

**Chairman:** The chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Quigley, for five minutes.

**Rep. Mike Quigley:** Mister Speaker, last week the ATF announced the results of the first eight months of its multiple sales reporting program, or MSR, for semi-automatic rifles.

The numbers prove that the MSR is already an invaluable tool in fighting gun trafficking along the Southwest border.

There were more than 3,000 reports accounting for the purchase of 7,300 rifles between Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California. These reports resulted in more than 120 criminal investigations, and subsequently, 25 cases involving 100 defendants have been recommended for prosecution. The ATF also reported a decline in large-volume rifle purchases, indicating that traffickers are altering their criminal activity due to the new reporting requirement.

The MSR program was created to counteract the dangerous trafficking of guns along our border with Mexico. These guns fuel the cartels' war in Mexico, destabilizing our southern neighbor and third largest trading partner. According to the ATF data, 70 percent of the firearms recovered and traced from drug cartel crimes in Mexico originated in the United States

So in light of the positive impact the MSR has had, what is the House voting to do this week?

That's right, repeal the measure.

A policy rider in the Commerce, Justice, and Science 2013 Appropriations bill would cut all funding for reporting the sale of multiple semi-automatic rifles. Yes, this House will vote to block

funding that is successfully removing semi-automatic rifles from the underground gun trade. These are the guns that endanger Americans along the border, and fuel an all-out war in a neighboring country.

Ending the MSR requirement is not about protecting anyone's rights.

Reporting the sale of multiple semi-automatic rifles does not infringe on Second Amendment rights. In fact, a similar multiple sales reporting requirement has been in place for handguns for over 20 years. The necessary paperwork will only take gun dealers 12 minutes to complete, but can give law enforcement crucial intelligence on straw purchased rifles.

A George W. Bush-appointed Federal Judge upheld the MSR requirement, finding that it did not disturb the balance between regulation and gun owners' right to privacy. So the gun lobby has now turned to cutting its funding, because why allow a program successfully fighting gun trafficking to continue undisturbed?

This has become an all too familiar for the ATF, which has operated under temporary leadership since 2006 due to blocked confirmation in the Senate.

But it's beyond just administration. According to the Washington Post, in 2010 the ATF had the same number of agents as it had in 1970, while the FBI has grown by 50 percent and the DEA by 233 percent. Gun ownership records are kept on paper because the NRA has successfully lobbied against funding for computerized records.

With record keeping from the 1950s and funding from the 1970s it's no wonder law enforcement struggles in 2012.

So maybe it's not surprising that the MSR program would encounter such heated opposition. An effective investigative tool for law enforcement with only a negligible effect on gun dealers? That would be evidence of regulatory solutions that can work for everyone – the dealers, the buyers, and most importantly, the public.

And that's exactly what the gun lobby doesn't want.

If common sense solutions like multiple sales reporting can stand, what's next?

Requiring background checks for sales at gun shows, which 69 percent of NRA members support? Denying people on the terrorist watch list the right to buy a gun? To the gun lobby, there's nothing scarier than common sense winning out.

So this week, let's scare them. Let's win one for common sense.

Let's keep reporting the sale of multiple semi-automatic rifles like we do with handguns. Let's allow the ATF to continue making progress against dangerous gun trafficking on our Southwest border. Let's make the choice that's best for our law enforcement, for our security, and for our common sense.

Thank you, and I yield back.

