Resolution on Semi-Automatic Firearms

Summary

Model Resolution

WHEREAS recent national debate has focused on so-called “assault weapons,” confusing the general public and lawmakers alike about the distinction between true military assault rifles and semi-automatic military-style look-alikes; and

WHEREAS proposals currently under consideration at the local, state, and federal levels would arbitrarily ban or restrict the manufacture, possession, and use of semi-automatic rifles, shotguns, and pistols under the guise of regulating assault weapons; and

WHEREAS true military “assault rifles” have been defined by the Department of the Army to include only firearms that have a “selective fire” capability - i.e., machine guns - and these true “assault weapons” have been strictly regulated by federal law since 1934 and banned in several states; and

WHEREAS attempts by legislative bodies to change the definition of “assault weapon” has lead to “assault weapon” definitions that ban or restrict possession of a firearm based solely on its appearance, not taking into account its use, operation or design; and

WHEREAS legislative activity has centered on inanimate firearms, while no action has yet addressed the condition and histories of the perpetrators of the heinous crimes that have instigated this national debate; and

WHEREAS millions of law-abiding citizens have exercised their Second Amendment rights to keep and bear arms by choosing to own military-styled semi-automatic rifles; and

WHEREAS the semi-automatic technology in firearms has been available to the general public since the 1890’s and semi-automatic firearms were the “weapons of choice” of President Theodore Roosevelt; and

WHEREAS semi-automatic technology firearms are used by medal-winning athletes in the Olympics and are used every day in the legal pursuit of a variety of shooting sports, including hunting, target-shooting, competition, and recreation, as well as protection of person, family, and property; and

WHEREAS law enforcement agencies from New York City, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and San Francisco, as well as the FBI’s Uniform Crime Report have confirmed that military-styled semi-automatic firearms are used in only one-half to three percent of all crimes involving firearms;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the American Legislative Exchange Council recommends the rejection of current proposals at the local, state, and federal levels that arbitrarily restrict the possession of the semi-automatic class of firearms by law-abiding American citizens; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the American Legislative Exchange Council recommends instead that the scarce resources of the law enforcement and criminal justice systems be focused upon uniform, consistent, and just sentencing, speedy trials, and increased punishment and incarceration for those who commit violent crime; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the clerk of the (House of Representatives or Senate) transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, to the Attorney General of the United States, and to each Member of Congress of the United States.

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