amendment and gun control. Tuesday's speech was designed to be more about the economy and how, as Obama repeated nine times, the U.S. could "win the future."

But in the next two weeks, the White House will unveil a new gun-control effort in which it will urge Congress to strengthen current laws, which now allow some mentally unstable people, such as alleged Arizona shooter Jared Loughner, to obtain certain assault weapons, in some cases without even a background check.

The recent tactics employed by opponents of the Second Amendment have turned away from the direct assault strategy of the past; rather than simply trying to ban firearm ownership, those who oppose the right of self-defense are endeavoring to hamper the free exercise of that right, either by restricting



Written by [James Heiser](#) on January 28, 2011

access to ammunition ([as was recently ruled unconstitutional in California](#)) or by [proposing mandatory insurance](#), which could make gun ownership unaffordable for the many of the nation's poorest citizens.

The latest tactic invoked references to the widely publicized discussions of the mental state of Jared Loughner. For the Left, discrimination against mental illness is the one form discrimination that serves the public good; profiling based on race, religion, gender, etc. may be illegal, but the label of "mental illness" — without regard to the type of illness, or its severity — is the sort of profiling that advances their agenda.

[According to an article posted at TheHill.com](#), meetings are already being conducted behind closed doors to determine whether the nation's laws that criminalize gun ownership by the "mentally ill" are sufficiently draconian. As usual, the focus of such discussions seems to be on whether or not the government is already encroaching sufficiently on the privacy of American citizens to adequately encroach on their right to self-defense:

Following the Virginia Tech tragedy, Congress unanimously passed a law designed to bolster the NICS system by providing states with financial incentives to report records of mental illness (and other red-flag cases) to the FBI. The NICS Improvement Amendments Act was supported by the NRA and signed by then-President George W. Bush in early 2008, but reporting by states remains voluntary....

On Monday, Mayors Against Illegal Guns — a group headed by New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Boston Mayor Thomas Menino — introduced a proposal to require states to report mental health records, drug-abuse histories, domestic violence cases and other red flags to NICS. The proposal would also require unlicensed gun dealers to perform NICS background checks — a step not mandated under current law.

"While I support the Second Amendment rights of responsible, law-abiding Americans, I also support tough, common-sense laws to keep guns out of the hands of felons, drug abusers, the mentally ill and other dangerous people," Grant Woods, former Republican attorney general of Arizona, said in endorsing the Bloomberg proposal.

If such proposals are enacted into law, one result will be that many individuals who are suffering from a wide variety of mental illnesses will not seek medical attention, for fear that their rights will be taken away from them. How many people will suffer in silence, for fear of suffering further social stigmatization on account of their illness? After all, Mr. Woods — and many who share his mentality — are allowed to posit in public that the mentally ill are not "law-abiding Americans," a stunning, discriminatory comment.

For example, when a person who is suffering sub-clinical depression finds himself categorized with "felons, drug abusers ... and other dangerous people," he knows the degree to which certain forms of discrimination are still encouraged when they advance the aims of the State. What if a statistical analysis found a degree of correlation between race and gun violence that was at least as significant as that which is purported to be between "mental illness" and such violence? Would any politician on Capitol Hill dare to assert skin color or ethnicity could be the sole and sufficient basis for terminating a citizen's Second Amendment rights? As always, the agenda of the gun-control crowd is not one which will make Americans any more safe — but it will make them demonstrably less free.



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