



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on July 22, 2023

## NDAA Amendment Would Require Service Members to Register Privately Owned Weapons With the Pentagon

It requires expert-level audacity to entrust the protection of our country to young American men and women while at the same time pushing legislation that would force them to relinquish the very freedoms they are willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to defend.

U.S. Senator Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) is just that audacious. In his latest demonstration of disdain for the Constitution and disregard for his oath of office, he has set his sights on eliminating the protections of the Second Amendment for service members, casting doubt on their ability to responsibly exercise these rights. Despite already sacrificing numerous liberties to safeguard the country, Sen. Murphy seems insistent on exacting an even greater price from the members of the armed forces.



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Murphy appears to view extending the protections of the Second Amendment to those in uniform as excessive and problematic. But consider this: These brave men and women are the frontline defenders who could be called on at any time to protect this country from harm, wielding firearms to accomplish that selfless act. Yet, somehow, Sen. Murphy thought the best use of his time and the best way to honor the oath of office he swore to defend the Constitution would be to propose that service members cannot be trusted to possess firearms for personal use.

His long-standing track record in advocating for gun control is well-known. Throughout his career, he has sought to abolish the Second Amendment and bankrupt the lawful firearm industry, earning praises and pats on the back from his fellow gun grabbers, both inside and outside of Congress.

However, now he is targeting military gun owners, a move that seems ill advised given that, if it came down to it, the people he's trying to disarm are the people he would be depending on to use weapons to keep him alive.

[Sen. Murphy's amendment](#) to the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), the critical legislation that outlines expenditures for the Department of Defense (DOD) for fiscal year 2024, seeks to impose tighter restrictions on our servicemen and women. The NDAA attracts thousands of amendments every year, but most of them never make it to debate as they are deemed irrelevant or unrelated to defense matters.

From a distance, Murphy's proposal appears harmless, merely asking the secretary of defense to establish baseline training standards for individuals carrying firearms on duty. These standards encompass marksmanship training, suicide awareness, and safe storage — all of which are already



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established norms across our armed forces.

Under closer inspection, however, Sen. Murphy's proposal is obviously taking a hard left turn off the constitutional path. His plan mandates that individuals employed by the Pentagon undergo training before purchasing a firearm *for private use*. Additionally, anyone possessing a firearm on a military installation would be required to register it with the base commander, along with keeping the firearm *locked at home and storing ammunition separately*.

It's worth noting that military commanders already enforce the registration of privately owned firearms used on bases, typically handled by the base's provost marshal. These lists are notoriously neglected, however, and Sen. Murphy's proposal would do nothing but exacerbate the already incalculable instances of bureaucratic mishandling.

The core concern lies in the legislation's attempt to dictate the storage of firearms, contradicting the principles upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in its decision in *D.C. v. Heller*. Notably, the court ruled that Washington, D.C., couldn't ban handguns and, germane to the Murphy amendment, couldn't dictate how firearms are stored in one's home.

However, there are broader issues at play. The proposed amendment goes so far as to mandate the registration of all privately owned firearms with base authorities, even those *legally acquired off-base and never taken onto the military installation*.

This should raise insuperable constitutional concerns, however. While a base commander holds authority to establish regulations within the confines of the base, their jurisdiction ends at the installation's front gate.

Without putting too fine a point on it, Sen. Murphy's proposal would create a national firearm registry, starting with the inclusion of all gun owners within the military, irrespective of whether they purchased the firearm on base or ever brought it onto the installation. This approach displays a disrespectful degree of federal overreach by leaving law-abiding gun owners subject to unnecessary *bureaucratic* scrutiny.

Murphy is relentless in his pursuit to impose his gun-control agenda on those who dutifully serve our country. He's also offering an amendment aimed at unnecessarily hindering the rights of service members. He seeks to impose federal waiting periods, forcing a seven-day delay for firearm purchases and a four-day wait for ammunition purchases on military installations.

This amendment, on its own, would likely face strong opposition and scrutiny in Congress. However, Murphy is attempting to slip it into a defense spending bill to avoid proper examination.

It's essential to understand that firearm and ammunition sales on military installations already adhere to federal and state laws of the specific base's location. Each sale involves meticulous completion of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) Form 4473, accompanied by verification from the FBI's National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) to ensure the service member is not prohibited from owning firearms. Furthermore, any state requirements are fully incorporated into the process.

It's worth noting that while our forts and bases comply with these regulations, every one of them is unconstitutional and can be — and should be — considered null, void, and of no legal effect.

Believe it or not, Murphy is not finished striving to become the man that repealed the Second Amendment. His NDAA amendment takes a disturbing and truly tyrannical turn toward an Orwellian



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approach. Murphy's amendment would grant the secretary of defense the power to collect information on both military *and civilian* employees of the Department of Defense regarding their *lawfully owned* firearms or ammunition. The stated purpose is for "injury and mortality prevention," but there's no such exemption included in the Second Amendment's explicit prohibition on the government's authority to infringe on the people's natural right to keep and bear arms.

Every one of Sen. Murphy's measures egregiously encroaches on the liberties of service members and law-abiding civilian DOD employees alike, raising the specter of Big Brother intruding into their personal lives to a degree that would make O'Brien and the boys at Ingsoc proud. It is crucial for Americans committed to reclaiming our liberty to be vigilant in defending the Constitution by exposing and opposing any attempt to exploit defense legislation for unrelated agendas, particularly those that so audaciously and arrogantly assault the right to keep and bear arms.



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