

Amendment Update

Membership ballot to change GrassRoots GunRights to a corporation without members.

3/25/2011 – Rob Butler, Democracy gave us an Obama presidency

Some people are making an issue of member organizations versus non member organizations. Well, the type of organization is not what makes an organization better or worse. Let me explain.

Supporting legislation that takes away the right to possess a handgun from those who can legally do so now is gun control. That is exactly what the Viers amendment to H. 3292 would have done, and the NRA supported it. The NRA is a member organization. The NRA supported the unconstitutional anti gun Viers amendment to H. 3292, which can be proven by looking at the NRA-ILA daily update of Feb 25, 2011.

National Association for Gun Rights (NAGR) and Gun Owners of America (GOA) are two national pro gun rights organizations that are not member organizations. Yet, each of these national organizations has consistently stood strong in support of our gun rights based upon principles. Both NAGR and GOA recently joined GrassRoots in opposing the unconstitutional anti gun Viers amendment to H. 3292.

So, which type of organization - member or non member - did the most to protect our gun rights in the fight over the unconstitutional gun control Viers amendment?

I have been hearing for years that NRA members need to vote and clean house because the NRA leadership does things that NRA members do not like. But, things have not changed in the many years that I have been watching the fight to reclaim the NRA. Why not? If member voting is the cure all, then the NRA must be the gold standard for protecting our gun rights. But, we know that is not true, as I will prove below.

GrassRoots GunRights has been a hard core pro gun rights organization since we started. That will not change just because we change from a member organization to a non member organization. We will continue to stand on principles just as we have always done, which is why people joined GrassRoots in the first place.

One of the dirty tricks employed in the world of politics is to go to the SC Ethics Commission and get a list of donors for a candidate you

do not like. Then, you do mailings to that list in order to negatively effect the fund raising of the candidate and thereby weaken the ability of the candidate to get his message out and thus help cause his defeat.

GrassRoots GunRights is no different than a candidate. If our enemies had access to our membership list, they could use it in many ways to harm GrassRoots GunRights and our fight to protect our gun rights. We have spent years getting pro gun people together. Imagine if Viers had a copy of the GrassRoots membership list. Viers could have paid to have a mailing done to our members telling his lies about his unconstitutional gun control amendment. Why should we make it easy for our enemies to confuse the issues? If Viers wants to try to confuse people, then let him spend years getting the mailing list together.

We were threatened with harm for opposing the Viers amendment to H. 3292. Then, shortly after being threatened with harm for opposing the Viers amendment, someone demanded we send them a copy of the GrassRoots GunRights membership list. While this request was most likely a coincidence, it still showed us that our membership list was vulnerable to being used by our enemies. We felt we needed to protect the privacy of the GrassRoots GunRights membership list since we had always told people the list was private, and that we needed to take action to do so.

The fact that GrassRoots GunRights would not be a member organization does not mean that you can not vote. Every time you decide whether to support GrassRoots GunRights or not, you are voting with your pocketbook. If you decide not to donate to GrassRoots GunRights, then you are voting with your feet - i.e., you are walking away. GrassRoots GunRights leaders can not force you to donate to GrassRoots.

GrassRoots GunRights believes that your first and foremost concerns should be whether GrassRoots GunRights takes the principled positions on protecting your gun rights that you want a pro gun rights organization to take on your behalf. So, ask yourself, what would you have wanted us to do differently on any of the issues over the years?

Yes, there are other pro gun organizations out there you can donate to instead of GrassRoots. In fact, some of them - GOSC and NRA - are

member organizations. And, if they represent what you believe more than GrassRoots represents what you believe, then give them your money! If GrassRoots represents your beliefs, then donate to GrassRoots.

Here are a few things you should keep in mind before you decide which organization should get your money:

1998 - NRA supports H. 4918 - a bill which among other things would require the registration of every private transfer of any firearm in SC. GrassRoots leaders led the fight to kill H. 4918. So, which organization best represents what you believe in with regards to gun registration?

1999 to 2000 - NRA supports a so called range protection bill that would actually harm the long term interests of shooting ranges. GrassRoots GunRights proposed amendments to greatly improve the shooting range protection bill. You can read about what GrassRoots was trying to do to help shooting ranges on our web site at <http://www.scfirearms.org/TheDefender/winter99.pdf> starting on page 14. GOSC/NRA blackballed GrassRoots GunRights and MCRC from the shooting range protection coalition because we refused to support the original bad bill and insisted the bill be improved. Rep. Jim Klauber was the primary sponsor of the Shooting Range Protection Act of 2000, and Rep. Klauber submitted an affidavit to the court in a case trying to shut down a shooting range after passage of the shooting range protection law. You can find a copy of the affidavit in the files section of both the SCFirearms and GrassRoots Leadership list serves. You should read Klaubers affidavit to see which organization was responsible for making the shooting range protection law a real shooting range protection law. Remember, Klauber is an officer of the court. If he submitted an affidavit that was not true, he could be disbarred. So, which organization best represents what you believe in with regards to shooting range protection?

