



ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY RIFLE & PISTOL CLUBS, INC

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2008 POSITION PAPER

PLEASE VOTE "NO" ON A2116 (.50 Caliber Gun Ban)

This bill is an attack on Sportsmen, banning many popular hunting guns.

Claims that it does not ban muzzle loading firearms are INCORRECT. While some muzzle loading firearms are excepted, it bans many of NJ's most popular muzzle loaders, along with modern hunting guns.

A2116 also bans HUNDREDS of historical American firearms, and is a slap in the face to collectors, historians, and the patriots who used these firearms to win the very freedom A2116 seeks to take away.

The real target of this bill – .50 bmg firearms – are not a threat to public safety because they are not used by criminals. They are exorbitantly expensive, large, heavy, and difficult to conceal, and their military ammunition is already illegal in NJ. The honest citizens who buy these guns are thoroughly investigated and certified by the State prior to purchase.

Claims that .50 bmg firearms are not used in competitions, matches and other non-military settings are FALSE. There is a national and regional community of law abiding gun owners who regularly and responsibly use .50 caliber firearms for matches, competitions, and precision target shooting.

Gun bans like A2116 do not reduce crime because they make the mistake of targeting the tool rather than criminal behavior, and the criminal mind will always find another tool. Instead of demonizing hardware based on the size of the hole in the barrel, maximum sentences should be imposed on violent criminals who misuse firearms, with no plea-bargaining or early parole.

A2116 Is an Attack on Sportsmen, Banning Many Popular Hunting Rifles and Interfering with the Inheritance of Family Heirlooms

One of the most popular and widely owned types of hunting guns in New Jersey is the .50 caliber traditional muzzle loading rifle. Many modern versions of the traditional muzzle loader are currently in use by New Jersey sportsmen, containing updated features such as synthetic stocks, fiber optic sights, and scopes.

Although the wording of A2116 (near the front of the bill) appears to create an exemption for traditional muzzle loaders, the *definition* of traditional muzzle loader (found near the end of the bill) excludes traditional muzzle loaders which have synthetic stocks, fiber optic sights, or any sight other than “iron or peep sights.”

Synthetic stocks are a modern innovation that replaced wood, and are ideal for the sportsman because they are impervious to weather. Neither stocks nor sights affect the function of traditional muzzle loading rifles.

A2116 *bans* all traditional muzzle loading rifles with synthetic stocks or fiber optic sights – the most common, popular, and safe traditional muzzle loaders currently used for hunting by New Jersey sportsmen. A partial list of popular hunting guns that would be banned by A2116 follows:

Buckskinner flintlock Carbine (.50)	Thompson Center Black Mountain Magnum percussion (.54)
CVA Greywolf percussion (.50)	Thompson Center Firestorm percussion (.50)
CVA Greywolf flintlock (.50)	Thompson Center Firestorm flintlock (.50)
CVA Lynx percussion (camo) (.50)	Thompson Center Firestorm percussion (.54)
CVA Lynx percussion (camo) (.54)	Thompson Center Firestorm flintlock (.54)
CVA Bobcat Hunter percussion (.50)	Thompson Center Greyhawk (.50)
CVA Bobcat Hunter percussion (.54)	Thompson Center Greyhawk (.54)
CVA Lone Wolf percussion (.50)	Thompson Center New England percussion (.50)
CVA Timber Wolf percussion (.50)	Thompson Center New England flintlock .50
CVA Silver Wolf percussion (.50)	Thompson Center New England percussion (.54)
CVA Silver Wolf percussion (.54)	Thompson Center New England flintlock (.54)
Deer Hunter percussion (blue) (.50)	Thompson Center Tree Hawk percussion (.50)
Deer Hunter flintlock (blue) (.50)	Traditions Deer Hunter flintlock (.50)
Deer Hunter percussion (camo) (.50)	Traditions Deer Hunter percussion (.50)
Deer Hunter flintlock (blue) (.50)	Traditions Pellet flintlock (.50)
Pursuit XLT flintlock (camo) (.50)	Traditions PA Pellet flintlock (nickel) (.50)
Pursuit XLT flintlock (blue) (.50)	Traditions PA Pellet flintlock (blue) (.50)
Pursuit XLT flintlock (nickel) (.50)	Traditions Panther percussion (.50)
Stone Mountain Silver Eagle percussion carbine (.50)	Traditions Panther percussion (.54)
Stone Mountain Silver Eagle percussion (.50)	
Thompson Center Black Mountain Magnum percussion (.50)	

In addition, A2116 fails to provide any definition of “iron sights,” potentially banning *hundreds* of other traditional muzzle loaders whose sights are not actually made of iron, or which contain a scope in lieu of iron or peep sights.

Because A2116 redefines many hunting firearms as “destructive devices,” the legislation prevents the heirs of who currently own these firearms from inheriting them as family heirlooms.

