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Florida's newest shoot 'em up gun law

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By Sun Sentinel Editorial Board

5:51 p.m. EDT, June 23, 2014

Another week, another Wild West gun bill signed into law in Florida.

This time, it's the firing of warning shots. As if we need more guns being shot into the air.

But that's one of the pieces of legislation Gov. **Rick Scott** signed into law last week. The law, which takes effect immediately, allows people to fire warning shots in certain circumstances.

The governor also signed into law the so-called Pop Tart bill, which makes it legal for children to play with simulated guns in school without facing punishment. Another bad law, but the warning-shot bill is worse.

At the behest of the **National Rifle Association**, Florida lawmakers continue to broaden the latitude given shooters under the state's controversial "Stand Your Ground" law. Instead of getting rid of that law, or clarifying it, or watering it down, state lawmakers continue to give it more ammunition.

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The warning-shot law was inspired by public outcry over the 20-year prison sentence given to Marissa Alexander of Jacksonville. Under the state's 10-20-Life gun law, a judge had no choice but to give her the maximum punishment after she fired a gun at her abusive husband during an argument.

Alexander did not injure anyone with her shot, and was granted a retrial by an appellate court. But that didn't stop the NRA and the **Florida Legislature** from pushing to make warning shots legal in certain circumstances, without fear of a minimum mandatory sentence.

The problems with allowing warning shots? Where do we start?

Whether the Legislature realizes it or not, when a gun is fired into the air, the bullet has to come down. And there's a chance it could hit someone. And that someone could be an innocent person nowhere near the confrontation.

Warning shots? Most police agencies won't use them because it's widely considered a dangerous practice. But now civilians have that right.

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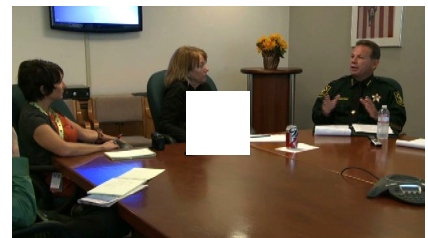
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Warning shots? How long before a vigilante uses one to justify his or her actions?

Warning shots? The spent bullets could pose a threat to animals, children and anybody picking up the shells.

None of that matters. In a state where lawmakers look upon virtually any kind of gun law as a good and necessary measure, this one was a slam dunk.

But as far as being necessary, this law wasn't. For better or worse, we already have Stand Your Ground to protect people who feel they have to use deadly force to protect themselves or their families. Allowing for warning shots is just another way to give someone the opportunity to use lethal force when none may be called for.

In addition to the potential for unintended injury and death from warning shots, you can be sure the law will bring about lawsuits from folks injured by warning shots, or whose children were alarmed by warning shots, or who witnessed their pet dog become extremely ill by eating the spent shells of warning shots.

And what happens when someone decides he wants to fire a warning shot during Fourth of July revelry, or someone who has had one too many beers decides he'd like to fire a warning shot, just because he can?

Far-fetched? This is Florida. It will happen.

Changing the 10-20-Life law to allow for some discretion would have been the clearer, fairer and bigger benefit to the citizens of Florida. Legalizing warning shots simply gives people another excuse to fire their weapons.

The whole thing has a very Old West feel to it.

Which makes it perfect for Florida.

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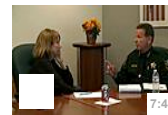
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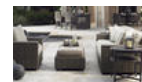
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reality_is_strange Rank 70

FIREARMS REFRESHER COURSE,,,

1. "Those who hammer their guns into plows will plow for those who do Not." Thomas Jefferson,,,
2. "Those who trade liberty for security have neither." John Adams,,,
3. Free men do not ask permission to bear arms,,,
4. An armed man is a citizen. An unarmed man is a subject,,,
5. Only a government that is afraid of its citizens tries to control them,,,
6. Gun control is not about guns; it's about control,,,
7. You only have the rights you are... [» more](#)

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reality_is_strange Rank 70

This is your typical liberal logic, they don't like warnings, they approve of sneak attack where you stick a scalpel in a babies skull!

23 hours ago 3 Likes

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sltpppy25 Rank 151

The Honest Truth About Guns -

-99.9% of all guns in America are not used in violent crimes
-99.8% of all guns are not used in crime at all
-Guns are used 4 times as often in self defense as in crime and 98% of the time, its not even fired
-Only 1% of the time when a gun is being used in defense, does the criminal take the gun from the defender
-After guns were banned in the UK, the armed robbery rate spiked over 40% and 44% in Australia. Now, in Britain most robberies happen when people are... [» more](#)

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sltpppy25 Rank 151

"A fear of weapons is a sign of retarded sexual and emotional immaturity!" - Sigmund Freud

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georgia1171 Rank 274

This is in response to the previous law signed by the governor that forbids a person from using the threat of deadly force until the crime is actually being committed. I guess lawmakers haven't learned that 2 wrongs don't make a right. Most intelligent and non-activist gun owners are not going to waste ammunition on a warning shot. They are going to shoot at and hit their target.

1 day ago 2 Likes

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Rich7553 Rank 930

Chicken Little likes to walk in the woods. She likes to look at the trees. She likes to smell the flowers. She likes to listen to the birds singing.

One day while she is walking an acorn falls from a tree, and hits the top of her little head.

- My, oh, my, the sky is falling. I must run and tell the lion about it,

- says Chicken Little and begins to run.

She runs and runs.

1 day ago 0 Likes

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Ignignokt_the_Mooninite Rank 98

As far as I'm concerned , if my Glock goes off , it's center mass .
That being said , I'm not really in agreement with this law .

1 day ago 1 Like

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Chris Cook Rank 1803

The person who wrote this article obviously is anti-gun. Which is fine, she has a right to be anti-gun. But that shouldn't get in the way of writing a good informative article based on facts. If I didn't want facts, I'd watch Fox News. Don't give me opinion, give me facts and keep your anti-gun views to yourself.

1 day ago 2 Likes

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Finger Tips Rank 141

Stand your ground and warning shots are a dangerous mix. Take a warning shot in the presence of a cop and you will end up with a law enforcement bullet to the chest.

There is no need for a warning shot. Here it is perfectly legal to aim, shoot, and kill an unarmed person and make up a lie about how you were scared for your life.

1 day ago 0 Likes

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FLBONZ Rank 687

@Finger Tips

If you don't already work for the Slantinel you should. Your comments are just as ignorant as those posted in the article above.

1 day ago 5 Likes

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flnative64 Rank 1130

Funny that the SS cites the fact that we already have a "Stand Your Ground Law", yet the railed against it during the Zimmerman trial. Zimmerman's case was clearly one of self-defense, which is why the police had filed no charges against him. They later bowed to public pressure, stirred up by the anti-gun, anti-self defense media. The whole affair ended up being a huge waste of taxpayer dollars.

1 day ago 5 Likes

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center51 Rank 17

@Finger Tips

Not try to kill Zimmerman, by bashing his head into the pavement, allowing the victim (GZ) to shoot TM in justifiable self defense! Simple!

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sltpppy25 Rank 151

@Finger Tips

Martin had already run off, if he would have just went home instead of circling around and confronting Zimmerman he would be alive today.

23 hours ago 1 Like

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