



Aborn Enters Gun Control Fray

By Liz Benjamin

January 14, 2011

Richard Aborn, former President of the Brady Campaign and the current President of the Citizens Crime Commission of NYC, is engaging in a little pushback of this morning's Times story that suggested there is little chance of movement in Washington on gun control measures, despite a renewed focus on the issue following last Saturday's Arizona shooting.

Aborn compared the current political landscape to the "hostile" environment he encountered in 1994 when advocates managed to win successful passage of landmark gun control legislation.

"We beat the odds in 1994 and achieved common sense gun control despite a hostile Congress and we can do it again," said Aborn, who ran an unsuccessful campaign for Manhattan DA in 2009.

"The current political landscape is nearly identical to the one we encountered previously, and there is no reason to think that we can't be successful. This horrible tragedy, and future ones, can be avoided by renewing the ban on high-capacity magazines now."

In the fall of 1994, the Brady Campaign pushed the successful passage of the ban on high-capacity ammunition magazines. Gun control advocates argue the Tucson tragedy might have been avoided had Congress renewed the ban in 2004.

Next Tuesday, Rep. Carolyn McCarthy, a Long Island Democrat, plans to introduce a bill to ban the sale of high-capacity magazines to civilian gun owners.

The Glock and clip used by Jared Loughner in the Tucson was also employed by Colin Ferguson in the 1993 LIRR massacre in which McCarthy's husband was killed and her son seriously wounded.

The 10-year Assault Weapons Ban passed Congress in September 1994 and was signed into law on the same day of its passage by President Clinton.

The 1994 midterm elections produced a similar result of the 2010 cycle, sweeping Republicans back into control of the House. The party had not held the majority in the House for 40 years, since the 83rd Congress (elected in 1952).

Democrats are arguably better situated now, however, since they retain a narrow majority. Six years ago, the GOP picked up eight seats in the Senate. The day after the election, Democratic Sen. Richard Shelby of Alabama changed parties, becoming a Republican. In January 1995, the GOP controlled both chambers.

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