

00:00;19;24 - 00:00;41;27

Stephen Gutowski

All right. Welcome, ladies and gentlemen, to another episode of the Weekly Reload podcast. I'm your host, Stephen Gutowski. I'm also a CNN contributor and the founder of thereload.com, where you can head over and sign up for our free newsletter today. If you want to keep up to date with what's going on with guns in America from a sober, serious perspective, that focuses on hard news and analysis over hot air and opinion.

00:00;41;29 - 00:01;02;00

Stephen Gutowski

This week we are going to be discussing some of the new moves from the Trump administration on gun policy. And to do that, we have, one of the my favorite guests on the show, Cam Edwards, recurring, guest who's always here to, walk us through some of these changes because he as well covers these things very closely over at Bearing Arms.

00:01;02;01 - 00:01;05;05

Stephen Gutowski

Welcome back to the show, cam. Thanks for joining us.

00:01;05;06 - 00:01;07;17

Cam Edwards

Oh, thanks once again for the invite. Steve. It's good to see you.

00:01;07;19 - 00:01;16;28

Stephen Gutowski

Yes, it's good to have you back. It's good to see you again. Can tell people just a little bit about yourself and Bearing Arms. I'm sure anybody who hasn't at this point heard them say the show.

00:01;17;00 - 00:01;23;04

Cam Edwards

Sure, absolutely. I mean, like you. So I, I do have a colleague at Hot Air. But but yeah, I try to stay away from.

00:01;23;06 - 00:01;25;23

Stephen Gutowski

Into, So we are we're.

00:01;25;23 - 00:01;44;06

Cam Edwards

A little bit more opinionated, I think, than the, the, the straight news analysis that you do at the reload. But you two are covering, second movement news and information on a daily basis. I also host the Bearing Arms Cam and Company podcast Monday through Thursday, where Steve is also a frequent guest. So a mutual admiration society.

00:01;44;09 - 00:01;48;07

Cam Edwards

And again, I'm always, always really pleased to get the opportunity. Spend some time with you.

00:01;48;09 - 00:02;05;29

Stephen Gutowski

Yes, absolutely. And I appreciate your, your opinions and analysis. I there's nothing wrong with doing opinion. It's just not what we do at the we. And we try to have other people on to give their opinions and their perspective. And that's, why I'm always glad to have you here, because I have a lot of respect for your, point of view and your opinions.

00:02;06;02 - 00:02;35;16

Stephen Gutowski

Speaking of which, let's get into, talking about what the Trump administration did this week. That signals, you know,

that they may, in fact, be serious about making reforms through, at least on the regulatory side of things, through the executive branch on gun policy. First up was they removed, the surgeon general's report on gun violence from, the Biden administration from 2024.

00:02:35;18 - 00:02:58;04

Stephen Gutowski

That was fairly political, documenting not the whole thing. But the overarching point of it was that we should have stricter gun control regulations. Because gun violence is a public health concern. And so we need things like softens bans and, and universal background checks. Right. And so they remove that from the, the HHS website this week.

00:02:58;04 - 00:02:58;27

Stephen Gutowski

Right?

00:02:58;29 - 00:03:16;26

Cam Edwards

They did. And it's interesting because, you know, we saw the removal of like, the white House Office of Gun Violence Prevention website, if not on day one, like day two of the administration. I was a little surprised that it took some time for this advisory to come down. As you say, given the politicized nature of the previous Surgeon General's announcement.

00:03:16;26 - 00:03:35;07

Cam Edwards

But, but it apparently has been taken down. Of course, the gun control groups complained about this year saying, you know, lifesaving information is no longer available. Well, they apparently have this list of, you know, resources, on their websites to vote and go there, I guess I'm not sure how many people actually access the Surgeon General's website to find access to this information.

00:03:35;07 - 00:03:59;09

Cam Edwards

But, you know, when Vivek Murthy made this pronouncement last year, what's interesting is that violent crime was already declining, according to the Biden administration. Right. We were seeing, fewer instances of quote unquote, gun violence around the country. And yet that was the moment that Vivek Murthy decided, okay, no, this is a public health crisis. So I thought the timing of that was odd.

00:03:59;11 - 00:04:15;24

Cam Edwards

You know, we we did see this spike in 2020, in terms of both, you know, violent crime and maybe gun related suicides as well. But if you look at, you know, what a lot of local agencies are reporting, you look at the FBI crime stats, and I know that there's some dispute about how accurate those are.

00:04:15;26 - 00:04:21;05

Cam Edwards

Certainly it seems the homicide rates, around the country have been going down for the past couple of years.

00:04:21;06 - 00:04:23;06

Stephen Gutowski

Yeah. Andrew Bailey so.

00:04:23;08 - 00:04:50;13

Cam Edwards

Right, exactly. So, you know, it tells me a couple of things. A that the, the arguments that more guns equals more crime is once again been debunked. Right. Because we still have far more guns than we did in this country five years ago. Yet violent crime in particular homicides are going down. But two, it showed me that, again, the Biden administration really

was politicizing these issues as part of this whole of government attack on the firearms industry on the Second Amendment.

00:04:50:13 - 00:05:14:08

Cam Edwards

So whether it was the ATF, whether it was DOJ positions or, you know, HHS, try to, you know, build gun violence and to a certain extent, gun ownership and gun availability as a public health crisis. There was a, you know, a an overdue move for the Trump administration to, to take that down. Obviously, that does not, represent the the point of view of the Trump administration.

