

June 2020 - DCPA Legislative Officer Report

Gregg Buddenhagen - Legislative Officer - Dutchess County Pistol Association
June 09, 2020
(Meeting location – DCPA Clubhouse)

Modern elections on both the local and national levels are being decided by small margins, so now more than ever, every vote counts. As I promised a few months ago, I will start off my report with a reminder to stay informed and get out and vote.

While the NY Republican Primary has been canceled as President Trump was the only candidate to qualify, remember that other parties will be holding their primaries.

The number of Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives with a high approval rating from the N.R.A. has fallen from 63 after the 2008 elections to 3 after the 2018 midterms. This put the N.R.A. in a more precarious position politically. That translates to each and every one of us as legal gun owners, being in that same politically precarious position.

Once largely insulated from shifts in partisan control: It could block gun restrictions no matter which party controlled Congress and the White House. In the long term, the loss of the N.R.A.'s Democratic buffer poses a threat to the success pro Second Amendment legislation and boosts support for the contrary. This is why it is utterly important for all members to stay informed and get out and vote.

About one month ago, a CNN poll conducted by SSRS, a survey based research firm found President Trump, a supporter of the N.R.A., behind the presumptive DNC nominee, former Vice President Biden overall, but ahead in 15 battleground states. In a new poll, results published just days ago by the same research group, amid the national protests, ongoing pandemic and a market that is starting to uptick, President Trump's ratings have dropped by 7 points.

National and individual state polling results can be found at this link:
<https://www.cnn.com/election/2020/presidential-polls>

On the NYS level, there has been some very quick moving legislation in response to the George Floyd case and other alleged excessive uses of physical force and deadly physical force by police in New York. This was done in similar fashion to the way the SAFE ACT was pushed forward. While these bills appear focused on criminal justice and law enforcement practice reform, it is a testament to just how the legislature acts swiftly or drags their feet when they want to. There are still several pieces of legislation pending, with no movement in recent months, that I will briefly mention later.

Governor Cuomo has declared gun control his "legacy issue." A Siena Research Institute poll last year shows the SAFE Act is popular with many New York voters. Five years after the SAFE Act was enacted, polling showed support by 74% of voters in New York City and 61% in the suburbs, including Long Island which will again be a battleground in the fall elections, while a mere 48% of upstate voters support the act. The Governor has proposed several gun control bills in his budget earlier this year and numerous others are still active in the legislature.

During these times of political and civil unrest, there is much going on with related firearms legislation. As ambassadors of firearms safety and sports, we should know, the current trend of laws are tightening restrictions on firearms related matters. It is imperative we remember this is an election year. We must express our views to our political representatives and GET OUT AND VOTE!

We must stay informed, get involved, and write our representatives and let them know where we stand on the issues. I encourage all Dutchess County Pistol Association members to email and or call their respective legislative representatives on any legislative matters that are relevant to Second Amendment issues.

May 2020 gun sales in the U.S. soared during the Coronavirus pandemic to an 80.2% increase over the same period last year. It is expected amidst the remaining Coronavirus concerns and recent riots and civil unrest, consumers will drive those numbers up throughout June as well.

There has been no additional activity in either legislative body on any of the previously reported proposed legislation, highlighted below.

Albany insiders are reported that Governor Cuomo wanted to use the utter chaos and distraction that is currently plaguing Albany, and in my experience, all of NYS, to his advantage to speed the process for bills like S. 7065, which would require a purchaser of any firearm, rifle or shotgun to submit to a mental health evaluation and provide the seller with his or her approval to purchase such firearm based on that mental health evaluation. The bill was introduced to the Senate earlier this year and there is a NYS Assembly version of this bill (A1589). The bill has been sent to the Senate's Consumer Protection Committee for further action. At this time, the bill hasn't been scheduled on the Senate's "On Floor Calendar". This is another piece of legislation we need to monitor. You can read the full text of this bill at <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2019/s7065>

Other than several NYS Senators who added their names in support of the stand your ground bill (S. 7915/A-10114) which specifically relates to justified use of physical force, it remains in the Codes Committee being reviewed. This bill was introduced earlier this year and was sent to the Senate's Codes Committee, where it presently sits awaiting further action. You can review the complete text of the legislation at <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2019/s7915>

Please consider contacting your state Senator and your state Assembly representative and urge them to support S. 7915/A-10114.

On the federal level, last month I reported on H.R. 5717/S. 3254 "The Gun Violence Prevention and Community Safety Act of 2020." There has been no documented action in either the House or the Senate on this proposed legislation and it remains with the Senate Finance Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregg Buddenhagen

Legislative Officer – Dutchess County Pistol Association