



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on March 18, 2013

Two Colorado Sheriffs Won't Enforce New Gun Laws

Two Colorado sheriffs, John Cooke of Weld County and Terry Maketa of El Paso County, [have vowed](#) not to enforce the new gun bills that were recently passed by the Colorado legislature and that are about to be signed into law by Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper. [Said Cooke](#), "They're just feel-good, knee-jerk reactions that are unenforceable," and will have no impact on limiting crime or criminals. Such laws only "give a false sense of security" he added. "Criminals are still going to get their guns."



One bill about to become law will require background checks on all transfers of firearms, including those between private citizens. The other limits magazine capacities to 15 rounds. Cooke said that under the new law, all magazines that can carry more than 15 rounds, or can be modified to do so, will be banned. Because "all magazines can be altered to a higher capacity," in effect the law bans all magazines and tracking down all owners of magazines in his county would be impossible.

El Paso County Sheriff Maketa concurs, saying that it would be impossible to separate which magazines would be legal — those sold before the July 1 enforcement date of the laws — from those sold afterwards. At a packed-house meeting in Colorado Springs Tuesday evening, Maketa said, "I can't tell you when those were sold, bought and purchased. As far as I'm concerned, they are all pre-July 1."

In response to a question from an audience member, Maketa said that his office keeps records of every concealed carry permit holder in the county as required by law, but he would never share it with the federal government. He added that "if anyone tried to get their hands on it I would destroy the database [and] would intervene if government agents started arresting county residents for exercising their constitutional rights."

During the debates over those bills, the out-numbered Republicans claimed that the bills would never work in reducing crime in the state. Republican Representative Jerry Sonnenberg said, "We know for a fact that whatever laws we pass criminals won't care," while Republican Senator Greg Brophy added that background checks "won't help anything, but it makes common everyday actions among friends and neighbors something that's now illegal in the state of Colorado."

Democratic Representative Rhonda Fields, [a hardcore anti-gun advocate](#) and the sponsor of the bill limiting magazine capacities, didn't know what was in her bill [until it was pointed out to her](#) by Jon Caldera, president of the Independence Institute. He read the [language of her bill](#), which says:

"Large-capacity magazine" means a fixed or detachable magazine, box, drum, feed strip, or similar device capable of accepting, *or that can be readily converted to accept*, more than fifteen rounds of ammunition or more than eight shotgun shells. [Emphasis added.]

He also prepared a [video](#) explaining that since nearly every magazine in existence can be modified by removing the base plate to add additional rounds, the bill would effectively ban every magazine owned by every gun owner in the state of Colorado. This goes far beyond what most legislators, including



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Fields, say they intended. Fields told Denver TV station 9News, “I’m just hearing about that now. Our focus was on the number of bullets you can put in a magazine.” It’s too late to make any changes in the bill as it is now headed to the governor’s office for signing. Said Fields, “I’m hoping that people will just comply with the law.”

With [nearly half of all Colorado residents owning guns](#), more than two million Colorado residents will become outlaws when Governor Hickenlooper signs the Fields bill. Many of them are pushing back, including Colorado Springs resident Rob Harris. Harris joined with the Basic Freedom Defense Fund to start a recall petition to remove Colorado State Senator John Morse, the president of the Senate and a strong proponent of the bills, from his position. In less than three weeks, Harris has recruited more than 100 volunteers to help him get the signatures necessary to force a recall vote. Said Harris, “It won’t do any good for the gun bills Hickenlooper is about to sign but it will cut the head off the snake and give a clear signal to others that the same will happen to them if they persist in infringing on our rights.”

Others have drawn a line in the sand in the fight over their gun rights, as has [Chuck Baldwin](#), pastor and former candidate for president for the Constitution Party in 2008. Writing in his blog, [chuckbaldwinlive.com](#), he said he has been forced to draw his own line in the sand about gun laws emanating from the federal government. In this blog which has since gone viral, [Baldwin wrote](#):

Ladies and gentlemen, whatever the consequences might be, and whatever anyone else does or doesn’t do, I am prepared to become an outlaw over this issue! I don’t know how to say it any plainer: I will not register my firearms, and I will not surrender my firearms. Period. End of story. It’s not just a saying with me: when my guns are outlawed, I will be an outlaw!

An increasing number of citizens are becoming activists in the freedom fight, many for the first time. Still others are making their own decisions about where to draw their own lines in the sand.

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