

As you know, in Nebraska we have legislation...or we have laws on the books which deal with felon in possession laws, with defacement of firearms, with the possession of short shotguns and machine guns and other laws. In fact, there even is a law on the books in Nebraska which requires the registration of tranquilizer guns with the local sheriff and these are weapons that are used to immobilize animals. So, in Nebraska, we have a law that requires the registration of tranquilizer guns that are used in the demobilization of animals. In any event, there was a great deal of concern at the time that this...these two cases were decided that if this amendment to the Constitution were interpreted by the judges of this state in the way that the two judges in North Platte, Lincoln County District Court interpreted the law, quite frankly, we would not be able to enforce any one of those gun laws. And, in addition to that, there had been attempts made to utilize the right to bear arms amendment to try to overthrow or overturn death penalty convictions or death penalty cases. So...and, as you recall, what the amendment says is that Nebraskans are entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and the right to bear arms. We place the right to bear arms on the same...in the same category as the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. I think we are the only state that does that. In any event, so there was a great deal of concern and speculation. The Attorney General raised some very good points, the chief law enforcement officer of the state, to the effect that we are in a real jam here. So that's why the committee, I'm sure, made the decision that it did. Since that time, there have been three decisions which have interpreted our right to bear arms amendment in a way which is not consistent with that fear. The most recent decision was reached on February 16, 1990, in a case versus... State of Nebraska v. Roger LaChapelle. And in that case, the Supreme Court said that the right to bear arms amendment does not prevent the enforcement of short shotgun laws and machine gun laws because that, even though there is a right to bear arms amendment, that the State of Nebraska, through its police power, has the right to regulate the possession, the possession of firearms and this opinion is identical to the opinion that was reached by the Supreme Court earlier this year in the State v. Comeau case and the State v. Rush case. Those two cases involved the defacement of firearm statutes and the statute involving a felon in possession, our felon in possession laws. So our Supreme Court has basically said that this right to bear arms amendment, even despite its language...