

WASHINGTON – Today, Congressman Mike Quigley (D-IL) released the following statement with regard to exempting the National Rifle Association from the campaign requirements set forth in the DISCLOSE Act:

“I oppose the compromise that would exempt the NRA from the disclosure and disclaimer requirements in the current bill. It’s sadly ironic that legislation entitled the DISCLOSE Act would permit non-disclosure from one of the most powerful lobbies in the country.

Compromise is a necessary part of policy making, and any proposal that must earn the support of a multitude of diverse interests will never be perfect. However, this deal is not designed to represent a multitude of interests, but instead only to serve one.

In light of what this legislation seeks to achieve, the NRA carve-out leaves the bill an empty contradiction. The bill attempts to shine a light on the financiers of political messages designed to advance special interests. The deal assures a heavyweight in the room that it may stay in the dark.

This two-tiered system of campaign finance laws gets us nowhere. It not only chooses a winner in the gun control debate, but implicitly says that some points of view are more worthy of protection than others.

I understand that this deal originated from a well-placed concern that granting an exemption for all 501 c-4 organizations would allow corporations to game the system by setting up sham non-profits through which they could funnel money. But the remedy does not treat the sickness; it only creates another ill.

Today, there is sensible, bi-partisan legislation before Congress that would close the gun-show loophole which inexplicably permits felons, terrorists, and the mentally ill to purchase weapons without a background check. An organization that may allocate resources to defeat such legislation simply cannot be allowed to play by a different set of rules than one that seeks to advocate for such sound policy. There is too much at stake.

I applaud the goals of this bill and other efforts aimed at making our government more transparent and accountable to the taxpayers. But we do not advance those ends by picking and choosing who we will hold accountable based on power, influence, and fear of political reprisal. **I will vote against any amendment that creates a carve out, and if such a carve-out amendment is approved, I will vote against the bill's final passage.**"