



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on March 23, 2015

Representative Steve Israel Excoriates ATF for “Cowardly” Delay on Ammo Ban

It didn't take long for fervent anti-gunner Representative Steve Israel (D-N.Y.) to respond to the ATF's decision to delay its proposed ban on “green tip” ammunition and to “study” its ramifications further before proceeding.

[On Friday](#) he called the decision “cowardly” and “reckless,” referring to the rounds as “armor-piercing” and “cop-killer” bullets — terms dredged up to associate the popular hunting ammunition with school shootings and other mass killings, although such efforts have repeatedly failed in the past.



After accusing the ATF of caving in to the gun lobby, Israel then called on the federal agency to “reevaluate” its decision and immediately ban the ammunition.

He also presented the Modernize Law Enforcement Protection Act, which would expand the definition of “armor-piercing” to include “all bullets that can pierce body armor” in rifles and in handguns.

Years ago the ATF learned that nearly every center-fire round made in the United States can pierce the minimum protective armor worn by law officers, but that such a ban would end up exactly where the “green-tip” resides now. So in the proposal that currently rests in the bottom of the ATF's out-basket, the definition was changed from “performance-based” to “content-based”: that is, that if a round is made of certain materials (steel, brass, bronze, molybdenum) it would automatically be banned.

It doesn't take much imagination to see where the ban would have led: the total and complete elimination of all ammunition for all rifles and handguns (with the exception of black powder weapons).

In his announcement, Israel made much of new technological advancements that have resulted in current ammunition being far more lethal, insisting:

Because of significant developments in bullet propellants, coatings and materials, *such as Teflon*, the original Law Enforcement Officers Protection Act of 1986 is now outdated. [Emphasis added.]

This was simply too much for the NRA, which has been battling anti-gunners such as Israel for years:

Seriously, Teflon? The substance used to coat skillets and 1970s-era all-steel handgun bullets invented for law enforcement officers, so the bullets wouldn't scratch the rifling of the officers' handgun barrels?

Teflon, which has nothing to do with whether a bullet can penetrate a protective vest?

In his final thrust, Israel promised that he would round up all the anti-gunners he could find and write a letter to ATF Director Todd Jones demanding that he end all delays and ban the offending ammunition immediately.

Unfortunately, that letter will be returned “addressee unknown” as, on the same day Israel unleashed



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his vitriol on the ATF, its director announced that he would retire effective the end of the month and consequently won't be opening any mail from Israel. Todd will leave that to Deputy Director Thomas Brandon, who will serve as acting director.

One of those likely to sign Israel's letter is Representative Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.), who decided to attack the issue frontally with legislation banning all civilians' possession and use of M855 ammunition. He, too, according to the NRA which reported on his intentions, "is not listening to the American people who have time and again resisted these unconstitutional bans."

One House member who *is* listening is Rep. Patrick McHenry (R-N.C.), who just introduced the Ammunition and Firearms Protection Act to prevent the ATF from acting on its plans or listening to the pleas of Israel and whoever he can round up to sign his letter. McHenry's bill would reaffirm the intent of Congress that the ATF is specifically prohibited from banning common rifle ammunition such as the M855.

So effective has been the pushback against the ATF's proposed ban — 300,000+ public comments and majorities of both the House and the Senate — that it is likely that the proposal will be delayed indefinitely, and the bills offered by Israel and Engle will die in committee. If the common rule of thumb applies here (that a single public comment represents the opinions of 100 others who didn't bother to express themselves), that means the NRA and other pro-gun groups such as the Second Amendment Foundation, Gun Owners of America, the National Association of Gun Rights, Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms, Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership, and others turned out more than *30 million* protests.

It's no wonder Todd got out while the getting was good. What does cause wonder is how the steadily declining number of zealous anti-gunners such as Israel and Engel who still remain in office continue to generate any serious consideration of their bills.

A graduate of an Ivy League school and a former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at www.LightFromTheRight.com, primarily on economics and politics.



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