A Pivotal Year for America

Dear Friend,

The year 2020 was full of surprises: a global pandemic, American cities full of rioting and pillaging, and an unprecedented presidential election season. While so much in our country changed in 2020, one truth remains constant — that it is the responsibility of those who cherish liberty to defend it.

Our country has faced upheaval and crisis many times in the past — depressions, wars, and yes, even pandemics. We have survived each crisis because we held fast to the bedrock principles enshrined in our Constitution.

Today, our nation faces crisis again. Already, the Biden-Harris Administration is positioning itself to be the most liberal administration in U.S. history. They are issuing Executive Orders at an unprecedented pace. They are bowing to the environmental extremists, shutting down U.S. energy production, and destroying jobs and lives. Property rights are under attack. Gun rights face unparalleled challenges. Conservative speech is being silenced.

Left-wing politicians have swept into Washington D.C. and now control both houses of Congress. The White House has nothing standing in the way of its destructive policies.

Nothing, that is, except the courts.

The Trump Administration appointed 230 new federal judges over the last four years. These include committed constitutionalists such as Justices Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, and Barrett on the Supreme Court. Those of us who cherish and defend liberty must now put our full effort into fighting through the courts to stop the radical progressive agenda.

Your support for Mountain States Legal Foundation directly funds the legal fight against the Biden-Harris agenda. Thank you for making this possible!

Yours in Liberty,

Roger Cymbaluk Chairman

Cristen Wohlgemuth President and CEO

Mountain States Legal Foundation is the nation’s leading, non-profit legal defense organization focused on the issues vital to the Rocky Mountain West. Founded in 1977, we are dedicated to individual liberty, the right to own and use property, limited and ethical government, and the free enterprise system. Our offices are located outside Denver, Colorado.
Second Amendment Center Launch

In 2020 we launched the only in-house, litigation-only Second Amendment operation in the U.S. – MSLF’s Center to Keep and Bear Arms. Building on MSLF’s history of success in this area, the Center represents our renewed focus on challenging unconstitutional gun laws on three fronts: your right to KEEP firearms, your right to BEAR them on your person, and your right to choose which ARMS you need in order to defend yourself.

Grassroots Support

We don’t receive the majority of our donations from wealthy foundations or large corporations. We receive the majority of our contributions from everyday Americans, who share our vision of a free and prosperous country.

4,025 individuals gave a total of $1,761,079. 246 individuals (online) gave a total of $49,570.

In addition to support from individuals and foundations, we earned $682,204 in investment income (excluding December investment earnings not yet reported).

2020 Expenditures: $2,987,554
Crucial MSLF Cases to Watch in 2021

Second Amendment – *California v. ATF* and *Syracuse v. ATF*
MSLF attorneys have intervened in a pair of related lawsuits. Anti-gun activists are trying to force the ATF to change its longstanding definition of “firearm” in order to make the sale of partially machined lower receivers illegal, arguing that any such change in the definition of firearm would run afoul of the constitutionally protected right to the home-manufacture of firearms for self-defense. These cases, and MSLF’s arguments, will be at the epicenter of public debate over the Second Amendment in 2021.

Holding Government Bureaucrats Accountable – *Solenex, LLC v. Bernhardt*
While the reversal of our earlier district court victory on appeal last year was certainly a setback, MSLF attorneys are sharpening, revising, re-focusing, and pressure-testing our arguments for Round 3. Victory will be hard-won, but we are confident our clients’ long perseverance will pay off.

Defending Property Rights – *Ministerio Roca Solida v. United States*
Ten years ago the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service illegally diverted a small stream away from a parcel of land used by our client Solid Rock Ministries as a youth camp and church retreat, subsequently leading to extreme flooding of the Church’s property. The trial on the government’s illegal taking of the Church’s property, delayed because of COVID-19, is scheduled to begin this Spring.

Victories You Made Happen in 2020!
Your support enabled our attorneys to secure these and other precedent setting victories for liberty.

Reversing New Mexico’s Unconstitutional Gun Store Shutdown – *Aragon v. Grisham* –
When the governor of New México used the pandemic as an excuse to shut down gun stores (labeling them “non-essential” while allowing similar retail establishments to remain open), MSLF stepped in to stop this injustice. MSLF’s lawsuit on behalf of local business owners, joined by the Firearm Policy Coalition and the National Rifle Association, brought pressure to bear on the governor, who quickly reversed her decision.

Stopping Environmental Extremists’ Power Grab – *Center for Biological Diversity v. Bernhardt* –
Environmentalist activists attempted to derail the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan and prevent reasonable use of land in and around grizzly bear habitat, but MSLF intervened to protect the interests of ranchers whose lives and livelihoods are on the line. A loss in this case would have been catastrophic. But in December, the court agreed with MSLF that CBD’s claims lacked merit and granted our motion for summary judgment.

Putting an End to a Federal Agency’s Shameful Delay Tactics – *Rayco, LLC v. Bernhardt* –
After nearly 30 years of delay, we were finally able to force an appealable decision on the Ray family’s mineral patent applications. The government denied the vast majority of the Rays’ applied-for acreage—seemingly a defeat. But by forcing the Department of the Interior to actually make a decision, MSLF cleared the way for the federal court complaint we filed in January.