

*As promised last week, here is Chris Souza's follow-up article concerning the firsthand account of the rally at the Rhode Island statehouse in Providence held last Thursday afternoon/evening. You can read the first part of this story by going [here](#). Thank you, Chris, for taking the time to share with the American Partisan readers the ongoing 2A fight in Lil Rhody and being our eyes and ears at the rally last Thursday. God Bless Brother!*

## Rhode Island 2A Fight - Part 2

By *Chris Souza*

Attendance and Follow-up to the RI 2A Rally, Jan 23,2020.

On Thursday January 23, 2020 several grass roots organizations got together, got the word out and organized a Pro 2A Rally at the State House. This event was planned from 4-7pm. As parking is always its own little adventure around the city of Providence, I left work a bit early and arrived at the State house at approx. 3:45

It was pleasant to see that there was already a good turnout with hundreds lined up to get through the main entrance at the State House. The line of yellow shirts ran along the entire walkway and had been forming down an adjacent sidewalk when I arrived. Being that everyone entering the building must run through a metal detector, to insure there are no weapons within the building, the line moved a slow but constant pace. I was maybe 100yd down the sidewalk, with another 200yds to the front door and was able to get inside with approximately 15-20 mins. I did of course set off the metal detector and required a little extra wandering (thanks new hip).

Once inside there was the sea of yellow that of course made what should be a strong impression. Upon entering everyone was being ushered to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors as the lower rotunda was quickly filling and the fire marshals were being very proactive about numbers and access to hallways and stairways. In addition, there was a larger than usual number of

law enforcement officers on hand. In addition to the Capitol Police there were State Police and Providence Police on hand. Those in Uniform numbered in between 100-150 (my estimation). There were also a number of undercover officers (hey guys you're not undercover if your plainclothes but your gun is evident inside of a State building), as well as officers staged as a QRF just off of the grounds and at least 3 spotter/sniper teams visible on the roof lines.

As was expected there were no issues with everyone in attendance acting civilly and orderly as well as respectfully to the officers. A line of various speakers came to a microphone that had been set up in the rotunda and people could come up and speak between planned orators. Unfortunately, with the large number of people and the acoustics of a giant marble building most of what was being said was lost to anyone not within the immediate vicinity of the speaker themselves. Throughout the course of the event there was an estimated 3-3500k attendees based off the numbers from the Capitol Police. Many carried signs and flags supporting the 2<sup>nd</sup>, most tasteful, and to the point. Though I did not meet any of them it was announced that 135 people from Virginia attend in support. It was great to see the absolute sea of yellow visible on every balcony and hallway and throughout the State House. There were a few elected officials in attendance with the more vocally supportive taking to the mic at different time throughout the evening.

At about 6:30 pm the Fire Marshall declared that the building had reached capacity and that they would only be admitting more as people left the event. This left a line of approx. 200 that never made it into the building. At 7pm on the nose the Police and Fire Marshall shut the event down and ushered everyone from the building. The recession was orderly, and many small groups milled around outside for a short amount of time, but by 8pm the entire area was clear and clean. Throughout the entire event all of the attendees were respectful of the Statehouse and those working there.

Everything about the event should have been a great show to our elected officials where we really stand in this state about this very important issue. Unfortunately I feel that it was

much more of a feel good for those that attended but will have little effect on the direction that the elected officials are taking our State.

The best way I can describe the evening was as an echo chamber. Everyone that was there supported the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment. We had speakers, a sea of yellow, great signage, some even educational. All of it may have been directed at the officials that are proposing new bills to strip our rights, but in reality, the only audience that was there were people that already agreed with the position. Though everyone meant well it just didn't reach the people it needed to. The officials that were in attendance were the Pro 2A ones that we all already knew and supported. Because this was a night when there were no agenda items open, The House, Senate and the Governor's office were all gone for the day. The people that needed to see the numbers of people, read the signs and possibly even hear the speakers were nowhere to be seen. Compare this to the Antis rallies that are hosted by the Gov, attended by the General Assembly members and get maybe 150-200 attendees. Which do you think has a stronger effect on the electorate? Not to mention the media coverage, of which there was a 15-second spot on 2 of the 3 major news channels for our rally and we actually made it to page 6 of the Providence Journal. An Anti rally with 10% of the attendance gets a 2 min story on all 3 major stations and is Front page of the ProJo [Providence Journal].

I don't mean to say that it was not a good event to grow from but to have an effect we need to get in front of not just the Gov and Generally Assembly, but we need to get better visibility for the people of the State. The Antis are made up of people mostly paid by Bloomberg and others (Moms, Everytown) and though much smaller numbers because they are there when during visible times they make for a stronger effect. The Grassroots nature of the Pro 2A contingent means that we are there after work, when the people that need to see us are already gone! This same Rally held from 1-4pm would change the entire nature and possibly have the desired effect that it was meant to.

For now, the Pro 2A community will need to continue to show up when the call out comes. Already the Senate committee is hearing comments and evidence related to some of the

proposed Bills as early as this Tuesday Jan,28. We need to get our numbers out, let them see the yellow, read the signs, hear the people.

*Chris is an owner of a Marine Manufacturing Company in Rhode Island where he has lived much of his life. In addition to his company he works as a gunsmith for several local shops and as an armorer and trainer for the regional LEO community. He is a self-professed training junkie who attends classes throughout the year in various parts of the country in a wide range of disciplines.*

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