

I wanted to bake for the Farmers' Market several years ago. I went through a long procedure, including kitchen renovations, water testing, and personal inspections before I received a license to sell breads and cookies to the public. After all, what I baked might be a danger to others. When I learned to drive a car, I needed a license that showed that I was competent to handle a vehicle safely. After all, I could injure or kill someone with my automobile. When Runo and I decided to get married, we needed a license. After all, one of us might already have a spouse, negating any marriage and doing harm. A neighbor wanted to act on the behalf of others to buy and sell property. She needed a realtor's license. After all, she could cause damage by wrong interpretation of the regulations. I made mittens of felt to sell to others. I needed a sales tax license. Otherwise, I would be guilty of defrauding the state in regard to tax revenues.

So, my question is this: Why don't people need licenses to own and use firearms? Can't these weapons cause injury and death to others? And why does anyone with any reasoning power even entertain the notion that the "right to bear arms" means that people can possess weapons that are powerful enough to take the lives of countless individuals in a matter of minutes—or even one minute? And another question is to the people who have these weapons—people who never have any intention of shooting anyone. What possible reason could there be for even owning such an instrument of death and destruction?

Hate rhetoric from the top has encouraged people to demonize those who are not "like us." This has to stop. And the NRA? Drop the nonsense about "guns not killing people, it's people who kill others." Without guns, these individuals would be far less effective in their aims. As to those who believe an armed populace will stop killers, the events of the past few days have proven the falsehood of that claim.

So, Republicans, get some backbone and force your immoral majority leader to bring meaningful gun control legislation forward. And then, in 2020, Amy McGrath, boot him out of office.