

Bloomberg At Center Of Gun Control Debate

BY MELANIE MASON
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WASHINGTON — The fate of gun control proposals in Congress this year may depend on who is more potent: Michael R. Bloomberg the billionaire or Michael R. Bloomberg the boogeyman.

With signs that momentum for stiffer gun laws has begun to flag on Capitol Hill, the White House and gun control proponents are increasingly turning to the mogul mayor of New York to carry the fight into key congressional districts. He has bankrolled a high-profile campaign to counter the political might of the National Rifle Association. His latest volley: a blitz of TV ads in 13 states urging lawmakers to approve expanded background check requirements.

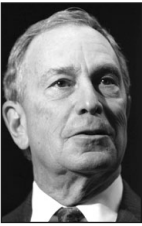
But as the emerging voice for gun restrictions, it's not clear whether Bloomberg will help or hurt. Many gun rights advocates believe he may be their perfect foil. They have ridiculed his effort as the latest excess from a "nanny in chief" who has forced chain restaurants in New York to post calorie counts, and who has waged fierce crusades against smoking, trans fats, salt and sugary beverages.

The White House has no qualms about Bloomberg's role. Vice President Joe Biden has met with him twice in the last month, and President Barack Obama offered impassioned support at the White House on Thursday for a "national day of action" called by Mayors Against Illegal Guns, a coalition that Bloomberg co-chairs.

To mark the day, the group sponsored nearly 140 events in 29 states, from a petition drive in Pleasant Hill, Calif., to a candlelight vigil in Raleigh, N.C. It also launched a TV ad in Connecticut featuring grieving parents of some of the 20 first-graders who were shot to death Dec. 14 at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown.

The tragedy sparked the current push for gun control, but more than 100 days later no bill has passed either house in Congress. And changes considered possible are far less ambitious than advocates initially had hoped. Lawmakers almost certainly won't approve new bans on assault weapons or high-capacity ammunition clips.

Bloomberg thus has focused on winning support for universal



Bloomberg

background checks and stricter gun trafficking laws.

But any new limits will require support from Democrats and Republicans in conservative states with mostly rural voters — constituencies that may be suspicious of Bloomberg's vast fortune, ambiguous politics (he's an independent), social liberalism and eat-your-vegetables style.

Early feedback suggests Bloomberg's pitch doesn't play well everywhere.

"I don't take gun advice from the Mayor of NYC. I listen to Arkansans," Sen. Mark Pryor, an Arkansas Democrat facing a tough re-election fight in 2014, wrote this week on Twitter.

Another red-state Democrat, Sen. Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota, was equally dismissive. "Frankly, there are far better uses for Mayor Bloomberg's (money) than buying ads attacking a way of life he clearly does not understand."

"It's not just about guns; it's about government overreach, and Bloomberg epitomizes that," said a Democratic strategist from a Western state, who requested anonymity to speak candidly.

The new TV ads call for background checks for nearly all gun buyers. The spots feature a flannel-clad man, a shotgun in his lap, praising responsible gun ownership from the back of a pickup truck.

The \$12 million ad buy, which is running during the two-week congressional recess, targets lawmakers in Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

"The public overwhelmingly in those states support background checks on all sales," said Bloomberg spokesman Marc La Vorgna. "If anything, the ads are going to give cover to those who vote for it because the bill is so popular."

The group claimed one quick success. Sen. Joe Donnelly, a first-term Democrat from Indiana, told a business round table in Fort Wayne on Tuesday that he was "supportive of background checks."

Bloomberg, who will leave of-

fice next year, does not appear in the TV spot. Other ads produced by the mayor's group have featured law enforcement officers, retired military officials, sports stars and victims of gun violence.

But Bloomberg has not been hiding. Last fall, his "super PAC" spent more than \$3 million to help defeat Rep. Joe Baca, an eight-term pro-gun Democrat facing a primary challenge in a newly drawn San Bernardino, Calif., district. It was more than Baca and the winner, Gloria Negrete McLeod, spent together.

Bloomberg's super PAC, Independence USA, spent an additional

\$2.2 million for anti-gun ads in a special congressional primary in Chicago last month, vaulting that race to national prominence.

In response, the NRA has showcased Bloomberg as its opponent. He popped up in the NRA's first post-Newtown ad, a pugnacious spot assailing public figures who rely on armed security while opposing posting armed guards in all schools.

Americans "don't want him in their restaurants; they don't want him in their homes," NRA Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre said Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press." "They don't want him

telling them what food to eat. They sure don't want him telling them what self-defense firearms to own."

"The mayor has made himself an issue," said NRA spokesman Andrew Arulanandam. "There's no way he can run away from that. He's made himself the sole benefactor of this crusade against the Second Amendment. He has also made himself the primary intimidator of senators by launching this multimillion-dollar campaign."

Former Rep. Earl Pomeroy, a North Dakota Democrat who tangled with the NRA when he voted for the now-expired 1994 assault weapons ban, said the group was

following a familiar playbook.

"The LaPierre argument is a classic straw-man approach: Shift the topic, portray the other side in an unflattering light, and talk about them instead of talking about the issue," said Pomeroy, who lost his seat in 2010.