00:05:14:08 - 00:05:18:21

Cam Edwards

And so, I think it's entirely appropriate that it's no longer available on the agency's website.

00:05:18:23 - 00:05:38:01

Stephen Gutowski

And so I guess, one question I have on this, though, I mentioned your thoughts. Obviously, there's a there was a scandal during the Biden administration where they removed, estimates of defensive gun use from the CDC website. You know, do you do you see a difference between that and this? Right?

00:05:38:03 - 00:06:07:05

Cam Edwards

I do see a big difference. Yeah. Because so, you know, what the Biden administration did was essentially hide the science, right? These are facts. These are reports that, that we don't want people to know. I mean, but it didn't mean that the CDC took down an entire section about, you know, gun violence. Quote, unquote. Right. It was that they massaged the data, to present a false picture, I think, of defensive gun uses and how often we, we see these things in the United States.

00:06:07:07 - 00:06:40:06

Cam Edwards

This, I think, is the administration saying we don't agree with this entire document. Right. And so whether you like that position or not, they didn't change what Vivek Murthy said. They didn't take out two paragraphs of that report because they didn't like that particular piece. Right. They just took this entire report offline. And so I think that there is a substantial difference in between what the Biden administration did with the CDC data and what the Trump administration has done with the former surgeon general's declaration of gun violence as a public health emergency.

00:06:40:08 - 00:07:08:17

Stephen Gutowski

Okay. Yeah. And presumably the the the fact that Murphy's document was was very much, in the form of advocating for new gun restrictions through legislation and, you know, fairly political in, of its own right. You know, that I guess that that's a difference as well. Right? As opposed to the the defense of gun use stats that were removed, under political pressure from, activists.

00:07:08:19 - 00:07:09:25

Stephen Gutowski

Right?

00:07:09:28 - 00:07:11:19

Cam Edwards

Yeah, I think so.

00:07:11:22 - 00:07:38:04

Stephen Gutowski

All right. That makes sense. And then, so the other hand, the other side of this, too, is, Yeah, that. Yeah. The president

just has the authority to do this. Right. This isn't something where there's a lot of fights over what the president, what Trump is, has been doing in a lot of other areas, whether he has the authority to do it or not, whether any legislation, you know, that fights over, you know, empowerment and, and funding and so forth.

00:07:38;04 - 00:08:10;10

Stephen Gutowski

But, you know, stuff like this, pretty straightforward. This is nuts. Something that he needs to make a rule through federal rulemaking to accomplish. This is just something he could do on day one. Now, he didn't do it on day one. And I will say, like the the HHS put out a statement on this and claimed that it was and were, as a result of, Trump's executive order on on ordering the, the gun, you know, review of federal, executive branch gun policies.

00:08:10;10 - 00:08:19;21

Stephen Gutowski

But that that explanation is a little bit weird to me because that that executive order is for the Department of Justice, not for HHS. But I don't know, what should we make of any of this as well.

00:08:19;21 - 00:08:38;14

Cam Edwards

So, I mean, so it the order was to the DOJ and to Attorney General Pam Bondi, but the directive was looked at at all of the the whole of federal government. And find out what policies are, you know, in conflict with the right to keep and bear arms. So.

00:08:38;16 - 00:08:40;08

Stephen Gutowski

Yeah. So that reasoning makes sense to me.

00:08:40;09 - 00:08:59;03

Cam Edwards

It does. I mean, it doesn't guarantee that Pam Bondi, or, you know, DOJ attorneys came across this and then told HHS, hey, you know what? This is in conflict with the presidency. Oh, so you got to take it down. Obviously, you know, we're not aware of the circumstances there, but, but the order was not limited specifically to.

00:08:59;03 - 00:09:13;02

Cam Edwards

Okay, look at DOJ, look at ATF, right? It really was look at everything in the federal government that could impact our segment rights. And so I think this would certainly fall under that. Again, I'm not sure that it couldn't have been done earlier, but,

00:09:13;10 - 00:09:29;21

Stephen Gutowski

Yeah, I guess that's the other half of it. Like what the. And this can be done. This is one of those situations where I think it's fairly clear that the administration can just do this if they want to. Yeah. There's no real conflict over their authority on this, this aspect. But there's probably a number of other areas where that's also true.

00:09:29;21 - 00:09:44;06

Stephen Gutowski

And they haven't taken those steps yet. You know, for instance, the zero tolerance policy at the ATF towards, you know, licensed dealers, you know, I don't know, I don't know what is this? What do you make of that? Like, should we expect more?

00:09:44;08 - 00:10:05;16

Cam Edwards

I think we should expect more. You know, and we may be starting to see the focus shift a little bit. I know that, on, cam a company earlier this week, we had sort of talked about how the segment, you know, has not been, a high priority issue

for Donald Trump. It wasn't really an issue, a high priority issue for him on the campaign trail last year.

00;10;05;19 - 00;10;37;03

Cam Edwards

I didn't talk about it during his, a joint session of Congress, our joint address to Congress, on Thursday, Dan Bongino, visited the ATF, tweeted about it, the white House, shared that tweet, or that post on X and, and, you know, reiterated their support for the right to keep and bear arms. So, so maybe now we're starting to see okay, you know, they've taken all these steps to deal with illegal immigration and, you know, trade whether you like the the actions that have being taken or not.

