

## **Statement of Scott L. Bach in Opposition to A2116 06/12/08 Meeting of the Assembly Judiciary Committee**

I am Scott Bach, President of the Association of New Jersey Rifle & Pistol Clubs and a member of the NRA Board of Directors.

This bill is essentially a convoluted solution to a hypothetical problem. It calls for the equivalent of radical surgery for an imagined pain, and its net effect is to ban hundreds of guns from thousands of honest citizens, while doing nothing to address public safety.

9/11 showed us, that a criminal bent on doing harm does not need sophisticated tools, and will not be deterred if a particular instrument becomes unavailable. Who would have ever believed that common household objects could be turned into instruments of evil?

The fact of the matter is that *any* object can be misused, which is why banning one *particular* object will never stop someone who means to do harm.

Instead of banning guns by the size of the hole in the barrel – which is what this bill does – we should be punishing criminals by the size of the crime. Punishment is the only thing criminals understand...

You've heard a lot of emotional rhetoric about the .50 BMG rifle, and in a few minutes, you'll get to hear hard facts, instead of hype, from one of the top .50 caliber experts in the Country.

But no matter what you think at the end of the discussion, there is one clear, simple, and irrefutable fact about this bill: it will ban hundreds of hunting and historical guns that are not even remotely similar to the firearm you are attempting to demonize.

Is it really your intention to ban popular muzzle loading rifles used by sportsmen? Because it does.

Is it really your intention to ban flintlocks and muskets that won the American Revolution and Civil War? Because it does.

And is it really your intention to prevent the inheritance of family heirlooms worth thousands of dollars? Because that's precisely what this bill does.

This is the third time in 3 sessions that we've had this discussion. At this point, it's hard not to conclude that a sweeping gun ban is precisely what's intended.

And while some of our concerns from last session were addressed in this session's bill, it remains fundamentally flawed legislation that uses hypothetical speculation and false emotional rhetoric about a single gun, as cover for a sweeping ban on *hundreds* of guns.

As for the maligned .50 BMG rifle, it is hardly the choice of criminals. Costing up to \$10,000 apiece, and weighing 30-40 pounds, these guns are expensive, unwieldy, and impossible to conceal.

The military ammunition you've heard so much about, is already banned and unavailable in New Jersey, where only target rounds are available.

Claims that the .50 BMG has no legitimate civilian use, and is not used on NJ ranges, are flat out lies.

There is a large community of honest gun owners who for decades have regularly and responsibly used these guns for competition and target shooting. These people pose no threat to public safety, and should not be demonized. They have passed an extensive police background investigation, after being fingerprinted and thoroughly vetted for past criminal behavior and mental health problems by the State of New Jersey. They pose no danger to public safety, and they should not be the target of this bill.

Our full position is in the materials we've circulated.

I'm now pleased to introduce Mr. Robert Viden and Mr. John Burr.