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**REMARKS on Saturday 28 April 2018
by LtCol (Ret) Willes K. Lee
to MN GOP and MN Gun Owners Caucus
SECOND AMENDMENT RALLY
Minnesota State Capitol, St Paul**

Thank you, for allowing me to join you patriots.

This is a beautiful day in Minnesota. Anytime out of the DC Beltway, in real 'merica, I'm happy. For this great rally, my hat is off to Chair Carnahan's Minnesota GOP and Bryan Strawser and Rob Doar of the Minnesota Gun Owners Caucus.

Like them, we don't have to be here. We're not being paid by liberal billionaires to attend. I can't tell you how proud I am to be a part of this. We are here to protect freedom.

From the bottom of my heart, I thank you...in advance. You, me, people like us voting in November, this is what will save our country.

I'll begin as I always do. There are those present whose sacrifice allows us to rally. Will the current and veteran military, law enforcement, first responders, and their family please raise your hand. You are why we can have this rally. All of us thank you.

Many of you who shoot, hunt, compete, and plink will understand this next shout out. #pewpew. Do you shoot, hunt, compete, practice? #pewpew nation. Are you here? Thank you.

You're here. You vote. That's good. But, let's be real. It is not good enough. Examining recent voter turnout numbers, we're getting worked. You, and Second Amendment loving friends everywhere, must recruit, train, and organize your neighborhood, your workplace, your civic organization, your family. The most pro-gun POTUS in history is counting on us, President Donald Trump.

So, let's talk about that.

You helped elect me to the Board of Directors of the National Rifle Association of America, Freedoms Safest Place. I do political work. I am not a silver-tongued politician. I am proud to work with Wayne LaPierre and Chris Cox. All of us join in the grief of the nation and we are heartbroken over senseless murders. All of them.

But, let's be transparent about what the other side is doing. Antis are using the politics of tragedy to ban firearms. To advance their political agenda, they are exploiting tragedy.

They want to further their admitted goal, as a former Supreme Court Justice recently penned, to repeal the Second Amendment.

Well, I suppose we can at least thank Justice Stevens for his honesty.

They've dropped all pretense of 'reasonable' or 'commonsense' gun control. They want to take your firearms. It is obvious, this is not about guns. It is about control. Some (the Mayor of London) want to take knives. I call BS on the government – antigun Democrats and Republicans - taking our civil rights. The Second Amendment affirms my God-given right of self-defense.

I've been in and around the military and firearms all my life: as an Army brat, at West Point, and in a career as a Defender of Freedom. I am proud to continue defending freedom with the NRA, and with you.

Minnesota has a strong history of support for the Second Amendment. Do not take it for granted. In the blink of the eye, if we are not vigilant, Minnesota can change. All of us have co-workers at your jobs, classmates at your school, neighbors in your communities who were not raised like us, even in Minnesota.

They don't have values which made America the shining city on the hill. They are brainwashed by Hollywood elites & pro-ball player babble. They do not believe in American values, our values.

It is idiocy for law-makers and the courts to punish law-abiding citizens for the actions of an unhinged madman. That's why we work for pro-gun legislation and to elect Second Amendment legislators. Keeping good people, law-abiding people, from defending themselves, from exercising their Second Amendment rights, doesn't make the criminal, the bad guy, stop being a monster ... it never will.

Antis are using the undeveloped emotions of children to advance their cause. Let me be clear on this. We should do all that is in our power to protect our children. I am told, for example, that a local police station in Minneapolis has established offices in schools. Securing our children, as we secure our banks and celebrities, is a no-brainer.

Simply ending gun free zones is a deterrent. The bad guy doesn't want to be stopped before achieving murderous goals. They know, say it with me, "The only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun."

It isn't rocket science, and it is high time we all got on board with the simple truth that protecting our children doesn't mean we destroy the Second Amendment. It means we do what needs to be done to provide them with an environment that is safe and secure.

