



# Office of the Sheriff

Towns County, GA

Sheriff Christopher M. Clinton



January 30, 2013

Hon. Doug Collins  
Hon. Saxby Chambliss  
Hon. Johnny Isakson

Greetings,

I write to you today out of a sense of duty to the citizens I serve. It seems that the media is ablaze with half truths and misleading information when it comes to certain rights of every citizen recognized in our United States Constitution – rights, which our Declaration of Independence recognizes were given to us by God and are “unalienable.” Our founders considered the existence of these rights to be self-evident. When these words were penned, they were not new ideas. Rather, they brought to memory ideas that, even 236 years ago, were of such great antiquity that they were easily forgotten or disregarded by governments and men.

I believe that the world today is, for the most part, the same as it ever was. Throughout time immemorial, there has been a struggle in the human experience – a battle between two opposing forces. Through the ages, there have been those who would give all authority over to a central form of government, and those who believe in liberty. Our English heritage records this struggle as it waged in the thousand years prior to our declaring independence. To say that the Constitution, or any portion of our Bill of Rights is outdated, is to say that mankind is outdated, because the arguments for and against freedom have been with us from the start.

The bedrock of freedom is recognizing the rights each human being is given by their creator and, “That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.” The words of our Declaration and of our Constitution were chosen very carefully by our founders. They were chosen carefully because words have meaning and their purpose is to convey thought. It is most unfortunate that we live in an age in which misguided and often self-serving politicians twist the meaning of words for the purpose of misleading the well-meaning and law-abiding average citizen.

It seems that many who are charged with representing “we, the people” have begun to think of themselves not as public servants, but as our masters. Rather than citizens, they see us as subjects they are entitled to rule over. They would have us believe that crimes are committed, or at least caused, by inanimate objects which have no will of their own, rather than placing the blame on the criminals who choose, in and of themselves, to commit these crimes. They would have us believe that certain firearms belong only in the hands of police, or that the right to keep and bear arms is about sporting, rather than defending oneself and one’s family.

The citizens of Towns County have given me the tremendous honor of electing me these three times to serve as their sheriff. Being sheriff comes with the tremendous responsibility of fulfilling a duty that has developed over more than two and a half millennia of recorded history. As sheriff, I encourage all citizens to take an active role in their own safety and that of their families. I recognize their right to defend themselves and their loved ones and expect that they will. Make no mistake that my deputies and I are coming to their aid as quickly as possible, but in situations when seconds can mean the difference between life and death, I rest easier knowing that most of Towns County's law abiding citizens are armed and, therefore, better able to defend themselves until their sheriff arrives.

Crimes in this nation are committed by a minute group of people. In Georgia, less than 1% commits virtually all crime. Disarming law abiding citizens only serves to create easier targets for those who will, whenever given the opportunity, harm another human being. Any attempt at such an egregious assault on those rights, both recognized and guaranteed in our Constitution, is both unconscionable and unlawful under our system of government.

As sheriff, I took an oath to support the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Georgia. I intend to keep that oath. I am encouraging you to stand firm on this issue and keep your oath of supporting the Constitution as well. Our citizens both need and expect us to represent them in this issue. It has been very clearly relayed to me in speaking with the people of my community that it is not the will of the citizens I serve to have their rights infringed upon by any level of government.

I am already aware of many "law enforcement officials" who are being enlisted to express their support of an infringement of the Second Amendment. I expect that most, if not all, of these "law enforcement officials" will prove to be nothing more than appointed figureheads and, therefore, only capable of declaring publicly the words and positions of their superiors for fear of losing their positions. I was present when Georgia's Sheriffs, who serve only the citizens who elect them, were given an opportunity to weigh in on the issue. The statement they agreed to make to the world was clear and direct: they will stand by their oath!

I want to be very clear so that my position is understood. As the duly-elected Sheriff of Towns County, Georgia, I have no duty, nor obligation, and cannot be compelled to enforce federal law. I will, as my oath requires, aggressively oppose any state or federal legislation that attempts to take away any of the natural rights guaranteed under the Constitution to the law-abiding citizens I serve. I will exercise the full authority of the Office of Sheriff in defending all of the Constitutional rights of each and every citizen of Towns County, Georgia, "so help me God!"

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris Clinton".

Sheriff Chris Clinton  
Towns County, GA