



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 12, 2011

Obama Uses Executive Order to Pass Border States Gun Restrictions

Last week, the Obama administration announced that it was in the process of preparing new gun safety measures. The announcement, which coincided with the six-month anniversary of the Tucson, Arizona, shooting, provoked criticism from pro-gun groups as yet another way for the government to infringe upon Second Amendment rights. The administration appears unmoved, and today is putting its words into effect, by way of executive order.

The executive order will implement newer restrictions on the sale of weapons in states near the border, and will impose greater penalties on those who violate certain gun laws.

Fox News [reports](#):

Under the new policy, federal firearms licensees in Texas, California, Arizona and New Mexico must report purchases of two or more of some types of rifles by the same person in a five-day span. The requirement applies to purchases of semi-automatic rifles that have detachable magazines and a caliber of greater than .22.

According to the Justice Department, gun stores in four Southwest border states are mandated to report frequent purchases to the federal government.

The Bureau of Tobacco, Alcohol, Firearms and Explosives (still known as ATF, headquarters pictured above) will be responsible for generating and maintaining annual reports, approximately 18,000 a year. If no investigative leads are made within two years, the information will be destroyed.

The Daily Beast [asserts](#) that the Executive Order is just one of many, and contends that the tentacles of those orders reach significantly further than most are reporting. The details include:

A national electronic system designed to make background checks for handgun buyers simpler and faster, leaving an electronic paper trail. [And] tougher sentencing guidelines for straw buyers that [U.S. Attorney General Eric] Holders department pushed through procedural hoops at the U.S. Sentencing Commission earlier this year.

Ironically, the orders are being passed in the wake of the Project Gunrunner (aka Operation Fast and Furious) scandal which implicates both the ATF and the Justice Department. As reported by Andrew Breitbart's BigGovernment.com, [Project Gunrunner](#):

was a project of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Fireworks [sic]. In late 2009, the ATF was alerted to suspicious buys at seven gun shops in the Phoenix area. Suspicious because the buyers paid cash, sometimes brought in paper bags. And they purchased classic weapons of choice used





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by Mexican drug traffickers semi-automatic versions of military type rifles and pistols. According to news reports several gun shops wanted to stop the questionable sales, but the Bureau encouraged them to continue.

ATF managers allegedly made a controversial decision: allow most of the weapons on the streets. The idea, they said, was to gather intelligence and see where the guns ended up. Insiders say its a dangerous tactic called letting the guns walk.

The project turned out to be a colossal failure, having resulted in a number of deaths, including that of Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry. Likewise, a number of the guns that were permitted to walk by the ATF have turned up in several Arizona drug crimes.

In fact, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee is currently in the process of investigating the mistakes made in Operation Fast and Furious, complicating the passage of any further gun control measures, as the federal government is behind the failures in Project Gunrunner.

Addressing the irony of the timing of the new proposals in the wake of the Project Gunrunner scandal, Republican Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Calif.) called the policy a political maneuver. In a statement, he pointed out:

Its disconcerting that Justice Department officials who may have known about or tried to cover up gunwalking in Operation Fast and Furious are continuing attempts to distract attention from clear wrongdoing.

Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president of the National Rifle Association (NRA), remarked of the new policy:

If they want to do something serious about stopping crime, they can do the tried-and-true rules and go after the criminals. They're not. They're collapsing prosecutions across the U.S. The idea of putting more forms on the honest people is ridiculous. They need to start on something the criminals don't like, which is arresting and incarcerating.

LaPierre understands that the President has opted for an executive order because he recognizes his measures would not pass any other way. He noted:

I don't think hes got any support in Congress for doing this. If he does this, its going to be ad politics in election time. Law-abiding people are sick of proposals like this that line them up and let the criminals go free.

Rep. Rob Bishop (R-Utah), a member of Obama's Second Amendment Task Force, declared, Democratic government was always supposed to be messy, but its based on checks and balances. Going only through executive action is not good for his relationship with Congress Those ideas are going to have a great deal of comments and can be abused especially if done by executive order.

White House Press Secretary Jay Carney continues to assert that the administration is passing common-sense measures [to] improve Americans safety and security while fully respecting Second Amendment rights.

An anonymous White House official indicated that the measures will be introduced separately and quietly, so as not to provoke attack ads.

The Obama administrations circumventing Congress by implementing executive orders to pass such controversial measures as these reminds many Americans of a statement made by President Bill



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Clinton's aide Paul Begala in 1998: Stroke of the pen. Law of the land. Kinda cool.



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