



# The PATRIOT

SPRING 2018



## Crucial Battles Ahead in the Fight for Freedom

by Wayne LaPierre,  
Executive Vice President

We're facing the worst assault on our freedom I've seen in my 40 years at NRA.

Gun-hating extremists are accusing NRA members of murder and even threatening the lives of pro-gun advocates.

And the mainstream media is dumping gasoline on the fire by spreading hateful lies about NRA and anyone who dares to question their anti-freedom agenda.

They blame you for the evil in our society today. They say you need to PAY—with your freedom.

And they're gearing up right now to wipe out our pro-gun majorities in November's crucial midterm election.

If we lose this election, we'll see gun-ban majorities in the House and Senate pass the biggest avalanche of anti-gun legislation in American history—gun bans, magazine bans, gun registration schemes, and much more.

And we'll only be one presidential election away from our enemies having the power to destroy our gun rights once and for all.

As a Patriot Life Member, it's never been more important for you to be engaged in the battle for our gun rights than it is right now.

That's why *The Patriot* newsletter is so important. It's your inside scoop on new developments at NRA, cost-saving benefits you've earned as a Patriot Life Member, and the latest news and analysis on the fight for our gun rights.

In this issue, I hope you'll read my friend Pete Brownell's article that lays out some practical ways to get involved on the local level. Because, the truth is, it will take each and every one of us doing our part to preserve our freedom in this critical election year.

When we've faced threats before, I've always been able to count on your friendship and leadership. And I'm 100% confident you will come through again.

Every single year, you do more for freedom's cause than most Americans will do in a lifetime. And for that, I am truly grateful.



## Act Locally to Protect The Second Amendment

by Pete R. Brownell, President

*The following is adapted from an article posted on America's 1st Freedom's website on March 7, 2018.*

You are the NRA. Every single one of you make us the great organization we have become. Every one of your voices counts. Every action you make as a member has impact. Every step you take to protect the Second Amendment locally has a compounding effect on our nation.

You all rallied to the call to support the Second Amendment at the national level this last presidential cycle. Now more than ever, local action by Second Amendment supporters is required. Become active locally by going to the range, by going hunting, by participating in NRA programs, which are plentiful.

One of the most important local programs in NRA's history is the Friends of NRA. This hometown outreach is a 100 percent grassroots effort to secure the Second Amendment by raising funds to ensure all Americans have opportunities to learn and participate in the shooting sports. Friends events occurring in all 50 states make you feel like part of something special from the moment you walk in. The atmosphere at a Friends of NRA banquet is both entertaining and fulfilling. Best described as a mash-

*Continued on Page 2*

up of formal dinner, firearm auction and neighborhood party, I guarantee you will meet many like-minded shooters and hunters at these family-friendly affairs.

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## SINCE THE PROGRAM BEGAN IN 1992, FRIENDS OF NRA HAS HELD NEARLY 21,000 EVENTS

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Since the program began in 1992, Friends of NRA has held nearly 21,000 events—currently more than 1,000 each year—raising \$810 million, and counting, for The NRA Foundation. This tremendous feat could never be achieved without the commitment of local volunteers. They support the program by organizing committees, securing donations, selling tickets, and hosting Friends of NRA events in their communities. And as for that \$810 million? All of the net proceeds are split 50-50: Half goes to support local and state projects, the other half to national projects. Learn more about the program at [friendsofnra.org](http://friendsofnra.org).

Another way the NRA is near you is through the thrill and accomplishment of competitive shooting. Training in marksmanship is the reason the NRA was started, and the tradition continues front and center. The NRA's Competitive Shooting Division offers dozens of different types of shooting that range from beginner-level matches to championships involving the world's best marksmen. The NRA sanctions some 11,000 shooting tournaments in all 50 states. Additionally, there are over 50 national championships conducted each year by NRA. For full coverage, check out NRA's online competitive shooting journal, Shooting Sports USA, at [ssusa.org](http://ssusa.org).

