



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

New York State County Sheriff Trashes State's Handgun Renewals

The sheriff of Fulton County, New York,  Thomas Lorey, made a presentation to some Second Amendment supporters on Friday, January 16. The next day seven minutes of it was [posted on YouTube](#). He told them that Fulton County has been targeted by New York's state capital, Albany, for a "pilot program" to see if those owning handguns in his county would desire to renew their permits to possess them early, for a small fee of \$15. (In New York, one must have a permit to even own a handgun.) He was strongly against renewing the permits early, or renewing them at all, for that matter. He explained:

I want to set the record straight. Fulton County is one of the pilot counties.... They are going to send out 500 invitations to my county and that's all they are ... invitations.

I'm asking everyone that gets those invitations to throw them in the trash because that is where they belong.

Mike Piccone, the Guns & Gear editor for the conservative blog The Daily Caller, gave a bit of background to the circumstances:

New York has two types of handgun permits. One type is a permit to carry, which is rarely approved.

The second is a permit to *possess* a handgun. [Emphasis added.]

Regarding the permit to possess ... the sheriff is telling his audience to allow their permit paperwork to expire.

Sheriff Lorey is a member of Oath Keepers, a fact that he had emblazoned on his shirt, which is the organization established in March 2009 by Steward Rhodes to remind elected government officials exactly who their bosses really are — the people — and to stand by their oaths to defend the Constitution. It has placed itself directly athwart state and federal attempts to override precious rights. Lorey's spiel was a call to abide by the Second Amendment of the Constitution by refusing to ask for a permit for the right to own a gun for self-defense. In his speech, Sheriff Lorey directly challenged the powers that be:

Don't do it. Let's have everybody's permit expire the same day and [let's see] what they are going to do about it.

At least two issues are a stake in this teapot tempest that Lorey hopes to start.

The first issue is the right to carry guaranteed under the terms of the Second Amendment. That right



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precedes and supersedes the Constitution (1787), the State of New York (1788), or the establishment of Fulton County or its sheriff's department (in 1838).

And it is a right that would be considered worth protecting in Fulton County, in a rural area with a population of barely 50,000 located about 40 miles northwest of Albany. It is doubtful that politicians in Albany know where it is, or even care. But local residents do, and their worldview is vastly different from their big-city overseers. Piccone grew up in Fulton County and remembered the only time he was ever stopped by the police, which was, ironically enough, when he was carrying a gun down Main Street:

I was walking home from a hunt with my Ithaca 37 [shotgun]. [A police] officer pulled over and asked if I was coming or going to hunt. When I told him I was walking home he responded with, "Oh, OK. I get off in 30 minutes and was just wondering if you wanted to go out."

The second issue is the power of a local sheriff to call for such an act of defiance. Constitutional scholar Jeff Wright, in his book *The Citizen's Last Stand*, explains how the power of the sovereign citizen rightly *flows upward*:

The People are endowed with rights regardless of origin;

The People created the entity of the State;

The separate States then created a Federal government ... to serve as an agent of the States, in a subservient role, to accomplish a small number of specifically enumerated tasks known as "delegated powers";

Each state then created counties or parishes as political subdivisions which were chartered to allow for the election of officials ... including the office of County Sheriff....

Thus authority flows *upwards* from the Sovereign Citizens through the Counties to the States to the Federal Government. It *does not flow downwards* to the citizens. [Emphasis in original.]

In all cases, the States and the Federal Government are ultimately subservient to the People.

Sheriff Richard Mack, who is on the board of Oath Keepers, explained how the proper governmental balance is being turned on its head:

The greatest threat we face today is not terrorists. It is our federal government....

One of the best and easiest solutions is to depend on local officials, especially the sheriff, to stand against federal intervention and federal criminality.

Calls to Sheriff Lorey were not returned in time to be included here, but one wonders when and if such defiance will be challenged by New York's Governor Cuomo and his enforcers against the precious right guaranteed by the Second Amendment, or if Lorey's defiance will be allowed to stand, giving it more credence and more encouragement to others of the same mindset. After all, Fulton County is off the map, miles away from Albany. It's small, and actions by its sheriff can be safely ignored, for the time being. But Lorey has raised overarching and profound issues that deserve to see the light of day. One waits hopefully in anticipation.

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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