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Editor

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To The Editor:

Michael Goodie and Ed Kozlowski make similar points. Gun laws, they say, are absurd because criminals, by definition, don't follow the law. I wonder if they understand that the same infantile tautology applies to *all* criminal law. Do they think we shouldn't have laws against rape and murder because only criminals would rape and murder? Should we have no laws regulating the handling of toxic chemicals because only criminals would dump those in our waterways?

The argument in favor of gun control is a simple moral one. The abundance of guns in our society makes us much more vulnerable. We should reduce the number of guns and make people safer.

Of course the Constitution specifically protects the right to bear arms. From 1791 to 2008 regulations limited this right in many ways. In 2008, the Heller decision claimed for the first time that this is an individual right and that the "well-regulated militia" clause was merely prefatory, another in a series of bad rulings by the Supreme Court.

One of the rationales for the right to bear arms is that citizens should be able to protect themselves from a tyrannical government. If this is an individual right, then if my government has machine guns, I must be allowed to have them too for protection. If they have tanks, I must be able to keep one in my garage. If they have biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons, they cannot prevent me from stockpiling these myself. If this sounds absurd to you, congratulations, you're paying attention.

It's really quite simple: if we drastically reduce the number of guns in our society, we also drastically reduce the number of harm doers who have access to them. If we do that, then we drastically reduce the threat they pose to all of us.

Sincerely,

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