A2116 Bans Many Modern Hunting Firearms

In addition to banning popular traditional muzzle loading rifles, historical firearms, and the .50 bmg, A2116 would ban many modern hunting rifles and handguns, including the following:

Examples of Banned Modern Hunting Rifles Under A2116 (by caliber/mm)

.50 Alaskan	.505 Gibbs
.50 Peacekeeper	.500-465 Express
.500 Jeffrey	.510 Whisper
.50 Nitro	.505 Nyati
.500 Nitro Express	.577 T-Rex
.600 Nitro Express	.510 DTC
.550 Nitro Express	.550 Magnum
.577 Nitro Express	.50 Airgun
.700 Nitro Express	.600 Overkill
.500 50 Express	12.7 x 99mm
.510 Fat Mac	14.5mm JDJ
.6-577 Rewa	12.7 x 108 mm
.50 Beowolf	15.2 Steyr
.500 Black Powder Express	14.5 x 114mm
.500 A-Square	

Examples of Banned Modern Hunting & Target Handguns Under A2116

.50 Remington Single Shot RF	Freedom Arms Model 555
.50 Remington Single Shot CF	LAR Grizzly Win Mag
AMT Auto Mag	Magnum Research Desert Eagle
Bowen Classic Arms .500 Linebaugh Revolver	Magnum Research BFR Revolver
Guncrafter Industries M1	Smith & Wesson 500 Revolver

Smith & Wesson 500 Special Revolver
Tanfoglio Thor-Raptor Single Shot
Taurus Raging Bull 500 Revolver

Thompson Center Encore .50 Single Shot
Webley Boxer Revolver
Zeliska .600 Nitro Express revolver

A2116 Bans Hundreds of Historical Firearms, Antiques and Replicas

A2116 bans hundreds of historical firearms, antiques and replicas. Though proponents of A2116 claim that the legislation targets only the .50 bmg rifle, this legislation is in reality a sweeping gun ban that would criminalize the possession, transfer, and inheritance of dozens of firearms other than the .50 bmg and the hunting guns mentioned above, including many collectible Revolutionary War through post-Civil War era firearms and replicas and antiques that are not even *remotely* similar to the .50 bmg.

By way of general background, the term “.50 caliber” is another way of expressing the measurement of only half an inch. One of the muskets that won the American Revolution, the “Brown Bess,” was .75 caliber (three quarters of an inch). The standard U.S. Army caliber until the 1840’s was .69 caliber, which was then changed to .58 caliber (also the caliber of many Civil War firearms).

Following is a partial list of collectible historical firearms and antiques that would be banned by A2116. It is ironic that many of these firearms were used by early American patriots to win the very freedoms that A2116 seeks to take away:

1842 Springfield (.69)	Gun Works English Sporting Rifle (.62)	Middlesex Village Doglock blunderbuss (.69)
1868 U.S. Springfield (.50/70)	Gun Works English Sporting Rifle (.69)	Middlesex Village Scottish Murdoch Pistol (.52)
Allen Conversion (.50/70)	Harper’s Ferry Musket (.69)	Middlesex Village 1773 French Cavalry Pistol (.69)
Ballard Rifle (.50/70)	Joslyn 50-60	Navy Arms British Dragoon Pistol (.614)
Brown Bess Musket (.75)	Kodiak Express Double Rifle (.72)	October Country Muzzle Loading Light American Sporting Rifle (.62)
Brown Bess Trade Model (.75)	Marlin Carbine (.56/56)	October Country Muzzle Loading Eight Bore Double Heavy Rifle (.85)
British Officer’s Light Infantry Fusil (.67)	Martini Henry (.577)	October Country Muzzle Loading Heavy Rifle (.85)
Bullard Single Shot (.50)	Maynard .50-70	October Country Muzzle Loading Heavy Rifle (1.00)
Cadet 1869 (50-70)	Maynard Carbine (.50)	Pacific Rifle Company African Zephyr Twelve Bore (.72)
Charleyville Pistol (.69)	Merrill Latrobe (.50/70)	Pacific Rifle Company African Zephyr Twelve Bore (.83)
Charleyville 1777 French Rifle (.69)	Middlesex Village Long Land	
Charleyville 1766 Musket (.69)	Middlesex Village Ship’s Carbine flintlock (.75)	
CVA Blunderbuss (.69)	Middlesex Village 1717 French Army Musket flintlock (.69)	
Colt Laidley (.50)	Middlesex Village Cookson Fouling Piece (.70)	
Colt Lightning (.50/95)		
English Matchlock (.72)		
Evans Musket (.69)		

