



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on March 9, 2015

ATF's Ammo Ban Ignores Facts and Common Sense

President Obama's official mouthpiece, White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest, had scarcely uttered his support of the ATF's pending ban on M855-type AR-15 "green tip" ammunition when much of his statement was exposed as lies and propaganda. Last Monday Earnest [told reporters](#):



[The president] has long believed that there are some common-sense steps that we can take.... This seems to be an area where everyone should agree that if there are armor-piercing bullets available that can fit into easily-concealed weapons, that puts our law enforcement [officers] at considerably more risk.

But Obama's "beliefs" have little to do with logic or history or experience or support from those law-enforcement officers the ATF's measure is allegedly supposed to protect. It's a belief, an ideology, with consequently little support coming from those involved in or closely related to law enforcement.

When asked if any law-enforcement officers had been killed or even wounded by the M855 round fired from a handgun, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Sheriff David Clarke responded, "Not in my jurisdiction. We're doing a search nationwide, but so far we haven't found anything." Clarke, it will be remembered, ran a series of radio ads in early 2013 recommending that citizens of his city arm themselves in order to protect themselves from criminals.

Clarke added:

I'm disgusted that this administration would use the safety and well-being of our nation's law enforcement officers to accomplish their gun-control agenda by circumventing the Congress and ... the Constitution in rewriting this law ... that's all this is. They don't fool me. No fraternal order of police, no sheriff is going to fall for this.

Clarke isn't alone in claiming that not "everyone" agrees that the pistol/cartridge combination puts law enforcement officials "at considerably more risk." Sgt. Dana Pierce of the Cobb County Police Department (near Atlanta, Georgia) said he's never heard of any officer being shot at, much less threatened by, a criminal wielding an AR-15 handgun.

The presumption that both Earnest and the ATF are making is that handguns chambered for the now-offensive round are easily concealable and are therefore somehow a greater threat to LEOs. In reality, an AR-15 pistol is not only very expensive (prices run into the hundreds, and often thousands, of dollars, and are therefore hardly attractive to common criminals), but they weigh in at six pounds or more and are often 24 inches in length — hardly concealable in a waistband holster.

For 38 years the FBI has been reporting the caliber of weapons used where law-enforcement officers have been killed. Not a single one has been killed by an M855 cartridge fired from a handgun. In fact,



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none has been killed with a .223 caliber handgun at all, according to the agency.

Earnest isn't the only one spouting lies in justifying the pending ban. Marjorie Clifton, a former Obama campaigner, told a big one on the Fox News show *America's Newsroom* when she claimed that the ammunition under attack by the ATF "has been used in every mass shooting we've had in this country." Spokesmen for the National Rifle Association (NRA) called the statement "absolutely untrue," and said that "most of these incidents haven't involved firearms even capable of using that round."

The ATF, although using the term "armor-piercing" in its 17-page announcement, says nothing about how most rifle ammunition, used almost exclusively for hunting and other sporting purposes, will defeat common flak-jackets used by law enforcement officers, not because they're built that way but because of their velocity. At 3,000 feet per second, any projectile will defeat the most common protective gear worn by police officers. As Alan Gottlieb, head of the Second Amendment Foundation, told Fox News: "Almost any hunting rifle bullet will go through body armor, so you could prohibit almost any rifle bullet with this. This is the [Obama] administration redefining the law on its own."

Gottlieb added that he, too, has been unable to "find a single instance where a police officer has been shot from this type of handgun using a bullet that pierces [body armor], and if the [Obama] administration had any examples ... they would be pushing it in everybody's face."

David Workman, the senior editor at TheGunMag.com, exposed the fraud as well, noting at the *Seattle Gun Rights Examiner*:

I cover this every day and I've never heard of a police officer being shot with one of these [AR-15] handguns.... That's a crock. I know of absolutely zero incidents of the shooting, wounding or fatally wounding of a cop with one of these handguns that is chambered for the .223-caliber round, or even someone using the AR-15 rifle, for that matter.

The ATF wants to ban ammo that is built in a certain way, using certain materials such as tungsten alloys, steel, iron, brass, bronze, or beryllium copper. The danger, of course, is that if the ban goes into effect, it gives the ATF the de facto power to ban any other ammunition using these materials.

Working with the National Rifle Association, Representative Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) wrote a letter to ATF chairman Todd Jones protesting the proposed ban and getting the support of 238 of his colleagues to sign it. In the Senate, a similar letter is working its way through the membership.

With 247 seats in the House and 54 seats in the Senate belonging to members of the Republican Party, the 114th Congress has the largest Republican majority since the 71st Congress of 1929-1931. And yet, barely half of those House members (there are 433 members with two vacancies at the moment) could be persuaded to uphold their oaths of office. This puts the chances of the simplest solution to the ATF's overreach — legislation prohibiting the ATF from issuing such a ban — as a very long shot.

Translation: When the ATF closes its public hearing period on Monday, March 16, it will then shortly thereafter officially declare the ban permanent. For those inclined to weigh in on the matter, the ATF can be reached one of three ways:

Via e-mail at APAcComments@atf.gov, or

Fax at (202) 648-9741, or

Regular mail to: Denise Brown, Mailstop 6N-602, Office of Regulatory Affairs, Enforcement Programs and Services, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, 99 New York



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Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20225 Attn: AP Ammo Comments.

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