



On June 26 the Supreme Court of the United States decided that the framers of the Constitution did in fact preserve and protect citizens' rights to keep and bear arms. Citizens should not be deterred in any way to legally exercise the right to possess and utilize a firearm. This landmark decision did not open the door to irresponsible gun ownership nor did it provide an entitlement to engage in unlawful conduct with a firearm.

On March 18, 2008 the United States Supreme Court heard oral arguments in the District of Columbia v. Heller case. This case marked the first time a 2nd Amendment challenge to a firearm case has reached the Court since 1939. DC v. Heller is a landmark case because of the far reaching impact it now has on the right of U.S. citizens to possess firearms.

The Phoenix Law Enforcement Association (PLEA) represents over 2500 rank-and-file Phoenix Police Officers. PLEA stands in support the High Court's decision supporting a citizen's right to keep and bear arms as outlined in the 2nd Amendment of the Constitution. PLEA believes it's important for citizens within a free society to protect and defend their lives, their families, their property as well as their neighborhoods and communities. History has taught us that criminals always find a way to

illegally arm themselves with guns. The right bear arms becomes crucial when police services are not readily available.

Clearly the framers of the Constitution appeared to know that giving U.S. citizens the right to keep and bear arms was a key ingredient in maintaining and protecting their other freedoms and rights that the same document enumerates.

PLEA is certain that many of you may ask the same question that those of us in law enforcement have fielded as long as this issue has been before the courts; why would cops want more guns on the streets? We cannot speak for other jurisdictions but we can certainly comment on the history of firearms and their relationship to the law enforcement community in Arizona. Citizens of Arizona have developed an appreciation for the role of responsible gun ownership and its positive contribution to our state. Our citizens have demonstrated a longstanding respect for their responsibility to keep and use their guns in a manner consistent with the laws of Arizona. The criminal deterrence factor can't be discounted when a supportive and law abiding community exercises its right to responsible gun ownership.