2001 to 2002 - GrassRoots GunRights proposed a number of pro gun rights improvements in our CWP and gun laws. You can read about these proposed changes - initially found in both S. 261 and H. 3010 - at <http://www.scfirearms.org/TheDefender/summer01.pdf> starting on page 1 and continuing throughout the issue. You can also read exactly what GrassRoots GunRights was able to get passed by the Senate Judiciary Committee and sent to the full Senate for consideration at

http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess114_2001-2002/bills/261.htm.

Unfortunately, NRA leadership was found to be opposing these pro gun changes. After being exposed - by senators surprised to see GOSC oppose pro gun legislation - as opposing these pro gun reforms, GOSC had a BOD meeting to discuss why the leadership was opposing the GrassRoots proposed improvements. While GOSC eventually voted to support S. 261, it was not a unanimous vote to do so - and it was only done after the leadership had tried and failed to kill S. 261. If the NRA/GOSC leadership had supported the GrassRoots GunRights proposed CWP and gun law improvements back then, we might well have gotten more than we did. What we had to settle for was found in the House sister bill of H. 3010, which can be found at http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess114_2001-2002/bills/3010.htm So, which organization best represents what you believe in with regards CWP and gun law improvements in SC?

2003 to 2004 - GrassRoots GunRights proposed more gun law improvements, which can be found at http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess115_2003-2004/bills/3482.htm There was no support from the NRA for these changes. So, which organization best represents what you believe in with regards gun law improvements in SC?

2007 to 2008 - GrassRoots GunRights supported a CWP recognition bill found at http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess117_2007-2008/bills/3212.htm But, NRA leadership supported CWP reciprocity. The NRA supported Senators Knotts and Ritchie gutting the CWP recognition bill on the floor of the Senate and replacing it with a CWP reciprocity bill. A CWP recognition bill would have allowed SC CWP holders to carry in 30+ states. So, which organization best represents what you believe in with regards CWP recognition or reciprocity for SC?

2009 to 2010 - GrassRoots GunRights once again proposed CWP carry on school grounds, only this time a more limited bill to allow the weapon to remain in the vehicle. There was no support from NRA leadership. GrassRoots GunRights had been on the front lines fighting for this for many years, as shown by GrassRoots leaders being on CNN and ETV supporting this change while others were too timid to support such a change. So, which organization best represents what you believe in with regards gun law improvements in SC?

2011 - See the above discussion of H. 3292 and how it was changed by

the Viers amendment from a pro gun bill into an unconstitutional anti gun bill. GrassRoots GunRights opposed the Viers amendment and the NRA leadership supported the Viers amendment. So, which organization best represents what you believe in with regards to gun control in SC?

These are just the highlights of the differences between the two largest gun rights organizations in SC. So, which organization best represents what you believe in with regards to your gun rights in SC?

So, how has being a member organization worked out for you with the NRA? Is supporting them a better alternative than supporting GrassRoots GunRights?

The most important vote that anyone can possibly cast is the one that comes from donating money to the organization.

GrassRoots GunRights has no way to keep you continuing to donate other than to continue to represent your interests. GrassRoots does not run shooting disciplines to keep you donating. GrassRoots does not teach and certify instructors to keep you donating. GrassRoots does not publish glossy magazines to keep you donating. No, GrassRoots must be effective at protecting your gun rights to keep you donating. And, we have done that well over the years.

Now, for those who wonder why I showed the differences between the NRA and GrassRoots over the years, it is to prove a point. The NRA is the way it is because that is what the majority of NRA members are willing to settle for or want. So, is what the majority wants really what you want? Or, do you want an organization that will stand up and fight for your rights regardless of what the majority wants? That is the central question here.

Allowing our enemies to have a copy of our membership list gives them the opportunity to convince a majority to start acting like the NRA acts with respect to legislation as detailed above. If that happens, then you lose the principled stands that GrassRoots has taken over the years. I do not want to waste time on or be distracted by internal battles over what we should or should not be doing. If people like what we are doing, then they can and should join us. If people do not like what we are doing, then they should leave us. But, the issue should be whether GrassRoots represents what you believe in, not

whether it is a member organization or not.

GrassRoots GunRights is a special interest group dedicated to protecting your gun rights. We have been successful at doing that. I believe it is more important that GrassRoots remain true to its principles rather than it be democratically led. Democracy does not always produce the best results. Remember, it was a majority that put Obama into office.

Rob Butler