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Congressional Committee Approves Dangerous Firearms Bill Colorado's Congressmen Scott Tipton and Doug Lamborn vote AYE.

The Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement (SHARE - H.R. 3668) Act is a broad-reaching measure that contains many provisions, largely aimed at loosening federal gun laws. The most egregious part of the bill is the deregulation of silencers. Unfortunately, this past week, the House Natural Resources Committee voted to approve the SHARE Act. Colorado's congressmen Scott Tipton and Doug Lamborn both voted in favor of the measure. Expectations are that the bill will come to the floor of the House of Representatives the last week of September.

Since 1934 in order to obtain a silencer, one must obtain approval of local law enforcement, pass a fingerprint background check and pay a one-time tax. The ATF maintains a registry of all silencers. Prime on the wish list of the NRA is deregulating silencers. Disingenuously, the bill sponsor named this portion of the bill the "Hearing Protection Act." Shooters worried about the noise of their weapons can always wear ear protection, devices that don't endanger others.

Silencers muffle the sound of a gunshot, making it difficult for people to realize a shooting is occurring or discern the location of the shooter. They also decrease the effectiveness of Shotspotter systems, such as the one employed by the Denver Police Department. By eliminating the thorough background check, it will be easier for criminals and domestic violence abusers to readily obtain silencers at gun shows and private sales, and by destroying the current register of silencers, Congress is removing an important crime fighting tool.

"Congress should be endeavoring to increase public safety, not putting silencers into the hands of dangerous individuals," said Eileen McCarron of Colorado Ceasefire, "and Congressmen Tipton and Lamborn need to rethink who they are representing in Washington – the NRA and the gun industry or their constituents."

Among its many other provisions, the SHARE Act would allow firearms use on almost all federal recreational lands (except national parks), remove restrictions on the interstate transport of firearms, and would also have manufacturers, rather than the Justice Department, determine what constitutes armor piercing bullets, thereby posing an even greater threat to law enforcement. McCarron noted that this was yet another example of "the fox guarding the henhouse."

Ironically, the original hearing for SHARE Act concepts was scheduled for June 14th but had to be postponed because of the sniper attack at the Republican Congressional baseball practice. Alas, how did the Congressmen know to take cover from their assailant? Because they heard the sounds of the assault rifle. Furthermore, if the shooter had used a silencer, the police who subdued the shooter may not have been able to ascertain his location and the casualty count would have likely been much higher.

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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