00;10;37;05 - 00;11;00;10

Cam Edwards

Maybe now there's, you know, a little bit more, a time to focus on, ATF, DOJ settlement issues, that that's, you know, that's the positive spin on this. You know, we'll have to wait and see. It could be just a blip, but, you know, I suspect with Kash Patel, and Dan Bongino there that you would see fairly quickly, and into these practices.

00;11;00;10 - 00;11;07;23

Cam Edwards

Right. As you say, the zero tolerance policy was not the result of a formal ATF rule. So it's not like it has to go through a formal repeal process. Right.

00;11;07;23 - 00;11;09;15

Stephen Gutowski

It's just a policy from the white House.

00;11;09;15 - 00;11;32;28

Cam Edwards

Right. So there could be a directive from Kash Patel, today saying, listen, we're going to revert to the old standard. Don't be taking anybody's FFL away because they made a minor clerical error. Don't interpret these minor clerical errors as a willful violation of the law. You know, and I guess perhaps that has happened, but we certainly haven't heard any word of that happening.

00;11;33;01 - 00;11;56;03

Stephen Gutowski

So, in fact, the industry was complaining about this, you know, after Trump took office that they're still enforcing the zero tolerance approach. But, you know, it sounds like in your mind this is, not necessarily, that they won't do these things. They may not be a top priority, but they that they still the likelihood that they'll get around to doing them eventually.

00;11;56;03 - 00;11;59;25

Stephen Gutowski

And that's what we're seeing with this HHS decision, I think.

00;11;59;25 - 00;12;20;05

Cam Edwards

So you know, the one I don't know if it's a concern necessarily was risen to that point yet, but I guess the one, note of caution, you know, is that Kash Patel and Damar Geno, are both doing double duty. Right? So there as Patel is the acting director of the ATF, and he's also the current director of the FBI.

00;12;20;08 - 00;12;41;02

Cam Edwards

So how much time and attention is being devoted to the FBI duties as opposed to devoting to the ATF duties? Right. And if. Yeah, a lot of that is being delegated or, you know, we're putting the ATF stuff on the back burner, that that might allow, again, these abusive practices to continue until they're able to pay time and attention specifically to this

agency.

00;12;41;02 - 00;12;50;05

Cam Edwards

So that's that's the one concern that I have. Right. Is that typically, I mean, I don't know about you, but I would say running the FBI is a full time job. Yeah, the ATF is a full time job.

00;12;50;05 - 00;13;09;02

Stephen Gutowski

Supposedly he's also doing this from Las Vegas instead of from I mean, at least that was what, one report, I think, from The New York Times indicated. So, and also, this is where the sort of lack of experience critique would come in to, like Dan Bongino. And I don't think Dan Bongino even has an official position at the ATF at this point.

00;13;09;02 - 00;13;09;18

Stephen Gutowski

He's just I.

00;13;09;18 - 00;13;12;22

Cam Edwards

Don't think so. I mean, he's assistant assistant FBI director.

00;13;12;24 - 00;13;31;17

Stephen Gutowski

But, you know, both these guys don't have a wealth of experience running a law enforcement agency. But do you know, as a Secret Service agent, and then for a very long time, a media personality after that, and then, Patel worked. He was like, he I think he was a lawyer at the DOJ for a while.

00;13;31;17 - 00;14;11;10

Stephen Gutowski

And then he worked at the DoD very briefly at the end of the last term. And then again, he's been kind of a media personality since then. So, you know, do these guys have the, the experience and expertise to, you know, really push through reforms that they want? Although we'll get into why there there's another sign that perhaps, that's more positive on the that scale, later on in the show, but but yeah, I mean, that'll be the question, at hand, although, I guess it kind of moves into our next topic here real quick, which is, that we did have some actual, like, movement on a rule

00;14;11;10 - 00;14;45;11

Stephen Gutowski

this week. We had we had the, attorney general propose or publish a, a rule on the, firearms, rights restoration process and how that works. And, that that's, it's an interesting development as well, that that's another sign that perhaps they really are going to do a number of these things. Now, you know, this one seems much more directly the result from the, executive order, because it's the DOJ doing it.

00;14;45;13 - 00;15;07;08

Stephen Gutowski

Now they're they're a bit late on not doing this. And it is only one thing that is not necessarily the top priority that people are thinking of, from that executive order. But let's just go through what it does. Right. So they put out this rule, and it kind of retakes authority from the ATF to the attorney general for this process.

00;15;07;08 - 00;15;09;09

Stephen Gutowski

What do you make of it?

00;15;09;11 - 00;15;30;10

Cam Edwards

You know, I think you described it as a plan for a plan, on, came a company earlier this week, and I think that's that's a good way of putting it. Right. So this is sort of a roadmap to what they want to do. But, you know, ultimately, for what, 30 years there's been this process that exists on paper where people can have their rights restored.

00;15;30;10 - 00;15;50;10

Cam Edwards

You can apply to the ATF, but the problem is that it hasn't been funded for 30 years. And so, this exists in theory, but it does not exist in practice. And this is basically Pam Bondi saying we want to bring this back into effect. But we're going to take it away from the ATF. We're going to put it back into the auspices of the attorney general and under the DOJ.

