



NEWS RELEASE

Second Amendment Foundation

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SAF, GOTTLIEB SUE WASH. AG FERGUSON, ALLEGING CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

For Immediate Release, May 3, 2023:

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BELLEVUE, WA – The Second Amendment Foundation and Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms, and their CEO Alan Gottlieb, have [filed a federal civil rights lawsuit](#) against Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson and members of his staff, alleging that Ferguson has used the power of his office to chill the activities of SAF, which are aimed at protecting and expanding Second Amendment rights.

The complaint was filed in U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington. The case is known as *Second Amendment Foundation v. Ferguson*.

Additional plaintiffs are the Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise, the Service Bureau Association, Merrill Mail Marketing and Liberty Park Press. They are represented by attorneys Steven W. Fogg and Jack M. Lovejoy at Corr Cronin LLP in Seattle.

Ferguson and three assistant AG's assigned to the Consumer Protection Division (CPD) of the Attorney General's office are being sued individually and in their official capacities

According to the complaint, "Over the last two years, the Consumer Protection Division of the Attorney General's Office ("CPD") has carried out an expansive, highly intrusive probe into the private affairs of SAF, CCRKBA, CDFE, SBA, LPP, MMM, Mr. Gottlieb, and his family. It has served Civil Investigative Demands ("CIDs") on each of the plaintiffs, including two on Mr. Gottlieb, citing the same consumer protection laws Mr. Ferguson was recently found to have abused." The complaint refers to a recent Washington Supreme Court ruling which "held unanimously that Mr. Ferguson's office improperly used Washington Consumer Protection and Charitable Solicitations Acts to suppress constitutionally protected speech with which he disagreed."

"It is a sad day when you have to sue the state Attorney General for violating your civil rights," Gottlieb stated. "This is not something we ever anticipated, nor do we take any pleasure in it. However, because the CPD has singled out SAF and myself for invasive and expensive harassment because of my political beliefs, especially my positions on gun control and our outspoken criticism of Attorney General Ferguson, our only recourse is to take legal action.

The lawsuit notes that Gottlieb is "a vulnerable target," as a 76-year-old man "with a history of cardiac arrest."

“CPD’s treatment of Mr. Gottlieb is designed to destroy his health, make his and his family’s lives miserable, and to chill the activities of SAF and the other entities or force them out of business as punishment for their politics and opposition to Mr. Ferguson and his agenda,” the complaint alleges.

“The Office of the Attorney General is one which inherently possesses significant power and comes with the expectation that its holder will not abuse that power for a political agenda or personal crusade,” said SAF Executive Director Adam Kraut. “Unfortunately, for the people of Washington, Attorney General Bob Ferguson has placed his political preferences above impartiality. For the past two years, his office has inquired into the activities of the Second Amendment Foundation in a highly intrusive manner.

“From the very beginning,” Kraut continued, “the Foundation has cooperated with the Attorney General’s Office and supplied all of the requested information, made employees available for depositions, spending hundreds of man hours and tens of thousands of dollars in attorney’s fees to do so, all while pursuing its mission. Yet, the Attorney General’s Office has not once clearly articulated the basis for the investigation or any wrongdoing of the Foundation. What is clear is that this investigation stems from the Attorney General’s abuse of office in an effort to silence and cause harm to his political enemies. Regrettably, and despite the Foundation’s efforts to resolve this amicably, the Attorney General has elected to continue to waste the taxpayer’s money due to his failure to recognize that his two-year fishing expedition has rendered nothing useful to his political ambitions and forced the Foundation to bring this action to vindicate its rights in an effort to stop this unjust harassment.”

The Second Amendment Foundation (www.saf.org) is the nation’s oldest and largest tax-exempt education, research, publishing and legal action group focusing on the Constitutional right and heritage to privately own and possess firearms. Founded in 1974, The Foundation has grown to more than 720,000 members and supporters and conducts many programs designed to better inform the public about the consequences of gun control.