Competitive shooting is a great way to exercise your Second Amendment-protected rights. Anybody can compete on equal footing—male or female, young or old—whether in small gatherings at your local range or in major tournaments attracting hundreds of competitors. There is no sport better for the entire family to enjoy together, and the skills obtained here will prove valuable for a lifetime.

NRA Education and Training programs ([explore.nra.org](http://explore.nra.org)) are the gold standard in firearms instruction. Each year, the NRA trains more than 1 million Americans to handle and shoot firearms safely and effectively. This occurs thanks to a network of 125,000 instructors, 8,000 coaches and 2,200 training counselors who provide invaluable service to communities. Training counselors recruit and educate hometown instructors to teach basic firearm courses, as well as personal-safety strategies on avoiding dangerous situations, self-defense with a firearm, and protection inside and outside the home.

Each year, more Americans are choosing to exercise their Second Amendment-protected rights, creating unprecedented demand for highly qualified instructors. The NRA works constantly to fill that need. You can find an NRA training course in your area at [nrainstructors.org](http://nrainstructors.org).

I encourage every member, along with family and friends, to make the most of what NRA is doing to strengthen our communities. You are the NRA! You are the voice that has moved a nation and kept our Second Amendment-protected rights alive in each of your communities. Do so once again by supporting local NRA programs.

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## ExpertVoice: Big Discounts on Quality Brands



As a Patriot Life Member and a key NRA leader, you're eligible to join the exclusive ExpertVoice program. Formerly Experticity, ExpertVoice is where name-brand manufacturers of shooting and outdoor gear are ready to offer you discounts of up to 70% through a special password-protected website.

Just as athletic apparel companies want professional athletes to be seen wearing their products, firearms and sporting goods manufacturers want other NRA members to see you using their brands.

These companies understand that other shooting and outdoor enthusiasts look up to you as a top-level NRA member. That's why they are willing to provide you with deep discounts that, in fact, could pay for your Patriot Life membership many times over.

Not only will you have access to bargain prices on some of the leading brands in firearms and accessories—including Beretta, Savage Arms, Bushnell, BLACKHAWK!, and Crimson Trace—you'll also find reduced rates on dozens of items from the top brands in camping, bicycles, workout equipment, and fitness apparel.

If you haven't already signed up for ExpertVoice, be on the lookout for a special announcement in your inbox on how you, as a Patriot Life Member, can access this exclusive program.

It's one more way for NRA to single you out for your legendary service to our 146-year-old Association.



## Trump's Federal Court Appointments Will Help to Preserve Our Rights for a Generation

by Chris W. Cox

*Chris W. Cox has served as the Executive Director of the Institute for Legislative Action, the political lobbying arm of NRA, since 2002.*

*The following is adapted from an article posted on America's 1st Freedom's website on February 5, 2018.*

Government doesn't always move quite as fast as we'd like. In recent years, members of both major political parties have complained about historic Congressional inaction. The requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act can slow down executive branch efforts to repeal or amend regulations. While it can be frustrating when our friends are in power, the more deliberative aspects of our system of government are an important check that preserves our rights when circumstances are less advantageous.

However, an important avenue where President Donald Trump and our friends in the Senate have been able to move swiftly to push a pro-gun rights agenda is by exercising the president's constitutional authority to appoint federal judges. Once confirmed, federal judges serve for life "during good behavior."

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### 22 PERCENT OF ALL VOTERS LISTED SUPREME COURT APPOINTMENTS AS THEIR MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN VOTING, UP FROM SEVEN PERCENT IN 2008.

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On May 18, 2016, candidate Trump signaled to the American voter that he understood the importance of the federal judiciary when he broke with convention and released a list of potential U.S. Supreme Court nominees. Exit polling data from 2016 observed that Trump's emphasis on sound judicial appointments was a crucial factor in his victory. An NBC News poll showed that 27 percent of Trump voters cited Supreme Court appointments as their most important factor in voting, while only 19 percent of Clinton voters answered likewise. Moreover, 22 percent of all voters listed Supreme Court appointments as their most important factor in voting, up from seven percent in 2008.

