

NEBRASKA TAXPAYERS FOR FREEDOM ISSUE PAPER: DO NOT ALLOW THE TAXING AWAY OF OUR FIREARMS.

BACKGROUND. Liberals invariably take advantage of every political crisis. Following every mass shooting, liberals howl for gun control measures that would restrict the right of law-abiding citizens to exercise their 2nd Amendment rights but would do nothing to control the criminal use of firearms. One of the most recent ploys used by congressional and other liberals is to attempt to levy confiscatory taxes on guns and ammunition, which would hike the costs for legal firearm use but not phase criminal use of firearms, many of them stolen. A particularly nefarious bill is looming currently in Congress that would implement a skyrocketing tax.

THE BEYER BILL. Socialist Democrat Rep. Donald Beyer (VA.), a member of the tax-writing House Ways & Means Comm., believes that AR-15s meant for the battlefield only, a menace to society, according to his June 8, 2022, blog post. He blames conservative Republican congressmen for filibustering meaningful gun control. His bill, **HR 8051**, would



impose a 1,000% excise tax on manufacturers, producers, or importers of semi-automatic rifles and also apply this tax to high-capacity magazines that hold over 10 rounds. This tax also would apply to weapons with 1 or more military characteristics, like a pistol grip, a forward grip, or a folding or telescopic stock. Exceptions for purchases by government agencies like law enforcement and the military. He cleverly introduced it as a revenue measure, which means the House could pass it with a simple Senate majority, avoiding a certain GOP filibuster. His option would require the

support of each Socialist Dem in the Senate, with VP Harris breaking a tie. The bill otherwise would need at least 10 GOP votes to pass the Senate. Several congressional experts believe that his measure could meet the threshold of bypassing the filibuster, one saying "taxes get more deference in budget reconciliation than other policies from a parliamentary point of view." A 1,000% tax on semi-autos would add at least \$5,000 to the sales price. Beyer readily admits that his objective is to make it too expensive for the average American to purchase a semi-auto, raising the total price up to as high as \$20,000.¹ Also factor in state and local taxes. Speculation exists that this bill could contain parts of the Biden Regime climate change bill and federal tax increase agenda.² This bill is in the House Ways & Means Comm., awaiting advancement to the full House for a vote.

THE CONSEQUENCES. If the liberals cannot outlaw our guns, their next best option is to make them financially inaccessible. Factoring in Biden Regime hyperinflation, semi-auto costs would skyrocket. Robert McClelland, a senior fellow at the Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center, said, "We don't have a lot of information on what would happen if gun taxes are raised. But a gun tax at 1,000% — I can't see how it would not dissuade some people from purchasing a taxed firearm." With the crime wave worsening under the Biden Regime, gun sales climbed to 18.9 million in 2021. Americans do not feel safe at home or on the street; they feel the necessity to arm themselves for self-defense. In 2021, 12 major Democrat-governed cities set a record for homicides; many others set records for violent crime. Our 2nd Amendment rights are crucial now.³ The real liberal plan is to ban all semi-autos, including semi-auto pistols. Liberal media is attempting to garner support by pushing the false narrative that most Americans support gun control. This legislation possibly could cause the complete annihilation of the firearm industry. We will witness another explosion of AR-15 sales, if this bill appears successful. One out of every 5 weapons purchased in the U.S. is an AR-15 style rifle, proving once again that citizens overwhelmingly support the 2nd Amendment over gun control.⁴ Individuals who never have owned firearms before are purchasing their first guns in record numbers. Citizens clearly see the fallacy of disarming the public, defunding the police, and pampering criminals and appear disgusted.⁵ Consumer firearms already are one of the most taxed items. Since 1937, the Pittman-Robertson Act levies a 10%-11% excise tax on all guns and ammo sold or imported into the U.S. to pay for conservation expenses such as restoring elk habitat, funding gun safety programs, and establishing public shooting ranges. \$14.1 million in taxes levied so far for this fund. The Tax Foundation states that 45 states and the District of Columbia collect state sales taxes, and 38 states collect local sales taxes on guns, e.g., Tennessee has a combined 9.55% sales tax.⁶ Using a tax as a means to prevent people from purchasing legal merchandise when there is no stated purpose for the revenue gained is a wrongful use of congressional procedure. Passage of this bill would cause

¹ Haris Alic, Washington Times, [Democratic Lawmaker Pushes 1,000% Tax on Assault Weapons](#), June 6, 2022.

