



Founding Fathers on the Second Amendment

A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

“I ask, Sir, what is the militia? It is the whole people. To disarm the people is the best and most effectual way to enslave them.”

George Mason - Coauthor, with James Madison, of the Second Amendment during Virginia's Convention to Ratify the Constitution, 1788

“Firearms stand next in importance to the constitution itself. They are the American people's liberty teeth and keystone under independence ... from the hour the Pilgrims landed to the present day, events, occurrences and tendencies prove that to ensure peace security and happiness, the rifle and pistol are equally indispensable ... the very atmosphere of firearms anywhere restrains evil interference — they deserve a place of honor with all that's good.”

George Washington - First President of the United States of America

“To preserve liberty, it is essential that the whole body of the people always possess arms and be taught alike, especially when young, how to use them.”

Richard Henry Lee - American Statesman, 1788

“Their swords, and every other terrible instrument of the soldier, are the birth right of an American. ... The unlimited power of the sword is not in the hands of either the federal or the state governments, but, where I trust in God it will ever remain, in the hands of the people.”

Tench Coxe, noted federalist and friend of James Madison, writing in defense of the proposed Constitution, in the Pennsylvania Gazette, Feb. 20, 1788



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