

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA  
**INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION**

11250 WAPLES MILL ROAD  
FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22030



**NRA**

*Office of the Executive Director*  
**CHRIS W. COX**

March 23, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker of the United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

On February 18, the House of Representatives voted to approve an amendment to H.R. 1, sponsored by Representatives Denny Rehberg and Dan Boren. This important amendment passed with the bipartisan support of 277 Members, including all but two House Republicans.

The amendment sought to provide protections to gun owners and firearms dealers by prohibiting the ATF from circumventing statutory restrictions by centralizing records of thousands of Americans' gun purchases, without any legal authority.

Since the passage of H.R. 1, an alternative is unclear. The NRA-ILA strongly urges that the Rehberg/Boren language be included in any upcoming long term continuing resolution.

As you are aware, the ATF has proposed requiring the 8,500 federally licensed firearms dealers in California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas to file reports on the sale of two or more semi-automatic rifles to the same person within five consecutive business days. This would include many of today's most popular rifles, owned by millions of Americans for self-defense, hunting and other lawful purposes.

While it is our strong belief that the ATF has no legal authority to demand these reports, the Rehberg/Boren amendment would eliminate any possibility for ATF to move forward with this plan. The overwhelming vote in support of the Rehberg/Boren amendment is a clear indication of where Congress stands on this issue. In addition to that vote, the will of Congress has also been expressed when dozens of House members and Senators signed letters to the Administration opposing this program.

It is critical to remember that with or without this program, ATF has full access to every record of every firearm transaction by every licensed dealer, whether during a bona fide criminal investigation or simply to enforce compliance with record keeping

requirements. Given that fact, the flood of new reports that would be generated by this proposal will waste scarce law enforcement resources that should be used for legitimate investigations.

In addition, recent events have shown that the ATF strategies on controlling the flow of guns into the hands of criminal enterprises operating on the U.S./Mexico border are highly suspect in both their effectiveness and execution. Evidence strongly suggests that the ATF has mishandled investigations based on leads voluntarily provided by firearms dealers, resulting in thousands of firearms allowed to be trafficked into Mexico, allegedly with the full knowledge of the agency.

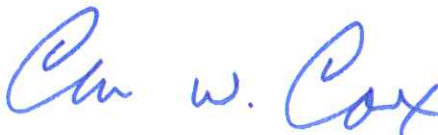
With that poor track record, it is highly unlikely that the hundreds or thousands of multiple sales reports generated by this proposal—almost all of which involving completely legal firearms purchases—would be of any law enforcement value. In truth, the inability of ATF to properly oversee the leads they are already receiving raises significant questions about how they would handle the reports generated by this proposal.

Inclusion of the Rehberg/Boren language in the continuing resolution will forestall the ATF from advancing this ill-conceived proposal. Hopefully, it would also serve to prompt the Department of Justice and the ATF to examine its enforcement activities and implement more effective strategies that actually target criminals rather than collecting information on thousands of legal gun purchases.

For these important reasons, the National Rifle Association respectfully urges you to support the inclusion of the Rehberg-Boren language in the continuing resolution that will soon be considered in the House of Representatives.

Thank you for your leadership and the strong support you have shown for gun owners and our right to keep and bear arms, if you have any questions or would like to discuss further, please do not hesitate to call me directly at (202) 651-2560.

Sincerely,



Chris W. Cox  
NRA-ILA Executive Director

cc: The Hon. Eric Cantor,  
Majority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives

The Hon. Kevin McCarthy  
Majority Whip, U.S. House of Representatives