



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 2, 2015

## Anti-gun Groups Seeking to Build on Washington State's "Victory"

Apparently the anti-gun group Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America didn't get the memo from November: You lost big in the midterms. Instead, MDA just announced [it is targeting](#) country music star Alan Jackson and comedian Jeff Foxworthy for agreeing to open the National Rifle Association's annual meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, in April. In its Facebook announcement, MDA criticized the two for accepting the invitation from the NRA — the group which, according to the MDA, "pushed to arm convicted criminals, blocked federal gun violence research and [their] board members promoted armed insurrection."



MDA then urged its members to "educate these celebrities on the dangerous and irresponsible policies of the [NRA]."

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This is reflective of the new life anti-gun groups — from MDA to the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence to Americans for Responsible Solutions to Mayors Against Illegal Guns (now called Everytown for Gun Safety) — believe they received in the November midterm elections.

In Colorado, for example, the two anti-gun state senators who were recalled last year were replaced with two new anti-gun senators, keeping that body under Democrat control.

The big boost, however, came with passage of Initiative 594 in Washington State now requiring background checks for every transfer of a firearm. These were two of the three states where Everytown focused its energy, and Michael Bloomberg's millions, and reaped their "victories." These successes, according to Everytown's President John Feinblatt, indicate the effectiveness of grassroots efforts funded with lots of money. He stated,

This [represents] a huge amount of movement in two years on an issue where Republicans and Democrats [at the federal level] ran for the hills for more than a decade.

We're going to build on the successes of 2014 and do more.

Gabby Giffords, the retired U.S. representative from Arizona and the founder of Americans for Responsible Solutions, spent more than \$10 million on local efforts in 2014, and she plans to spend even more. In a recent e-mail to her supporters, she sought not only new funds to replenish her coffers, but input on their new strategy to target local races rather than Congress.

Josh Horwitz, executive director of the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, one of the more extreme anti-gun groups supported by such organizations as Americans for Democratic Action, the National Urban



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League, and the Presbyterian Church (USA), affirmed that the mid-term election results will have little impact on their agenda:

We'll probably be playing a little more defense, but I think we're optimistic that we'll be able to tamp down any type of [National Rifle Association] meddling and then be in a better position in 2016 to continue our work.

We're not going to be going away, I can tell you that much.

Horwitz even saw victory in the Senate takeover by the Republicans, saying it "weeded out" a number of red-state Democrats who supported gun rights, leaving the remaining Democrats "united" in opposition to the expected pro-gun agenda of the Republicans. He asserted, "It's going to be a much stronger, unified bunch of Democrats, and I think that is going to be able to hopefully stop most of the NRA's agenda."

Anti-gunners were also cheered by the folding of Republicans in the Senate as it confirmed the nomination of Surgeon General Vivek Murthy. Said Erika Lamb, a spokeswoman for Everytown: "We see that political leaders are listening to what's happening in the states as they recently confirmed ... Murthy in a stunning defeat of the gun lobby's fight against his nomination."

Robert Spitzer, a political scientist and observer of such trends at State University of New York-Cortland, thinks the change in strategy has merit and will bear fruit for the anti-gunners. He also thinks the financial interests behind gun controls are putting the NRA into a tight spot:

They have come up with a strategy that seems to be working so far. For the first time in gun-politics history, the NRA is being outspent by the pro-gun control forces....

I have a feeling the NRA thinks they would be bled dry if they try to match Bloomberg's spending.

In Nevada, for example, grassroots efforts funded by wealthy out-of-state donors are already bearing fruit. A Bloomberg-funded group has already collected more than 250,000 signatures to put a universal background check initiative on the ballot in 2016.

In Washington State, the victors behind Initiative 594 aren't relaxing, either. A newly created group, the Center for Gun Responsibility, is pressing forward with its agenda, including creating criminal liability for parents whose firearms are used by their children to commit gun-related violence, and passing a law similar to California's "Domestic Violence Protective Orders." This would allow "concerned" family members to force the removal of firearms from a member whom they consider a "threat to themselves or to others." They also want to ramp up more "health and safety" rules at privately-owned shooting ranges in the state.

Millions from wealthy anti-gun donors coupled with local, grassroots organization are reminding patriots that the opposition in the freedom fight never stops. It just morphs into a different and more dangerous form.

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