00;15;50;13 - 00;16;10;27

Cam Edwards

And we're going to develop a plan by which people can apply to have their rights restored. So we don't know what that plan is going to look like. Bonnie made it very clear that this was not going to be everybody who got convicted of a felony, everybody who spent, you know, who was convicted of a crime that's eligible for more than a year in jail is automatically going to get their rights restored when their sentence is over.

00;16;11;00 - 00;16;30;26

Cam Edwards

A couple of places in this rule, it talks about preventing violent felons from regaining their right to keep their arms. So we don't know what this process is going to look like, but it doesn't appear that it's going to be, you know, entirely automated. Let's say there is going to be some oversight. And I think that I think that this is in line with what we're starting to see from the courts.

00;16;30;26 - 00;16;55;27

Cam Edwards

Right. Where you've got, you know, appellate courts like the Third Circuit that have said at least as an as applied challenge, the current law is unconstitutional, like there are going to be some cases where people segment rights are being violated because of the current federal statute. Look at a case like, Brian Range out of Pennsylvania, who again, 37 years ago, lied about his income on a food stamp application.

00;16;55;27 - 00;17;15;26

Cam Edwards

This was a misdemeanor, but it was punishable under Pennsylvania law by more than a year in jail. So, you know, we only got probation. He's been unable to buy a gun for the past three decades. And the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, I think, even on bonk said Brian, range is not a dangerous person. Brian Range, you know, should have a way to get his gun rights back.

00;17;15;28 - 00;17;40;22

Cam Edwards

And so we've heard, you know, Justice Amy Coney Barrett in the past talk about, in the canter cases before she was on the Supreme Court, talking about the, the need for a, an an individualized finding of dangerousness, would be a more appropriate avenue than this, you know, just blanket prohibition. And so I think this gets us there, not through court action, but through executive branch action.

00;17;40;25 - 00;17;59;11

Cam Edwards

Right? Yeah. And it could be that, that one way or the other, we're going to get to this point, and this is just the Trump administration sort of getting ahead of, what the Supreme Court might eventually rule and, and, you know, going in and providing that, that route for some individuals, to have their rights restored.

00;17;59;14 - 00;18;03;26

Stephen Gutowski

Yeah, it's interesting and it's not necessarily an anti-hate play either.

00:18;03;28 - 00:18;04;29

Cam Edwards

No, I don't think so.

00:18;05;01 - 00:18;25;24

Stephen Gutowski

It's much more of a, it seems the reason, at least as they explained in the rule. And this does appear to check out, you know, basically this this authority exists under federal law. You can get your, your rights restored. The the AG has the authority to do that. It's just that they, the AG delegated this authority to the ATF to come up with a specific process.

00:18;25;24 - 00:18;47;11

Stephen Gutowski

Decades ago. They used to do this. And then in the 90s, Congress got upset about it because, you know, the claim was, I believe from Democrats at the time, I think Chuck Schumer was was actually the one who sponsored, this, this effort. But, you know, they claim that the ATF is spending too much time and resources on restoring people's rights.

00:18;47;11 - 00:19;14;03

Stephen Gutowski

Some of those people I don't know the the data on this, but they claim some of them would re-offend later on. Some of the people had their rights restored. And so they basically made it, a priority to completely defund the process, to say ATF can't spend money to do this anymore. And that effectively shut it down. And so the reason they're reclaiming it, the authority from the ATF, is not because they don't think the ATF did a good job with it or what what have you.

00:19;14;10 - 00:19;36;25

Stephen Gutowski

It's because the ATF can't do anything with it. And so the only way to to, you know, re reignite this process is to take it away from ATF and figure out some other way to do it. Now, they they say in the rule they plan to offer up, you know, budget proposals, you know, some some language to try and, get Congress to restart this process with funding as well.

00:19;36;25 - 00:20;04;27

Stephen Gutowski

But but, you know, in the meantime, it sounds like they can go and do some stuff, you know, some of these restorations, and you obviously that's created something of a controversy already. There was, a pardon attorney at the DOJ who got into a dispute with leadership over this exact question. Because I think they she claims that they were going to start to, like, actually start restoring people's rights, and make an announcement on this.

00:20;04;27 - 00:20;25;25

Stephen Gutowski

And they she put together a bunch of candidates. They whittled it down to nine people. We don't know who those people were. And then, someone in leadership wanted to add Mel Gibson to the list because he doesn't he's, prohibited person from a domestic violence misdemeanor conviction. He has on his record from 22,001. And. And, she wouldn't recommend that.

00:20;25;25 - 00:20;49;06

Stephen Gutowski

So, she was fired over that. This is the her claim, right? Right. And so it's caused some controversy, but, already. And where do you draw that line on who can be restored to people with domestic violence, convictions, even if they're less serious ones, I guess, you know, it sort of depends. Yeah. On a case by case basis.

00:20;49;06 - 00:20;49;28

Stephen Gutowski

But and I.



00;20;49;28 - 00;21;00;06

Cam Edwards

Think that's why it goes back to this, that's where the idea that, that at least a if not a, if not an individualized find a new dangerous that, you know, there may be some excluded categories.

00;21;00;09 - 00;21;01;00

Stephen Gutowski

Yeah.

00;21;01;02 - 00;21;14;28

Cam Edwards

That, you know, if you've been convicted of, you know, crimes X, Y and Z, we're not going to consider you at all. Maybe there's a time limit on that, right? For certain categories of crimes. So you can't apply for ten years or 15 years or whatever after your conviction. I mean, there are ways to do that, but.