When Trump took office he inherited 114 federal court vacancies from Barack Obama. In contrast, there were

only 54 vacancies when Obama was inaugurated and 81 when George W. Bush began his presidency. Through November, nine of Trump's U.S. Courts of Appeals nominees had been confirmed. Obama only notched three in his first year in office. In early November, before Trump secured the ninth confirmation, *The New York Times* lamented that the first eight were "the most this early in a presidency since Richard M. Nixon."

Even with Trump's early victories, as of mid-December, the number of vacancies had swelled to 144. This number included 119 positions on the U.S. District Courts and 17 on the U.S. Courts of Appeals. Eager to fill these seats, as of press time Trump had nominated 41 individuals to serve; 34 to the district courts and 7 to the appellate bench.

Trump has stated that he plans to make the most of his historic opportunity. During an October 17 news conference with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, the president explained, "many [nominees] are in the pipeline," adding, "we will set records in terms of the number of judges."

Moreover, Trump has shown that he is dedicated to nominating individuals with a proper understanding of our Second Amendment. This began with Trump's nomination of Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch, who, less than three months after taking the bench, signed a blistering dissent of the Court's decision not to take up a challenge to California's may-issue carry regime. Trump has shown similar care in lower court appointments.

This fact has not gone unnoticed by gun rights opponents. Upon discovering that one of Trump's district court nominees had written a 2013 blog post in support of NRA and the Second Amendment, Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) took the nominee to task for his pro-gun views. In her written questions for the nominee, Feinstein all but demanded that the nominee pledge to recuse himself from "cases involving the NRA or where the NRA had taken a position." Feinstein also quizzed the nominee on why he became a member of NRA.

Gun control proponents aren't wrong to be concerned about a pro-Second Amendment shift in the federal judiciary. Following the landmark *District of Columbia v. Heller* and *McDonald v. Chicago* Supreme Court decisions, the lower federal courts have played a significant role in interpreting the scope of the Second Amendment. Until the Supreme Court abandons its current reluctance to take up Second Amendment cases, appellate court rulings on issues such as Right-to-Carry and commonly owned semi-automatic firearms will continue to be the law in their various districts.

*Continued on Page 4*



Beyond strictly Second Amendment issues, federal judges are also asked to rule on the administrative state's interpretation and enforcement of federal statute. Judges with a more comprehensive understanding of our rights should be more apt to remedy executive branch overreaches of the kind perpetrated by Obama and former-Attorney General Eric Holder.

At any given moment, NRA is involved in numerous federal court cases that run the gamut of issues that

affect gun owners, from defending the Right-to-Carry, to protecting gun owners' due process rights and privacy, to fighting illegitimate restrictions on the use of traditional ammunition. It's impossible to know all of the federal litigation tomorrow will bring, but by prioritizing filling federal court vacancies, Trump and our Senate friends are helping to put gun rights supporters in a position to succeed for decades to come.

## Patriot Hall of Honor Under Construction

We're excited to report that the Patriot Hall of Honor is currently under construction and over 50% of the way to completion.

Just as colleges and universities honor distinguished alumni and supporters, our Patriot Hall of Honor is NRA's way to pay tribute to Patriot Life Members at our national headquarters outside Washington, D.C.

The Hall will be located in the atrium just steps away from the National Firearms Museum and will feature the names of the heroes whose courage and sacrifice have won battle after battle for freedom—especially our NRA Patriot Life Members.

Through this unique exhibit, freedom-loving Americans from all over the country will be able to pay tribute to the men and women who have led the charge for freedom.

And they'll also be able to learn more about the rich history of the Second Amendment, the NRA, and the fight for our gun rights.

Once the Hall is completed, we'll be sure to share photographs in a future edition of this newsletter. And, if you ever get the chance, please stop by NRA's Headquarters and tour the Hall for yourself. But even if you can't visit soon, I hope the Patriot Hall of Honor will be a source of pride for you as an NRA leader.

As a Patriot Life Member—whether at the Endowment, Patron, or Benefactor level—you are the backbone of NRA and the gun rights movement. And the new Patriot Hall of Honor serves as a strong symbol of our deep appreciation for your NRA leadership.



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