

CALL TO ACTION

The Obama Administration has recently announced two executive actions in connection with its ongoing gun control agenda. If this action remains unchallenged, it will greatly impact and negatively affect millions of gun collectors, hobbyists, and enthusiasts. As announced on the White House's website on August 29th: "Today, the Administration is announcing a new policy of denying requests to bring military-grade firearms back into the United States to private entities, with only a few exceptions such as for museums. This new policy will help keep military-grade firearms off our streets."

This action will effectively ban the importation into the United States of all U.S.-origin curio and relic rifles. This ban will make it impossible to import historically relevant rifles such as the M1 Garand, which Century has been working to lawfully import for years. This action reinstates a presumptive denial *policy* that was in effect during the Clinton Administration.

U.S. law generally prohibits the importation of U.S.-origin surplus military firearms. The law does, however, carve out an exception for those firearms that qualify as curios or relics. A firearm will qualify as a curio or relic if (1) it was manufactured at least 50 years earlier than the current date; (2) it was certified by the curator of a municipal, State, or Federal museum that exhibits firearms to be curios or relics of museum interest; or (3) it derives a substantial part of its monetary value because it is novel, rare, bizarre or associated with a historical figure, period, or event.

Following the enactment of the Gun Control Act of 1968 ("GCA") through the early 1980s, the GCA did not permit the importation of historical military surplus firearms. In the 1980s, however, Congress enacted 18 USC § 925 (e) to permit the importation of curio or relic firearms. Despite the change in law, the Department of State continued to enforce a policy opposing the importation of U.S.-origin curios or relics. During the 1990s, the Clinton Administration continued the presumptive denial policy against the importation of U.S. origin curios or relics. Finally, in the early 2000s, an appropriations amendment passed that prohibited the use of any funds to pay expenses to deny any application what was submitted to ATF or import U.S.-origin curio or relic firearms. In 2005, during the Bush Administration, the Department of State advised ATF that it had changed its policy of presumptive denial to one of approval (which in practice has been selective approval). This announcement by the White House reverses that approval policy and reinstates the presumptive denial policy that plagued the importing and collecting community through 2005.

For more than 20 years, Century has invested significant time and resources to be able to lawfully import firearms, including M1 Garands, which are of great historic value to thousands of firearms collectors, hobbyists, and enthusiasts. In fact, the announcement kills the ability of Century or any other licensed importer to import into the United States the M1 Garand rifles that had been approved at all levels in the Federal government, but was awaiting the White House's approval. Now we know the answer from the White House. In fact, the US government, through a separate quasi-government program, is doing exactly what licensed importers are not allowed to do.

Many of these firearms are obsolete, or antique, and are pieces of history that should not be treated as “crime guns.” In fact, they are not currently “military-grade” as described in the White House’s fact sheet. These guns are over 50 years old and are in no way a threat to the safety of the general public. Furthermore, the Department of Defense already brings in large quantities of M1 Garand rifles for the Civilian Marksmanship Program, without obtaining any Department of State or ATF approval. This executive action threatens access to these firearms by the more than 60,000 federally licensed collectors, and millions of American consumers, who actively pursue these historic collectibles. Many of these individuals are World War II and Korean War veterans, for whom these firearms have significant sentimental and patriotic value. For little practical reason, this executive action would eliminate veterans’ access to these firearms.

Accordingly, Century is calling on you to immediately contact your Congressperson or Senator to urge them to ask the Obama Administration to reverse its position on the importation of U.S.-origin curios or relics. Secondly, you can ask your Congressperson or Senator to support, or sign on as a cosponsor of, the Collectible Firearms Protection Act, H.R. 2247. This Act, reintroduced this year by Representative Cynthia Lummis (WY), would amend the Arms Export Control Act to permit curio and relic firearms to be imported into the United States by a licensed importer, without obtaining authorization from the Department of State or the Department of Defense. We need to act now to preserve our gun rights!

The following website will help you easily contact your Members of Congress. Please contact them immediately. www.usa.gov/Contact/US-Congress.shtml