



## Golden Gate United NRA Members' Council

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### San Francisco Proposition H (Handgun Possession Ban) Update

**It has been some year and it isn't over yet.** Last December (2004), we learned about a resolution to put Prop H on the ballot for the next election, which would have been the special election if applicable, or the primary election in 2006. We hosted a meeting with NRA President Sandra Froman (then First Vice-President of NRA) and members from the Bay Area MC's, along with NRA Staff Members Ed Worley and Paul Payne.

**At this meeting a commitment was made that NRA will fight this measure however it proceeded.** Sandy took the information we provided her back to NRA HQ.

**In the months following an NRA strategy developed and was executed. Now here is where I have to say something from my experience with the NRA.** There are many gun groups out there: some are good, bad, or ugly. None of them have the clout and experience that the NRA has. NRA has always proven right in the long run as long as I have been a member.

**Last year (2004) was the sunset of the 1994 Clinton Assault Weapons Ban.** The NRA strategy there was not to engage the media or anyone else on the subject. NRA gave us a 24/7 phone number, (703) 267-3820, to give to anyone who wanted to talk to an NRA member about the ban (that number is good today for prop H or anything else). We in San Francisco were bombarded with media phone calls to say something about the ban, to appear on radio, television, or print in newspaper. They would call me then all my officers down the list and if they knew any other members, they would call them too. We all gave them that phone number to call. They didn't like it, but that's all they got from us as we supported the strategy.

**So what happened?** When the AW ban renewal arrived the U. S. Senate could let it sunset. Had we made an issue of it, we could have had an extension of the ban, with many more guns on the list along with ammo and who knows what else because legislators would have been backed in a corner with no wiggle room. Not making a public challenge kept those 60 U S Senators from having to answer reporters' questions and being forced into taking a public position to satisfy what was the position of a large number of their constituents, to support renewing the so called 'AW' ban. We didn't give the press any fuel and there was no fire! When we needed those 60 Senators to vote our way the path to that victory was cleared by not 'acting' in haste, or the feel good 'just do something', but it was won by fighting smart.

**Now we come to San Francisco.** Our MC is nicknamed the Council (who is) in the Belly of the Beast since it seems in S F there isn't a gun control idea they don't like. Chris Daly and four other supervisors (of 12) put the initiative together. **In this city, if it was the NRA vs. Chris Daly, who do you think would win in the electorate?** Chris Daly. Who would become famous for beating the NRA? Chris Daly.

**The NRA strategy (that evolved through independent strategy) was not to make an issue of it.** To rob Chris Daly of his pending fame. Do not talk to the supervisors. NRA went into stealth mode working in the background. Our council was to write letters to the editors of the local papers. Lots of letters so that the one's that were printed would educate the public, the letters that were not printed would educate the

editors. The talking point shunned away from Second Amendment arguments and any of the standard stuff that you read in most gun publications. Our emphasis was talking points such as:

- Prop H sanctions government house-to-house searches
- Prop H would prevent policemen from having backup firearms.
- Prop H would prevent policemen from transferring ammunition to another policeman.
- Prop H only applies to citizens of San Francisco.
- Prop H would divert scarce law enforcement resources away from the street.

**We worked hand in hand with the NRA continuously.** Many things, both strategic and tactical, we could not openly talk about. We had no illusions about this initiative. It could / would be a 15 round bout. Our information told us we had little chance of defeating this measure should it be put on the ballot in November. However, anything could happen, and with NRA's help, we would fight it 'til the end.

**Even back in December 2004 we realized that this is an opportunity for all MC's to build-up stronger than ever.** Whatever happens in S.F. will spread like a virus throughout the entire state. This will waken a sleeping giant. Gun owners you never heard from will be knocking on your doors. And this is happening as I write this report. Volunteer recruitment is up!

**Round One: Keep Prop H Off of the Ballot.** This almost happened. There were five supervisors on the initiative. One removed their name from the initiative and we needed one more. We almost got it. If the second supervisor hadn't been backed into a corner by people who felt they needed to do something for a perceived public 'win', the supervisor might have removed his support for the initiative, it would have been dead and would not have appeared on the ballot. (Once backed into taking a public position the supervisor could not back away from the initiative. Remember the lesson of the national assault weapons ban?) While this work to remove two of the five authors was going on MC members were working to educate other activists.

**Round Two: Work the Election.** Our informed sources suggested the possibility of a huge loss at the polls for us. With the writing of the letters to the editors and making flyers to hand out we did real well during election time. We didn't 'Win', but we lost by less than 8% of the swing vote. Timing was essential. People remember things at the last minute of an election so in the last 10 days before the election the NRA made mailings to every voter in S F that votes every time. On top of that, my active members and I distributed over 20,000 flyers in S F. The result was that the measure passed 58% to 42%. It wasn't 90% to 10% as projected throughout the build up to Nov 8th. **That was from our effort.** Have you noticed there has been NO fanfare from any of the supervisors or mayor? This isn't the success that was hoped for. In fact, I don't think the other supervisors or politicians wanted this thing in the first place.

**Round Three: The following day of the passage of Prop H, NRA filed an 80-page lawsuit.** (See it at: [www.calgunlaws.com](http://www.calgunlaws.com) and updates at [www.calnra.com](http://www.calnra.com)) Not the lawsuit that Chris Daly expected in San Francisco Superior Court either! Since there is State precedence, it was filed in the State Court. We are also seeking a injunctive order to prevent the implementation of Prop H. Stay tuned, this fight is not over.

**Ongoing: The Public Education Opportunity continues.** Now is the time to be prepared to recruit more members, and they will be seeking you out. This is a numbers game. The more active members we have, the more battles we win. It's as simple as that. Please be prepared to share in this opportunity

**Hope everything is well with your Council. Keep up the good fight.**

Sincerely,

**Gerard J. Cecchetti, President - GGUNRAMC**