00;21;15;02 - 00;21;19;02

Stephen Gutowski

Yeah. So the process will be important, right, when they actually put it out.

00;21;19;08 - 00;21;35;19

Cam Edwards

Yeah. I mean, but you know, you look at Mel Gibson's case, so he pleaded, no contest. I believe it was. So, you know, he he did not admit guilt, but he admitted that there was enough evidence to convict him of misdemeanor battery. It has been 14 years. Mel Gibson's not been in trouble with the law since then.

00;21;35;21 - 00;21;41;20

Cam Edwards

You know, he may have made some headlines for comments, but he's not been in trouble with the law. Right. And so.

00;21;41;20 - 00;21;45;25

Stephen Gutowski

His, I believe his conviction was expunged at the state level.

00;21;45;27 - 00;22;05;15

Cam Edwards

Okay. So, you know, again, I mean, these things are not going to be as cut and dried as and maybe I think there's one reason why a one size fits all rule policy, or one size fits all policy doesn't make a lot of sense here, because, sure, you know, you can look at somebody like, Mel Gibson.

00;22;05;17 - 00;22;16;14

Cam Edwards

And maybe Gibson does deserve to have his rights restored. But you could look at somebody else who had a domestic violence misdemeanor conviction in 2011, who did not comply with the terms of his probation. You know, I mean, you.

00;22;16;14 - 00;22;33;06

Stephen Gutowski

Could also, I'm sure that the thing with domestic violence especially, right, is that it's going to be very unpopular to to reararm somebody who's convicted of domestic violence and, and Mel Gibson's case, obviously, I think there's the added twist that he is friends with the president of the United States.

00;22;33;08 - 00;22;35;05

Cam Edwards

He would not have been on that list if he were not right.

00;22;35;05 - 00;22;39;03

Stephen Gutowski

Yeah. So that becomes it's, sort of, controversy as well.

00;22;39;05 - 00;22;43;02

Cam Edwards

Yeah. I'm actually curious as to who the other eight names were, because that's what we don't know.

00;22;43;04 - 00;23;06;13

Stephen Gutowski

That's why we want to get into actually, next is like this, this process, the process side of it seems really important with this for, really for strategic purposes on, if you're a gun rights advocate because while while, you know, I mentioned earlier that like the, the bigger ticket items that people are wanting to see rolled back are stuff like the pistol breaks ban and the the ghost gun ban, stuff like that.

00;23;06;13 - 00;23;32;05

Stephen Gutowski

And this isn't that. But this has been, as you mentioned, some of the cases, a priority of the gun rights. But now it's been very laser focused on people with nonviolent convictions. So not necessarily no Gibson in particular, but, you know, Martha Stewart has been kind of a famous example. But but Brian Range is probably your really, perfect plaintiff for something like this, given his background.

00;23;32;08 - 00;23;59;22

Stephen Gutowski

Yeah. And so you wonder, like, do you think they should take into consideration the fact that he has a chance of getting to the Supreme Court and getting rolling, which is what a lot of gun rights groups want to see, or, or is it just better off to have. Yeah. Like you mentioned earlier, the executive branch just do this process, on its own and not worry about these legal fights in the courts.

00;23;59;25 - 00;24;20;28

Cam Edwards

You know, listen, from the DOJ's perspective, it shouldn't matter. If Brian ranges cases going up to the Supreme Court soon, or the Supreme Court will have a chance to consider his case soon. Right. Because the DOJ's. I think the DOJ mission is to ensure that justice is done here. Right. And so in the case of Mr. Brian Range, the sooner he could get his rights restored, the sooner justice can be done.

00;24;21;01 - 00;24;39;02

Cam Edwards

From a tactical perspective, obviously, segment of groups say this is a perfect case, right? Or at least a really good case to bring this issue, to the justices so I can see why they would want, you know, hey, Brian, just hang on a little bit longer before you're able to go out and buy a gun. But, you know, let's let's do this avenue instead of that avenue.

00;24;39;05 - 00;24;57;11

Cam Edwards

But I don't think that's DOJ's job, to say, you know, hold off Brian range. We were going to let the Supreme Court figure this out. And there are going to be other cases. Right. So there I can I remember her name. There's a woman in Utah who was convicted of, writing a bad check, basically, maybe a couple of bad checks.

00;24;57;12 - 00;25;16;15

Cam Edwards

And this was 20 some odd years ago. She was a drug addict at the time. Felony conviction. She has since turned his life around. She is a counselor now. She's working with the state of Utah, to help drug addicts out. I mean, she's really just. She's had a complete 180 degree turn, right? She would like to be able to regain her gun.

00;25;16;15 - 00;25;35;23

Cam Edwards

Right? So she get a have a farm in the home to protect her family. She would like to go hunting with her kids and, the I don't know, I don't think it was the ninth Circuit, but it might have been the ninth Circuit. Whatever. Whatever. Circuit court. Over. Over, you know, overviews, Utah basically said, no, you are a prohibited person.

00;25;35;25 - 00;25;55;18

Cam Edwards

Back then, you'll be prohibited person forevermore. Unless again, you know, there is this process by which you can have your rights restored through, ATF or DOJ action. There's there going to be plenty of people out there who present compelling cases, that they should have their rights restored. Now, their, their cases may not be as far along as Brian rages.

