

Dear Governor Haley:

I'd like to commend you for your leadership after the Emanuel AME tragedy. Your presence and compassion was much appreciated by all.

Like you, I'm a supporter of the Second Amendment right to lawfully possess firearms. But here's a question to which I'd really appreciate a specific response.

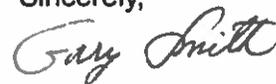
A few days ago, in referencing the "Charleston Loophole," you said, "It's not a loophole. They (the FBI) didn't do their job. And we will always have to feel the effects of the fact of what if they had just done their job."

A question arose in my mind. If the FBI had done its job, and Dylann Roof had been prohibited from buying that gun because of his prior drug conviction, he could have simply gone online or to a gun show and purchased a gun from any one of the many, many gun dealers who call themselves private sellers and therefore aren't required to have their buyers submit to a background check. Forty percent of guns, according to the Harvard Injury Control Research Center's 2015 report, are being acquired without any background check because of this blatant inconsistency in background-check laws.

So how can we make believe that it wouldn't have been ridiculously easy for Mr. Roof to buy a gun even if that FBI check had proceeded smoothly and (momentarily) deterred him? By saying that we don't need to expand our background-check system, you're saying that you're fine with criminals and the dangerously mentally unhealthy continuing to easily buy guns — because that's exactly what they're able to do under current law in South Carolina.

To repeat, I am a supporter of the Second Amendment's protection for responsible and lawful gun owners, so I would greatly appreciate it if you could respond to this very specific aspect of gun safety that I'm addressing here rather than replying in a generic manner about your support for gun-ownership rights. Many thanks for all your public service, Governor Haley!

Sincerely,



Gary Smith
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