



Reaping the Whirlwind: the Colorado Model and Gun Control

On February 18, the Democrat-controlled Colorado House of Representatives [passed all four gun control bills](#) over an outnumbered Republican minority's noisy and occasionally emotional protests.

House Bill 1224 would prohibit the sale, transfer, or possession of large capacity magazines (15 for firearms and 8 for shotguns). It passed 36-29.

House Bill 1226 would prohibit concealed weapons from being carried into any building, structure, stadium, or arena used by a public institution of higher education (unless the permit holder is a security officer employed by that institution). It passed 34-31.

House Bill 1228 would require that those seeking a criminal background check in order to purchase a firearm pay the costs of that background check. It passed 33-32.

House Bill 1229 would require all sellers of firearms, including transactions between private individuals, to receive a background check through a licensed gun seller before the sale can be completed. It passed 36-29.

These four bills are headed to the Senate where Democrats hold a 20-15 advantage over Republicans. And Governor John Hickenlooper, a Democrat, [is expected to sign at least three if not all four of the bills](#), making them laws of the state.

In covering the bills for the *Associated Press*, Ivan Moreno noted that "the vote [on] Monday in Colorado's gun control debate is part of the shift in the region's politics to the left."

That shift has been going on at least since 2004 when four rich liberals, Tim Gill, Rutt Bridges, Jared Polis, and Pat Stryker, decided to fund the [Colorado Model](#), a low-profile strategy deliberately designed to turn "red states blue" [according to Erik Erikson](#), a blogger at *Redstate.com*. As explained by Erikson, the Colorado Model is "one of the left's most effective stratagems ... when combined with the tactics of Saul Alinsky and his disciples, the Colorado Model is akin to a Soviet platoon armed with AK-47s mowing down a militia armed with slingshots."

The Colorado Model was first outed by Fred Barnes in his column at *The Weekly Standard* in July 2008 when he noted that something strange and stunning was happening to the conservative state of Colorado:

In Colorado, Democrats are third in registered voters (31.2 percent), behind both Independents (34.19 percent) and Republicans (34.14 percent). But in the last two election cycles — 2004 and 2006 — they've routed Republicans, capturing the governorship, both houses of the state





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legislature, a U.S. Senate seat, and two U.S. House seats. Democrats are on a roll, and that's not likely to change this year.

Indeed it didn't. Democrats now have commanding control of both houses and the governorship and nothing is standing in their way to enforce their view of the world onto unsuspecting and politically naïve Colorado citizens and gun owners.

The Colorado Model is a simple strategy that consists of developing seven "capacities" that are "required to drive a successful political strategy and keep it on [the] offense," according to Eric O'Keefe, chairman of the conservative Sam Adams Alliance in Chicago. The seven capacities are: generate intellectual ammunition for the fight, pursue investigations into alleged wrongdoings by the enemy, mobilize citizens to get active on specific issues, expose media bias that opposes their agenda, litigate when necessary, train up new young progressives as soldiers in the battle, and support progressives in the media who are favorable to their agenda.

How are they doing in Colorado? As Barnes explained:

First, there are the think tanks such as Bighorn and Bell [founded and funded by Bridges] and supposedly nonpartisan political advocacy groups like the Colorado clone of MoveOn.org called ProgressNowAction.org, founded in 2005. Another clone, this one a local version of Media Matters known as Colorado Media Matters, was created two years ago to harass journalists and editorial writers who don't push the liberal line.

There's a "public interest" law firm, Colorado Ethics Watch, established in 2006, plus an online newspaper, the Colorado Independent, with a team of reporters to ferret out wrongdoing by Republicans, also begun in 2006. And there's a school to train new liberal leaders, the Center for Progressive Leadership Colorado, as well as new media outlets with bloggers and online news and gossip, including ColoradoPols.com and SquareState.net.

That covers all seven capacities. Count 'em.

According to Barnes, here's how it works:

It works quite simply. The investigative arm uncovers some alleged wrongdoing by a Republican candidate or official or plays up what someone else has claimed. Then Ethics Watch steps in and demands an official investigation, and ProgressNowAction.org jumps on the story. This is synergy at work. It spurs political chatter. Finally, the mainstream media are forced to report on it.

The Republicans are in disarray, to put it nicely. John Andrews, the former Republican Senate majority leader, admitted as much back in 2008: "Colorado is being used as a test bed for a swarm offense by Democrats and liberals to put conservatives and Republicans on defense as much as possible."

With no effective pushback, the Colorado Republican Party can only mount a noisy and emotional defense of sacred rights against this onslaught. Gun control bills like those just passed by the Colorado legislature and shortly to be signed into law by the Colorado governor, are just the beginning. From the *King James Version* of Holy Scripture comes this warning:

For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind: it hath no stalk: the bud shall yield no meal: if so be it yield, the strangers shall swallow it up. — Hosea 8:7

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