00;25;55;18 - 00;26;23;22

Cam Edwards

Hers is pretty close. Yeah. Hers has already been decided, at least by a three judge panel. So there may be an en banc review, but it could get up to the Supreme Court or before long. And, you know, I just happen to say, I mean, listen, I'm a second woman advocate, but I don't want my 50,000ft support for the Second Amendment to ever get in the way of the real life men and women whose lives are being impacted by these laws.

00;26;23;22 - 00;26;41;02

Cam Edwards

So the 50,000ft level is important. So is Brian Range as a human being, as a guy who wants to have his rights restored. And if the fastest way for that to happen is through DOJ policy, that's the quickest way for him to get justice. I'm not going to objective. That's what happens.

00;26;41;04 - 00;26;57;25

Stephen Gutowski

Sure. Yeah. I guess the counterargument there, right, is that, you know, a process that the DOJ puts in place to restore these people's rights can just as easily be undone in the next administration, whereas the Supreme Court ruling is harder to undo.

00;26;58;02 - 00;27;21;25

Cam Edwards

Yeah. Well, again, and if Brian Raines was the only person out there, then I think that arguing would have more merit. Right. But again, he is far from the only permitted person in the only far from the only nonviolent offender, you know, who has lost their, their rights. So there are going to be, I think, a lot of other opportunities for the court to weigh on this, on this issue without needlessly delaying, an individual's restoration.

00;27;21;25 - 00;27;26;19

Cam Edwards

And again, we don't know. We don't know that Brian Ranger's name was on that list, right? That this could be an entire. Yeah.

00;27;26;19 - 00;27;44;04

Stephen Gutowski

We don't know. We don't know who was on there. And we don't know if they're taking into consideration, you know, strategic litigation, you know, concerns, right? When they're putting now, like you said, they probably shouldn't. That's not really what DOJ should be doing. You know, it's not the role of DOJ.

00;27;44;08 - 00;27;59;00

Cam Edwards

I wouldn't want living for this way. I would not want it. And I'm pretty sure it happened, but I would not want the Biden DOJ taking into consideration. Well, what's Everytown law doing? And are we going to be stepping on their toes if we

take this action? Right. We would be furious.

00;27;59;02 - 00;27;59;15

Stephen Gutowski

Sure.

00;27;59;16 - 00;28;01;11

Cam Edwards

Have a Democratic administration. We're doing that.

00;28;01;13 - 00;28;22;06

Stephen Gutowski

So although they do take it clearly, like something like Rahami being one of the cases that they that was that being this First Amendment case, get taken up after Bruen that I think that involved some strategic litigating on the part of the DOJ, under and that's not necessarily exactly the same thing here, but because that's that's a DOJ case.

00;28;22;08 - 00;28;28;23

Cam Edwards

Yeah, but was it a Rahim's I mean, no, it was the DOJ. No. That's right. Yeah. Well it was the appeal.

00;28;28;25 - 00;28;39;22

Stephen Gutowski

Now, you know, they it was on the glide path to the Supreme Court. But the they I think the way that they worked it, you know it got there before for instance range.

00;28;39;24 - 00;28;40;24

Cam Edwards

Right.

00;28;40;27 - 00;28;58;24

Stephen Gutowski

You know the before that and then the Biden's DOJ did ask them to review range as well, and a number of other cases which the court just didn't do. Yeah. Which is another perhaps, idea here too. It's like maybe who knows when the court might actually act on range. This case, we don't know, but, but I do want to get, the last part here.

00;28;58;24 - 00;29;39;07

Stephen Gutowski

Into what? What, to me at least, has been, the brightest sign that they are the biggest indicator, I guess, that they're, the Trump administration is going to be more serious about using regulatory, action this time around, which is that they appointed, former weekly reload podcast guest and actually, somebody who's written for the reload, in the past, George George Mason University professor Robert Leiter to be ATF chief counsel and, assistant director for the ATF as well.

00;29;39;09 - 00;30;04;07

Stephen Gutowski

Now, this is somebody who is a Second Amendment scholar. And I would say it's fair to say that he's a gun rights advocate. But also maybe even more importantly, an expert on the regulatory side of federal gun laws. So what do you to me that says, you know, whatever Kash Patel and Dan Bongino might do, or Trump might be focused on lots of other stuff.

00;30;04;09 - 00;30;18;24

Stephen Gutowski

If somebody like Robert Leiter is the chief counsel at the ATF, that's they don't he doesn't need a lot of, you know, focus from the top to enact or at least propose a bunch of, significant regulatory changes.

00;30;18;27 - 00;30;55;04

Cam Edwards

I think you're right. Yeah, I think this is a great pick. You know, there's I don't want to say this is, like the legal equivalent of, naming Brandon Herrera, ATF director, but, it kind of is, in a way. Right? This is somebody who, may not be as well known as some other prominent litigators, but, but is a second scholar, is a guy who has, you know, come down on the side of a robust right to keep and bear arms and somebody, as you say, who has that regulatory background, knows a lot about, you know, the rules and regulations.

00;30;55;04 - 00;31;19;12

Cam Edwards

So if you are wanting to unwind, the Biden era rules, but also wanting to put in place new rules that will protect individual gun owners, and, you know, protect the firearms industry from a lot of the vagueness that we've seen from the ATF. Right? I mean, that's been one of the problems over the years is that the ATF comes up with these rules that are so hard to comply with.