Pedersoli 1777 Corrigé Anno IX Musket (.69)	Remington .50 Center Fire	Snider Carbine (.577)
Pedersoli 1777 Corrigé Anno IX Dragoon Musket (.69)	Remington 50-70	Spencer Rifle (.50)
Pedersoli 1789 Austrian Infantry Musket (.69)	Remington Hepburn .50-45	Spencer Rifle (.52)
Pedersoli 1809 Prussian (.75)	Roberts (.58)	Spencer Rifle (.56)
Pedersoli 1816 Harper's Ferry (.60)	Robertson Carbine (.52)	Spencer Carbine (.50)
Pedersoli 1848 Springfield (.69)	Sharps 1853 (.52)	Spencer Carbine (.52)
Pedersoli Fredericksburg Musket (.75)	Sharps 1855 (.52)	Spencer Carbine (.56)
Pedersoli Kodiak Express SxS Double Rifle (.72)	Sharps 1855 (.577)	Tarpley Carbine (.52)
Perry Brass Frame Carbine (.50)	Sharps 1859 (.50/70)	U.S. 1816 Musket (.69)
Ranger Carbine flintlock (.75)	Sharps 1859 (.52/70)	Whitney (.50/95)
Remington Rolling Block Rifle (.50)	Sharps 1863 (.50/70)	Whitney-Laidley (.50)
Remington Rolling Block Carbine (.50)	Sharps 1863 (.52/70)	Whitney Musket (.69)
Remington .50-45	Sharps 1865 (.52)	Whitney Phoenix (.50)
Remington .50 Rimfire	Sharps 1867 (.50/70)	Winchester Single Shot (.50)
	Sharps 1867 (.52/70)	Winchester Hi-wall (.50)
	Sharps 1870 (.50-70)	Winchester 1876 (.50-95)
	Sharps 1874 (.50)	Winchester 1886 (.50 express)
	Sharps 51-40	
	Sharps Hankins 1861 (.52)	

The .50 BMG Rifle: Target of Opportunity

There exists much in the way of inaccurate claims and hypothetical speculation regarding the .50 bmg rifle. Anti-gun groups are making far-fetched claims about crimes they believe might be committed. Urged on by such speculations, several media outlets have recently aired unbalanced, irresponsible stories misportraying the rifles as "too dangerous to be in the hands of private citizens" and "a clear and present danger to the public safety." Gun ban legislation like A2116 is sometimes a result.

Instead, the facts are:

- .50 caliber rifles are virtually unheard of in crime. Modern .50 caliber rifles are too large, heavy, and expensive for most criminals. They generally measure 4-5 feet in length, weigh between 22-34 pounds, and cost up to ten thousand dollars each.
- Most .50 caliber owners use their rifles for long-range target shooting competitions. Long-range matches have been common for more than a century. For over 20 years, the Fifty Caliber Shooters Association has been the nation's leading proponent of .50 caliber marksmanship competitions. For several years, the Association of New Jersey Rifle & Pistol Clubs has had a Fifty Caliber marksmen's group that regularly participates in lawful, responsible .50 caliber shooting events in the region.

- Modern .50 caliber rifle ammunition was invented in the 1920s. Despite anti-gunners' claims, Mk211 .50 cal. rounds are not available to the public, but are restricted to military use only. Armor-piercing / incendiary ammunition is already prohibited in New Jersey.
- .50 caliber rifles have existed since the 1860s. Those that use modern .50 cal. ammunition have existed for a half century. The particular firearms that this legislation now seeks to ban have existed since the 1980s.

Along with this position paper, we have provided a copy of one of the most comprehensive studies ever prepared concerning the .50 caliber rifle, entitled *Report of Expert Commission on Fifty Caliber Rifles*. It factually and fairly addresses every speculation and claim made about .50 caliber rifles, and provides valuable general background information. Every legislator who will vote on A2116 needs to review this report.

Target the Criminal, Not the Tool

Gun bans like A2116 do not impact public safety because they make the mistake of targeting the tool rather than criminal behavior, and the criminal mind will always find another tool. To effectively impact crime, legislative efforts should be directed at severe punishment of criminal behavior. Just as banning matches won't stop arson, or banning steak knives won't stop stabbings, banning firearms from law abiding citizens based on the size of the hole in the barrel won't stop or reduce crime.

A2116 fails to recognize that those intent on doing evil will not be deterred simply because a particular tool is unavailable, and that the only ones impacted by A2116 will be honest citizens, who are thoroughly investigated by New Jersey government, and must also pass criminal and mental health background checks before being certified by the State as qualified to purchase firearms.

Lawmakers who have understood that criminal behavior is the proper target of legislation have had measurable positive results in reducing crime.

Project Exile and Project Safe Neighborhoods (already being implemented successfully in Newark) are two such successful programs, which should be given careful consideration by any lawmaker dedicated to addressing New Jersey's crime problems in a meaningful way. The essential components of such a program include no plea bargaining, imposition of maximum sentences, and no early parole.