



Yuba County Sheriff's Department

Steven L. Durfor, Sheriff-Coroner



215 5th Street, Suite 150, Marysville, CA 95901
Ph: 530-749-7777 • Fax: 530-741-6445

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Citizens of Yuba County:

The recent tragic events in Newtown, Connecticut have deeply affected us all. There have been too many shooting tragedies across our nation over the years including in our own county. The natural reaction to such events is to take steps to prevent them from ever happening again. Tighter gun control has been the subject of debate and controversy over the past several weeks. With growing frequency, I have been asked about my opinion on enforcement of tighter gun control measures, particularly as it relates to the Second Amendment of the United States Constitution.

First, I will address my stance on the Second Amendment. As the Elected Sheriff of Yuba County, I have been sworn to support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of California against all enemies, foreign and domestic, an oath that I take very seriously.

I believe that every law-abiding citizen has the right to acquire, own, possess, use, keep and bear firearms. The Supreme Court of the United States of America has ruled that the Second Amendment protects an individual's right to possess and carry firearms. In two Supreme Court decisions (*District of Columbia v. Heller* – 2008) and (*McDonald v. Chicago* – 2010), the Court issued landmark decisions affirming this right.

My support of law-abiding citizens' Second Amendment rights is evidenced by the fact that more than 700 residents of Yuba County have an active permit to carry a concealed firearm. The compelling need demonstrated by the majority of permit holders is personal protection.

As to the topic of gun control, I believe the State of California already has among the most restrictive gun laws in the United States. To further restrict law-abiding citizens' rights to bear arms is imprudent. California has enacted reasonable laws to help prevent violent criminals and the mentally ill from acquiring weapons of any type. These measures include background checks and waiting periods for those wishing to purchase firearms. As a result, the homicide rate in our state declined by 18.9% from 2001 to 2010 according to California Department of Justice reports. Preventing the wrong people from gaining access to any firearm, rather than prohibiting the law-abiding from doing so is a far more effective method to reduce violence in our nation and tragedies such as Newtown.

I want to assure the citizens of Yuba County that public safety is my priority. I will continue to work with the community, businesses, schools and allied law enforcement agencies to make our communities as safe as possible while at the same time ensuring that the rights of law abiding citizens are not impugned.


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