

SIMPLE, YET EFFECTIVE: THE BILL OF RIGHTS TEST

Do you own a firearm? Do you carry a firearm? Do you support the Second Amendment? If you answered yes to any one of these questions, then the popular press and the politicians consider you part of the “pro-gun vote.” Now that you have been officially categorized as a “pro-gun voter,” how can you be sure your vote actually protects your rights? The answer is: make your vote protect everybody’s rights.

You can find a list of everybody’s rights in the Bill of Rights. Enacted as the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights protects our freedoms of speech, press, and assembly; our rights to self-defense, privacy, and a fair trial; and our liberty from overgrown government. Get a copy in English and other major languages at: www.jpfo.org/bor.htm.

If pro-gun voters consistently stand for the rights of all Americans, then we can stop the bleeding away of our gun rights. Gun owners do not have to form a single-issue lobby that cares only for one narrow cause. Gun owners can promote a free, prosperous and safer America by constantly holding politicians accountable for all rights.

Our Founders provided a formula to protect all rights, and we have to apply it: the Bill of Rights Test. Call it “the BORT” for short. It’s a simple test. For any government law, program, or policy, just ask the question: “Does this violate the Bill of Rights?” Any law or policy that violates any element of the Bill of Rights must be rejected. If a candidate stands for ideas that would violate the Bill of Rights, then that candidate must be defeated. The BORT is not a liberal or conservative approach. It is a distinctly American approach that can bear fruit for gun owners and all citizens.

If a law punishes people for stating political views, then that law fails the BORT. A proposal to eliminate the requirement for a search warrant is a proposal that should fail. A procedure that allows a federal agency to seize land or property without due process of law is a procedure that flunks the BORT.

We don’t mean to oversimplify the process. There may be close cases when using the BORT. Sometimes people with good intentions may disagree about how the Bill of Rights applies in certain situations. But the burden should be on the lawmakers to show that any proposed law or policy passes the Bill of Rights Test. As it stands today, Congress and state legislatures enact laws and then wait to see whether a court will strike the laws down many years later. That careless disregard of our Constitution must end.

Americans could enjoy many wonderful results from a return to a Bill of Rights culture. Click on www.jpfo.org/borculture.htm to explore the possibilities. Gun owners can lead the way, using the BORT to judge laws, policies and the voting records of politicians. And when Americans start to insist on respect for all of the Bill of Rights, then the rights of gun owners will be protected better than ever.