² Julia Conley, Common Dreams, [Beyer Proposes Filibuster-Proof 1,000% Tax on AR-15s](#), June 6, 2022.

³ Fullmagnews, [House Democrat Proposes 1,000% Tax on Soft Ban A-15s](#), June 6, 2022.

⁴ Bruce Campbell, Firearm Man, [Proposed Bill will Place a 1,000% Tax on AR-15s](#), June 7, 2022.

⁵ Joshua Swanagon, [Proposed Bill Will Place a 1,000% Tax on AR-15s as a 2A Work Around](#), June 7, 2022.

⁶ Chris Eger, Guns.Com. [Dem Plans to Skip Filibuster, Hit AR15-s with 1,000% Tax](#), June 6, 2022.

problems for those with moderate incomes, including young people seeking a semi-auto for recreational purposes. Such a proposal would have a deleterious effect on the poor and middle class, as they no longer would have money in order to make such an investment in self-protection. Therefore, not only have Socialist Democrats decimated the police, dumped criminals back on the street, and emptied our prisons, but now they seek to remove the ability of lawful citizens to defend themselves.⁷

REFUTATION. This tax would face legal challenges. Federal courts have struck down other indirect attempts to restrict 2nd Amendment rights in the past. The U.S. Supreme Court has referred to the AR-15 semiautomatic rifle in the context of protecting the “long tradition of widespread lawful gun ownership” in America.⁸ In *District of Columbia v. Heller*, the Court ruled that the 2nd Amendment protects arms typically possessed or in common use by law-abiding citizens for lawful purposes like self-defense. The AR-15 is actually a viable choice for self-defense at home. These decisions bear heavily on whether semi-auto firearms can become banned. Research from the Rand Corp. shows that taxing firearms has little impact on violent crime. This class of firearm accounted for fewer than 500 homicides in 2020, one of the most violent years on record⁹



LAWFUL USES. Almost 20 million citizens own modern sporting rifles, firearms that the Socialist Dems call assault weapons.¹⁰ Consumers purchase semi-autos for hunting, target shooting, and self-defense in these perilous times, all lawful reasons. During a House Judiciary Committee hearing on gun violence, conservative Rep. Ken Buck (CO.) said the AR-15 is the weapon of choice for killing raccoons before they reach chickens in rural Colorado. Buck said this type of firearm also used to kill predatory foxes. “It’s a weapon that you use to control predators on your ranch, on your farm, on your property,” Buck said.¹¹

TAKE ACTION NOW. Congressional gun banners and their private organization gun control followers and liberal media toadies are wreaking havoc on our 2nd Amendment rights by using raw emotions to try to quickly pass gun tax legislation that would impinge on our lawful constitutional rights but do little to stop killers from using semi-autos for nefarious deadly purposes. During this time when emotions are running wild following a spate of mass shootings, it is imperative that taxpayers and gunowners, using the information above, calmly but persuasively lobby our 3 congressmen to vote NO on **HR 8051**. Email netaxpayers@gmail.com for congressional contact information and join our NTF *Congress Watch Project*.

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⁷ Patrick Droney, Democrats want to tax scary looking “assault rifles” into oblivion so poor, middle class can’t protect themselves, June 7, 2022.

⁸ *Staples v. United States*, 511 U.S. 600, 610-11 (1994).

⁹ Hannah Cox and Brad Polumbo, Democrat Introduces Plan to Restrict Poor Peoples’ 2nd Amendment Rights, undated.

¹⁰ National Shooting Sports Foundation statistics.

¹¹ Rick Schindler, Republicans torn for saying South Dakotans kill “varmint” with AR-15s, June 7, 2022.