You know the antis have an agenda against guns, and not for safety. Their solution, like all socialists, is to take rights away from the law-abiding instead of solving the issue. This is not rhetoric, this is their stated goal. We haven't seen an assault like this on our civil rights since the 60's when Democrats fought to prevent integration. They want to ban all firearms from law-abiding citizens, but they do nothing, absolutely nothing to stop the carnage in places like Chicago and Baltimore.

Because they have an agenda to repeal the Second Amendment, we cannot compromise.

I live in the world as it is, not as I wish it were. The Second Amendment affirms my right, but it doesn't protect me. You are responsible for your safety. You have to know the law, the laws. Safely owning a firearm incurs responsibility. That means training. How you carry or store your firearm. How you draw, from the hip, from your purse, in your car, from your nightstand. Dominant hand, weak hand. Different, often awkward positions. Train, practice every situation. Know the law, and safely be a responsible firearms owner.

So, what do we want?

Reciprocity. The NRA's number one legislative priority is National Concealed Carry Reciprocity. It means with your Minnesota carry permit, you can defend yourself regardless of the state line you happen to cross. A law-abiding citizen, whether you are an independent or Democratic or Republican Party member, should be able to defend him or herself where ever and whenever that citizen is legally allowed to be. It is the most

expansive pro-gun legislation in history to pass the US House. We are working with our US Senate allies to get it passed. Tell your Senators, tell all 100 of them, we want reciprocity. It doesn't matter what they want. Call and write and tell what you want. We want to see how Senators vote so we know our true friends, and because we deserve reciprocity.

Don't like gun control? Continue winning elections with wonderful patriots such as your State Representative Marion O'Neil. No one just gets into office. You have to go and win it. My top election priority is to increase our majority in the US Senate. Fulfilling his most important promise, President Trump delivered big with Justice Gorsuch, and many lower court appointees. They are confirmed in the US Senate. Want your civil rights? Want another Gorsuch? Win your Senate races with #pewpew Senators.

How many of us are NRA members, or at least think we are? Thank you to all our NRA members. I am a life member of the NRA. I told you that being here is good and important, and not enough.

We are the Ambassadors for the Second Amendment, for freedom. Last week, Hollywood celebrities declared war on the NRA, on you, on 'merica. If you are an NRA member, the NRA FrontLines Activist Leader program, FAL, is looking for committed 2A leaders to assist year-round with elections, ballot initiatives, and issues. Please, do your part to defend freedom. If you are not a member of the NRA, for whatever reason, you are hurting the Second Amendment movement. Join.

The RNC is invested in the largest ground game in the history of US elections. As a former GOP state Chairman, I applaud this effort. The Republican Leadership Initiative, RLI, needs you.

My call to action is for everyone you know to join and participate with RLI and the NRA in this election. It is not enough for you to simply support the Second Amendment, or to own a firearm. To simply compete, or train, or hunt. Or, to believe, Heaven forbid, you have the right to defend your life. Bloomberg and Soros, Hollywood and the media, all protected by firearms, are openly and aggressively attacking your right to defend your family. Throughout history, it is proven. You want rights, fight for them.

What do you think? Does the Second Amendment affirm our God-given right of self-defense? You better believe it.

We'll wrap up. For continued transparent updates, my Twitter & Instagram handle is @WillesLee, website is WillesLee.com and you should Like my Facebook page WillesLeeNRA.

If there is one thing you take from today, make it this: We better fight for our civil rights because the antis are fighting to take them. The National Rifle Association of America defends freedom. I am here to stand with you. Who stands and fights with me? "Stand and Fight."

Thank you. God bless our troops and first responders. God Bless America.

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Willes K. Lee is a member of the National Rifle Association of America Board of Directors, and he serves on five committees. Willes is a co-chairman of the Trump-Pence Second Amendment Coalition. He is also President of the National Federation of Republican Assemblies, and on the American Conservative Union Foundation Board, hosts of CPAC. Willes is a former State Party GOP Chairman and RNC member. Lee is a retired Army combat veteran, a West Point graduate, an airborne-Ranger Armor officer.