00;31;19;14 - 00;31;33;28

Cam Edwards

Because you don't really know. Right? There's all of these, you know, may language and maybes. And, you know, one of the things that, Larry Keane has talked about on my podcast and the National Shooting Sports Foundation is, you know, give us that bright line. So we you know, it's not that we don't want to know lines.

00;31;33;28 - 00;31;54;12

Cam Edwards

We just want to know where the line is. And I think with a guy like Robert Leiter there, you are going to see, a much, a much more fair, treatment, of the firearms industry from this agency. It's not going to be as combative as it was during the Biden administration, certainly, under Trump.

00;31;54;14 - 00;32;07;20

Cam Edwards

But I think with with Leiter, you've actually got a chance to put in place rules and regulations that are easy to understand, easy to comply with, and are not designed to trip up gunmakers, FFL or gun owners.

00;32;07;22 - 00;32;45;06

Stephen Gutowski

Yeah. I mean, and hopefully we'll be able to have him back on the show, in the, in the near future. That'd be great. Well, we'll see what the ATF allows, you know, him to go on and say publicly, but, but we do have what he wrote in December when he was arguing, basically against the Brennan Herrera, argument of shutting down the ATF and, and and in favor of, instead having, you know, somebody who's an expert go in and, and, you know, use the regulatory process there to, as you suggest, make, the ATF enforcement fair or even just to, there's a lot of ways that

00;32;45;06 - 00;33;11;16

Stephen Gutowski

you can use ATF rulemaking. In, in efforts to that would make Gun Rights Act, advocates happy. Right. And then he suggested a couple of them in the piece, you know, people should go read it, directly, but one of the things he suggests is, for instance, you know, sporting purposes, sporting purposes and federal law, the ATF has a lot of leeway to determine what sporting purposes is, and this can affect things.

00;33;11;24 - 00;33;32;17

Stephen Gutowski

It's not a very well known aspect of federal law outside of, you know, gun enthusiasts and especially like people who focus on gun regulations. But it has it is very broad, you know, federal federal law allows the ATF to determine or that the, you know, the federal government to determine what are sporting, what guns are useful for sporting purposes.

00;33;32;17 - 00;34;09;14

Stephen Gutowski

And that can affect things like importation of firearms. You know, what what firearms you can, there's just, a wealth of different aspects. It's kind of hard to explain it very briefly here, but. But it's something that he's taught, he talked about in that piece, you know, coming up with, maybe a more updated version of what is sporting purposes like, you know, is, is competition shooting, does that sporting purpose, if so, then, you know, a lot of, AR 15 style firearms could be, you know, imported under that if that ATF decided to go that route.

00:34:09;14 - 00:34:24;15

Stephen Gutowski

There's just a lot of ways beyond just rolling back some of what Biden had done, that you could, get at, at new reforms without needing legislation, which is particularly important. Right, because we're unlikely to get new legislation through this.

00:34:24;19 - 00:34:41;04

Cam Edwards

I mean, yeah, I mean, honestly, legislatively, I think Congress needs to go back and actually remove that sporting purposes language. The Supreme Court has said that the primary, you know, reason for the amendment is self-defense. So if you are limiting arms that have a sporting purpose going to go to me, that flies in the face of Supreme Court precedent.

00:34:41;04 - 00:35:02;12

Cam Edwards

But you're right. We're not likely to see Congress, be able to enact those changes. Right. As long as cloture exists in the Senate. And so, you know, what Lide is basically suggesting is, you know, just as the Biden administration used the ATF to pass these regulations and bypass Congress, you can do the same thing from a pro amendment perspective.

00:35:02;15 - 00:35:06;20

Stephen Gutowski

Or tried to at least try and tie it up a lot in court. Which is he?

00:35:06;23 - 00:35:16;11

Cam Edwards

He did, he did. But I would argue that it's probably easier to use the regulatory power to protect the right to keep and bear arms in the.

00:35:16;11 - 00:35:16;29

Stephen Gutowski

Other direction.

00:35:16;29 - 00:35:36;09

Cam Edwards

Attack the right to keep and bear arms. Right, simply because we have that constitutional protection. Yeah. I think you're gonna, you know, now again, we'll see. What what what, lawsuits get filed and where they get filed. And, you know, they may find a friendly judge that's going to, you know, strike down any rule that would be a good for, for the industry or for gun owners.

00:35:36;09 - 00:35:49;26

Cam Edwards

But I do think that the because this is an enumerated. Right, we're talking about, the thumb should be on the scale, in terms of, you know, siding with the Second Amendment when it comes to any court challenges.

00:35:49;28 - 00:36:10;13

Stephen Gutowski

And, you know, we also have to see what letter can deliver. Now, the lighter can right off the bat, you know, a ton of

different rules and, and uses, you know, expertise on, federal law to come up with all kinds of reforms. There's still going to be need to be the political will to enact those from the administration, which is something we, you know, you still have to keep on top of all this.

00:36;10;13 - 00:36;24;01

Stephen Gutowski

It's not like just because they picked, somebody like ladder to be the in this position that you're guaranteed to get the Second Amendment advocates are guaranteed to get everything they want. It's just, it's a good sign of that, right?

