



NIAGARA COUNTY
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COUNTY LAWMAKERS STAND UP FOR SPORTSMEN
SET TO OPPOSE RADICAL ANTI-SECOND AMENDMENT ASSEMBLY BILLS

LOCKPORT—Niagara County lawmakers will introduce several resolutions tonight opposing a slew of anti-sportsmen and anti-Second Amendment measures being advanced by the New York State Assembly's majority and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver.

"In typical Albany fashion, the Assembly will hold, probably sometime in April, an 'Anti-Gun Day,' putting on a big show for their Downstate constituents," Legislator John Syracuse, R-Newfane, said, as he introduced three resolutions opposing various Assembly bills. "They'll ram through one piece of anti-gun legislation after another. The problem is, though, you can't be anti-gun without being anti-sportsman and anti-Second Amendment. And here in Niagara County, we value our sportsmen and we believe in the Constitution as it's written."

Syracuse made the announcement late Monday at the Niagara County Public Information Office's press briefing area, where he was joined by Niagara County Federation of Conservation Clubs President John Butcher, who said he supported the three resolutions. The Federation represents 27 sportsmen's clubs and more than 5,000 sportsmen.

Several county legislators were particularly vexed by proposed legislation that would require pistol permit-holders to renew their permits every five years, enduring an invasive investigation every renewal—and being expected to pay for it. Syracuse said the measure was little more than a costly unfunded mandate from the state that created new bureaucratic hurdles for gun owners while doing absolutely nothing to improve public safety.

"Currently, pistol permits are issued for the lifetime of the permit-holder, provided they don't have any tangles with the law," Syracuse said. "If they do run afoul of the law, those permits are promptly yanked. The system works, and has worked just fine for Niagara County's 26,000 pistol permit holders."

Syracuse was joined sponsoring that resolution by fellow lawmaker Paul Wojtaszek, R-North Tonawanda, and Kyle Andrews, D-Wilson, who resigned from the Legislature yesterday to take on new duties as county treasurer. County Clerk Wayne F. Jagow has also indicated his opposition to the Assembly bill.

A second resolution being introduced tonight by Legislator John D. Ceretto, R-Lewiston, will tackle an Assembly bill that would treat any private transfers of long guns in New York state as a gun show, and subject to state red tape. Syracuse also indicated he would introduce a resolution to oppose an extreme tightening of rules on magazine-fed rifles and shotguns.

"A third proposed law from Albany that this County Legislature will oppose would seek to make New York's laws regarding magazine-fed rifles and shotguns, already the most-restrictive in the nation, even more restrictive," Syracuse said. "This basically makes it illegal for private citizens to own much more than a bolt-action rifle."

Syracuse said more resolutions opposing other anti-Second Amendment bills in the Assembly would be introduced at subsequent meetings of the County Legislature, noting more than a dozen such measures had been added to the Assembly calendar over the past two months.

"These bills in our State Legislature are wrongheaded," Syracuse said. "Frankly, they show us that the Assembly leadership have their priorities far out of line, when they should be focusing on New York's massive budget gap. We, of course, don't share their zeal to repeal our citizens' rights."

Syracuse was confident the resolutions would attract strong bi-partisan support, noting that the County Legislature had passed a resolution opposing most Assembly anti-Second Amendment bills last year by a 17-2 margin.

Butcher expressed his support and thanks for the efforts by Syracuse and his colleagues as well.

"The citizens of Niagara County are fortunate to have legislators who share the same values as our forefathers and who are willing to draft legislation that will help preserve and protect their rights," Butcher said. "These rights were given to the people as guaranteed in the Constitution of the United States and in the Bill of Rights with the Second Amendment."

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