



## Legislative Action

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### For Immediate Release

**April 12, 2016**

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### Lawmaker Cooke Tells His People to be Law Breakers

When Republican Senator John Cooke was the Weld County Sheriff, he publicly and repeatedly proclaimed that he would not enforce the gun laws passed by the General Assembly in 2013.

Now a Colorado senator, Cooke spoke on the floor of the senate yesterday of encouraging people to break the law. While speaking in support of SB16-113 (Repeal of the 2013 High-Capacity Magazine Ban), Senator Cooke stated “What I tell my people is ‘Go to Wyoming.’”

“Go to Wyoming”? By this, **Senator Cooke is advising “his people” to break the law!**

Perhaps it is a matter of incompetence – that the senator who has so fervently opposed the high-capacity magazine ban isn’t actually familiar with the specifics of the law. It states that “after July 1, 2013, a person who sells, transfers, or possesses a large-capacity magazine commits a class 2 misdemeanor.” An exception was provided if a person owned such a magazine on that date.

By advising “his people” to go to Wyoming, Sen. Cooke is clearly advising them to commit a criminal act and expose themselves to as much as a year in jail. Yes, magazines greater than 15 rounds are for sale in Wyoming, but if you buy one out-of-state and bring it back to Colorado, you are committing a crime.

Perhaps, rather, it is a not matter of incompetence, but one of integrity – that a former sheriff and current Colorado senator who is now tasked with making laws is simultaneously encouraging citizens to break the law.

Those who support the repeal of the ammunition magazine ban have repeatedly argued that the law inconveniences law-abiding citizens. “Sen. Cooke, as one of the leading supporters of the repeal, advocated that these same law-abiding citizens become criminals,” noted Jacqui Shumway, a board member of Colorado Ceasefire.

“What Senator Cooke doesn’t seem to understand is that the General Assembly passed, and the Governor signed a high capacity magazine ban in order to save lives, and it is the law in Colorado. 82 people were wounded and 12 were killed in the Aurora Theater, where a 100-round drum was employed,” said Tom Mauser, also with Colorado Ceasefire. Mauser’s son Daniel was shot and killed at Columbine High School in 1999, where high-capacity magazines contributed to the carnage.

“Sheriff Cooke shamed himself and his state when he proclaimed he would not enforce the gun laws passed by the General Assembly in 2013. Now as a senator in that same Assembly, Cooke violates the expectations the people have of a lawmaker,” said Eileen McCarron, president of Colorado Ceasefire Legislative Action. “While he works to enact laws by day, in his off-time he is advising citizens to break them.”

Do the proponents of looser gun laws in the Senate majority believe the average citizen can choose which laws to abide by, simply because they agree or don't agree with them? Cooke is a key spokesperson for public safety on behalf of the Republican majority in the Senate. His remarks should be censured by them, or the public should know that the party in charge in the Senate is encouraging citizens to break the laws with which they disagree.

*Colorado Ceasefire, an all-volunteer statewide organization, has been fighting for freedom from gun violence since 2000. Ceasefire initiated and was instrumental in the enactment of the 2013 Colorado firearms laws, which included universal background checks, a high capacity magazine ban, and domestic violence firearms relinquishment.*

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