00:36;24;04 - 00:36;42;01

Cam Edwards

Yeah, I think so. You know, again, we'll we'll see, where this goes. I think, you know, the next few months are really going to be telling, but, I am also, you know, I'm cautiously optimistic because a lighter's position was not one of benign neglect. It wasn't one of just. Well, let's just, you know, stop what had happened.

00:36;42;01 - 00:37;03;07

Cam Edwards

And and then we'll just, you know, keep the status quo in place. Right. He did talk about a path forward to not only getting rolling back some of these, regulations that were promulgated under Biden, but going off in a new direction. And so, yeah, we'll see what kind of resistance he meets with, both internally within the agency, and, you know, externally as well.

00:37;03;07 - 00:37;20;02

Cam Edwards

But I think that these are, you know, everything we talked about today are are good steps. They're not the end of the journey. And in fact, I would say that, you know, these are first steps we need to see a lot more. But I think we're starting to see movement in the right direction.

00:37;20;04 - 00:37;47;23

Stephen Gutowski

Yeah, I mean, even if without the leader appointment to me, you're not. There hasn't been much done yet. Right. You're even with the wider appoint. The appointment itself isn't doing anything right, but it suggests they're going to do more, because, you know, there's this deadline for the review, has passed twice now. And the only thing that they've actually announced is, is that, the rights restoration process, a plan for a plan, basically.

00:37;47;25 - 00:38;03;24

Stephen Gutowski

So I think without the letter appointment, you know, people are following this closely with maybe be a little bit more peeved at the situation at the moment. But, you know, there is his appointment gives you reason to think, well, it's probably not the end of it.

00:38;03;26 - 00:38;09;16

Cam Edwards

I don't think this is the end of it now. You know, again, we are just a few months into this administration.

00:38;09;23 - 00:38;10;12

Stephen Gutowski

Yes, that's.

00:38;10;12 - 00:38;22;25

Cam Edwards

True, you know, so, well, this is not been the day one issue that I think gun owners, had hoped it would be. And I know Trump even said at one point, yes, that you would roll back these regulations on day one. And obviously that hasn't happened.

00:38;23;01 - 00:38;24;12

Stephen Gutowski

Right.

00:38;24;14 - 00:38;35;15

Cam Edwards

You know, I mean, there's there's been a certain amount of chaos, over the past couple of months as the administration has, you know, tried to move forward and move forward very quickly on some issues. And they've had to go back.

00:38;35;18 - 00:38;50;22

Stephen Gutowski

So which I think which adds the contrast here, right, that this idea that it's not a top priority because they're not doing those kind of like very aggressive moves. Whatever you think of them, they're not doing that with the gun stuff. But again, I think to your point earlier, it doesn't mean they won't do them.

00:38;51;00 - 00:39;01;06

Cam Edwards

It doesn't. And they seem to be putting, you know, you know, with leaders, appointment putting people in place that could actually do a methodical.

00:39;01;08 - 00:39;01;21

Stephen Gutowski

00:39;03;02 - 00:39;22;00

Cam Edwards

You know, rollback so it doesn't get overturned in court, that doesn't get halted. Right? That is not, you know, taking too big a bite out of the apple at one time. So, yeah, frankly, I would much rather see that, you know, something that that takes these steps that are maybe more moderate steps than something that, you know, goes way big, and then all of a sudden, I know now you're not going to get any of it.

00:39;22;00 - 00:39;22;12

Cam Edwards

Right?

00:39;22;12 - 00:39;45;14

Stephen Gutowski

Right. Yes. That's a good point too. Yeah. And that is the difference in approach. Like you point somebody like leader over, you know, a a talking head type or like somebody who's splashier but doesn't have the expertise level. That's a that is a very good point. I think. And since another reason perhaps to think to, to see this as a, as a sign gun rights advocates ought to read as positive.

00:39;45;16 - 00:40;03;04

Stephen Gutowski

But, hey, look, I, appreciate you coming on the show. It's good to have you back on. Been a little while. So always happy to have you here. To give your insight. If people want to follow you or even watch our most recent episode, Ben was, from the farm. As you are live on the farm.

00:40;03;07 - 00:40;04;10

Stephen Gutowski

Where can they do that?

00:40;04;13 - 00:40;08;22



Cam Edwards

Yeah, I mean, I just, I knew I knew the rooster would make an appearance at some point this hour.

00;40;08;22 - 00;40;10;09

Stephen Gutowski

Our the third guest on the show.

00;40;10;10 - 00;40;27;29

Cam Edwards

There he goes again. All right. Yeah. Just, bearing arms.com. You can find, my writing. You can find the podcast there as well, but also just go to YouTube Rumble. Whatever. And look at Bear Arms Cam and company. As always, Steven, it is great to spend time with you. I'm looking forward to catching up with you in person here in a month.

00;40;27;29 - 00;40;30;00

Cam Edwards

And have you excuse me? I need to go murder a rooster.

00;40;30;00 - 00;40;33;08

Stephen Gutowski

I might have to get some eggs. You guys, you know the prices.

00;40;33;08 - 00;40;35;21

Cam Edwards

You know what? I'll bring you a dozen together.

00;40;35;24 - 00;40;49;16

Stephen Gutowski

All right? Like a bride. Yeah. Lantern. The NRA annual meeting. We'll both be there. So look forward to seeing that and reporting on it. But, yeah, that's all we've got for you guys this week. I'm going to tell you a little bit about, another good public publication that I like. The Dispatch here.