



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on January 22, 2020

## Inside the Crowd at the Richmond Gun Rally

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RICHMOND, Va. — Scores of thousands descended on the Capitol grounds in Richmond, Virginia Monday. On one of the coldest days of the year, they came to stand up for the right to keep and bear arms. They came from all over Virginia and from across the country. Their message was simple: The right to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.



By 7:00 a.m. — a full hour before the event was to begin — there was already a crowd of thousands. They lined the streets of Richmond all around the Capitol grounds. The jubilant crowd chanted patriotic slogans — including a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance — and carried flags, banners, and posters. Despite the reason behind the event — the Democrat-led state assembly is considering a slate of anti-gun laws aimed at disarming residents of the Old Dominion — the feeling of the rally was one of optimism. Men and women — black, white, Asian, Hispanic, and more — marched together peacefully to show that Governor Ralph Northam has gone too far.

There was a heavy police presence, and guns — usually legal to carry in Richmond and even on the capitol grounds — were banned by special order by Governor Northam. He had taken the heavy-handed measure after claiming that there was “credible intelligence” of armed militia groups planning to attack the capitol.

Of course, his self-serving doomsday prophecy was proved false. The rally was entirely peaceful. The single arrest of the day was that of a woman who refused twice to remove a bandanna — her protection against the arctic winds on a day that barely got above freezing — from her face. No violence, no disruptive behavior. In a crowd estimated between 22,000 and 50,000 with hundreds of those outside the fence surrounding the capitol heavily armed, the atmosphere was one of peace and unity. Northam’s pretended fears of a repeat of Charlottesville were all for nothing.

This writer was there and met and interviewed dozens of people from as nearby as Richmond and as far away as Texas. Everyone was optimistic that the peaceful turnout would serve as evidence of their claim: Law-abiding gun owners are not a threat. (Article continues are video.)

A common theme that ran through the day was the idea that rights are inseparable from other rights. If rights are allowed to be infringed in one area, that infringement threatens freedom in other areas, as well. One woman expressed that idea well, with a sign saying, “Gun rights are women’s rights.” And while she declined to be interviewed, other women expressed the same idea.

Tori — who did not give her last name — held a sign that said, “I am unarmed today due to Government oppression.” Since she decided to attend the portion of the rally taking place inside the fence



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surrounding the Capitol Grounds, she was forced to come unarmed. Despite that, she was excited to be part of a historic moment, standing up for her rights and those of millions of others. She laughed and told me that she had shaken hands with a state senator.

Tori said she came out to “show Governor Northam that we cannot be put down any longer.” She added that citizens need to have their rights protected “because we are concerned American citizens.”

She was not alone in expressing that view. We also spoke with Julia Glenn, a handicapped senior from Woodbridge, Va., who told us that the right to keep and bear arms is tantamount to her ability to defend herself. “I am a single woman, I live by myself. How am I going to protect myself? I’m also handicapped, so if someone were to attempt to attack me, I would be defenseless.”

Employing the type of common sense that is sorely lacking in the Democrat-led state assembly, Glenn said that she realizes that there have been some people shot by crazed criminals, but that has nothing to do with this. “The people I have met at these shooting ranges, gun shops, they’re peaceful. They want to keep the peace. They want to protect themselves,” she told *The New American*, adding, “We’re not violent people, so why can’t we have our guns?”

Others — including State Senator Bryce Reeves and former U.S. Congressman Scott Taylor — expressed the same sentiments. Reeves told us he supports the Second Amendment and does not believe that law-abiding Virginians should the right to keep and bear arms taken away by radical Democrats.

Scott Taylor — who is running to regain his seat in the House of Representatives — agreed. He called the legislation now being considered “a premeditated assault on the Second Amendment.” As to the crowd present at the rally, he said that even with his two terms as a Virginia state delegate and his term in Congress he has “never, ever, seen the engagement that I have seen here.”

The consensus of those we spoke to was that protecting the Second Amendment in Virginia, where it is now under attack, helps protect it in other states as well.

Kenny Wolfam from Houston, Texas, said he was at the rally to defend the Second Amendment here, before the threat spreads. Sal, from Ashboro, North Carolina, came to show support for Virginians and their right to keep and bear arms. He told us, “These are our rights.”

Jim Young, an 82-year-old Air Force veteran from Youngstown, Ohio, said he was also in Richmond to defend rights in his home state. “I talked this up back home, and I came down here to put my money where my mouth is.” He described the current threat to our God-given rights as “probably one of the most troubling things I’ve experienced in these 82 years.”

And Dave Spicer, a Shelby County, Ohio, deputy, came to show support for law enforcement who are going to need to honor their oaths of office.

Tom, from Long Island, New York, said he believes the proposed laws in Virginia are worse than those already in place in New York. He was here to support the Second Amendment in Virginia before it erodes even further in New York.

As for the attempt by Governor Northam and the liberal media to portray the event as a “white separatist rally,” Wade, a black Second Amendment advocate, said, “I woke up the same color today as I was yesterday. He added, “Here I am. These are my people.”

With the rally having gone peacefully despite Governor Northam’s dire — and self-serving — predictions, he and his fellow Democrats may find themselves out of power in the next election. After



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all, scores of thousands of Virginians just marched on the capitol to tell them they are out of step. In fact, one group is looking to have Northam recalled for violating the Virginia Constitution. Chris Anders, director of Virginia Constitutional Conservatives, told us that his organization has already gained more than 60,000 of the needed 402,000 signatures needed for a petition to have Northam recalled.

*Photo: The New American*



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