

## News

## Green Beret Group Lobbies Against Gun Control

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Military.com | by Bryant Jordan

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More than 1,100 former and current Army Special Forces troops -- Green Berets -- have reportedly put their names to a letter condemning any efforts to restrict gun ownership following the massacre of 20 students and six staff at Sandy Hill Elementary School in Newtown, Conn.

The [2,900-word letter](#) has been distributed to media outlets and [posted on Professionalsoldiers.com](#), which is operated by retired Army Special Forces Master Sgt. Jeff Hinton. Because of the sensitive nature of their military careers the names of those signing the

letter are not being released.

Hinton -- who has routinely exposed phony Green Berets and others on his website -- said he has confirmed that everyone who put his name to the letter is a current or former Special Forces soldier. Military.com could not validate all 1,100 names by press time.

Hinton's original goal was to collect 100 signatures. He was surprised by the response he received.

The letter makes the case for allowing civilians to own and use a military-style assault rifle, in particular the AR-15, as well as high-capacity magazines that can hold in excess of 10 rounds.

While the AR-15 is designed to look like the Army's M4A1 rifle, it is not able to fire automatically and cannot be reconfigured to do so, the letter states. As for limiting magazines to 10 rounds, they wrote "it is our considered opinion that reducing magazine capacity from 30 rounds to 10 rounds will only require an additional 6 -8 seconds to change two empty 10-round magazines with full magazines.

"Would an increase of 6 -8 seconds make any real difference to the outcome in a mass shooting incident? In our opinion it would not."

The view offered by the Special Forces soldiers is markedly different than that given by retired Army Gen. Stanley McChrystal, the former commander of forces in Afghanistan, who also came out of the Special Forces community.

In interviews with various media outlets McChrystal drew no hard distinctions between the AR-15 and M4, both of which fire a .223 caliber round.

"We've got to take a serious look -- I understand everyone's desire to have whatever [weapon] they want -- but we've got to protect our children, we've got to protect our police, we've got to protect our population," McChrystal said during an appearance on MSNBC's Morning Joe earlier this month. "Serious action is necessary. Sometimes we talk about very limited actions on the edges and I just don't think that's enough."

In its letter, the group states they also are "loving and caring fathers and grandfathers" who have been "stunned, horrified, and angered by the tragedies of Columbine, Virginia Tech, Aurora, Fort Hood, and Sandy Hook."

But solutions cannot and will not be found in new laws restricting gun ownership, the group wrote. The writers argue that the Supreme Court has maintained the right for citizens to own weapons in common use, which does not rule out military-style weapons.

In its letter, the group also offers several recommendations it says will help solve gun-violence, including gun-safety programs in schools, legislation mandating that court-determined mentally ill people undergo treatment, and giving border states the job of implementing border control laws to prevent illegal shipments of both firearms and drugs.

The government intercepts only about 10 percent of illegal drugs coming into the country, while its

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attempt to track illegal guns has also proven a failure, the group said, pointing to the "Fast and Furious" program that allowed criminals to buy and move guns.

"Given this dismal performance record that is misguided and inept ... we believe that border states will be far more competent at this mission," the group says.

The group also supports passing Assisted Outpatient Treatment laws to allow courts to require

"In each of the mass shooting incidents the perpetrator was mentally unstable," the group wrote in the letter. "We also believe that people who have been adjudicated as incompetent should be simultaneously examined to determine whether they should be allowed the right to retain/purchase firearms.

As for schools, which have been the sites of several mass murders in recent history, the group supports state and local boards developing security measures they deem necessary. This includes arming staff, if that is their wish. The group also calls for firearms safety instruction -- such as the National Rifle Association's "Eddie the Eagle" program -- in classrooms.

The repeal of the "Gun-Free School Zones Act of 1990," does not work but establishes schools as tempting targets to anyone wanting to inflict violence, the group said in their letter.

The group also recommends that gratuitous violence in movies and video games be discouraged, citing research showing links between the exposure to those popular mediums and desensitization to actual violence.

"We believe that it is time that we take personal responsibility for our choices and actions rather than abdicate that responsibility to someone else under the illusion that we have done something that will make us all safer," the group states. "We have a responsibility to stand by our principles and act in accordance with them. Our children are watching and they will follow the example we set."

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Obama and the Democrats will regret the day they started this fight with "We the People".