

[Gun Owners of America \(GOA\)](#)

from [Guns in American Society: An Encyclopedia of History, Politics, Culture, and the Law](#)

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Gun Owners of America (GOA) is a generally conservative organization of firearm owners. GOA was founded in October 1975 in California by state senator Bill Richardson. It presently has about 300,000 members and an annual budget (including that of the affiliated Gun Owners' Foundation) of approximately \$4 million. Its official publication is *The Gun Owners*, a monthly member newsletter focusing on firearm legislation and national politics. GOA pioneered the use of member fax and e-mail alerts as a means of targeting specific legislation and quickly generating grassroots opposition.

Parallel organizations include the GOA Political Victory Fund, a political campaign fund that aims to provide heavy support of a relatively few select candidates, and the Gun Owners' Foundation, a tax-exempt organization that supports litigation and educational efforts.

GOA stresses that its objective is the elimination rather than merely the restriction of gun control legislation. It takes a relatively optimistic view of what can be achieved by grassroots opposition and pressure; this results in a more uncompromising position than that held by other firearm groups, including the National Rifle Association. GOA counts among its victories its 1998-1999 opposition to (and eventual defeat of) the Juvenile Justice Bill, which would have banned importation of firearm magazines holding more than 10 rounds, forbidden sale of semiautomatic rifles to persons under 21 years of age, and restricted gun show sales. GOA refused to accept the bill after the gun show restrictions were reduced, and the bill ultimately was voted down by an unusual combination of legislators who felt that it went too far and legislators who felt that it did not go far enough.

See also: [Gun Control](#); [Gun Shows](#); [National Rifle Association \(NRA\)](#); [Pratt, Larry](#)

Further Reading

- Gun Owners of America. <http://www.gunowners.org> (accessed February 15, 2011).
- "Who Is Larry Pratt?" New Republic, March 11, 1996, 9.

David T. Hardy



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Hardy, D. T. (2012). Gun owners of America (GOA). In G. L. Carter, *Guns in American society: an encyclopedia of history, politics, culture, and the law* (2nd ed.). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO. Retrieved from http://ezproxy.apus.edu/login?url=http://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/abcguns/gun_owners_of_america_goa/0?institutionId=8703

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