Bloomberg's allies say the benefit of his advocacy — and his deep pockets — outweighs any potential backlash.

"The risk would be allowing (the) NRA to have the field to themselves, because we've seen what the result of that is," said La Vorgna, Bloomberg's spokesman.

ASK THE EXPERTS

Comfort Care

At Autumn Winds Comfort Care, we strive to provide our patients, families, and caregivers with the best possible care. This covers not only physical pain and discomfort, but mental and spiritual as well.

Our care does not end when a loved one has passed. Quite often it begins before then, with patients, families, caregivers, and our spiritual care and bereavement coordinators working to provide comfort and support through the difficult process of grief. It is absolutely vital that the family members have a healthy mourning experience, so the Autumn Winds Comfort Care team remains available to insure that experience for those family members and caregivers.

Our Bereavement Team assists families by telephone visits, personal visits, grief counseling, or connecting them to a support group that is available in the area. Cards, letters, and reading material are also provided to give comfort and encouragement along this journey. Our team members and resources are available to the community as well. Here are a few resources we recommend to provide understanding and encouragement on your journey.

- **Internet**
 - www.centerforloss.com The Web site for the services of Dr. Alan Wolfelt and the Center For Loss in Fort Collins, Colorado. On this site, articles on grief can be read, materials can be ordered, and they can be contacted for further assistance.
 - www.griefshare.org A national grief recovery support group program.
- **Books**
 - *Understanding Your Grief* Ten Essential Touchstones for Finding Hope and Healing Your Heart by Alan Wolfelt, Ph.D. Companion Press. ISBN 1-879651
 - *A Grief Observed* C. S. Lewis Harper Collins Publishers ISBN 0-06-065273-X

Autumn Winds Comfort Care
Yankton, SD 605-689-0382

Colette Broekemeier, RN
Autumn Winds Comfort Care Administrator

Family Medicine

Q Should I really be concerned about my cholesterol?

A. We have all heard of the importance of getting our cholesterol checked and if it is high we usually recommend that you start a class of medication named "statins".

However, it is not as simple as HDL and LDL levels. There are good and bad LDLs. Type A if high is nothing to worry about.

Type B however, is small and more likely to cause atherosclerosis and really should be addressed whether through diet, exercise, or even "Statins". Statins are powerful and do have the possibility of severe side effects. They should not be prescribed without a thorough understanding of how they impact you and your health.

Cholesterol is a very important component found in our blood and serves many important purposes. If you have questions about cholesterol and how it impacts your health or about statins, feel free to schedule an appointment at Lewis & Clark Family Medicine.

605-260-2100, 2525 Fox Run Parkway, Lewis & Clark Medical Plaza, Yankton

Jeffrey Johnson, M.D.

Brandi Pravacek, CNP
L&C Specialty Hospital

Brad Adams, PA-C

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MEDICINE

Ear, Nose & Throat

Q Dr. Rumsey, I found out recently that I have a permanent hearing loss in both my ears. Is it really necessary to have a hearing aid in both ears, even if my hearing improves with only one hearing aid?

A. The simple answer is two hearing aids are better than one. We use timing, volume, and spatial cues from both ears to process auditory information. Two hearing aids collect more and better information, which typically results in improved performance. Secondly, speech understanding abilities deteriorate over time in the ear left unamplified ear due to the lack of stimulation. Research confirms this opinion. Multiple studies have found only 5% of people with bilateral hearing loss perform better with one hearing aid. At Avera Medical Group ENT-Yankton, we encourage our patients to use our 90 day adjustment period find out for themselves what fits their needs best. If you have any further questions, please contact our office at (605) 665-6820.

David Wagner, M.D.
Matthew Rumsey, AuD., CCC-A
Professional Office Pavilion,
Suite 2800, 409 Summit, Yankton
665-6820 • 888-515-6820 • www.yanktonent.com

Avera Medical Group
Ear, Nose & Throat
Yankton

Matthew Rumsey,
Au.D. CCC-A

Podiatry

Q Is surgery required to remove corns, or is there a less invasive way?

A. When you're asking about corns, I will assume you are referring to the callus that develops on the top or sides of the toes. Therefore, this callus is most commonly referred to as a "corn" and is formed secondary to pressure. Basically, people develop pressure from their shoes or boots against a prominent joint of the digit. The bone pushes up, and the shoe pushes down, thereby pinching the skin in between forming a callus or corn.

Conservatively, removing the corn involves shaving or smoothing the thickened skin with a pumice stone, or a scalpel. Then, you must reduce or eliminate the pressure on the skin either by eliminating or changing the type of shoe. Next, you must eliminate, if present, the abnormality of the toe. If you have a flexible hammertoe, strapping can straighten it out, or some type of gel pad can be worn over the toe.

I do not recommend acid corn pad removers, because they can burn the surrounding skin causing infection and even ulceration. The problem is not the callus or skin itself, but the underlying bone and the overlying shoe. So why burn the skin when the problem is a "bone and shoe" problem?

If corns or calluses are not relieved with conservative care as described above, then surgical options may be necessary to remove or correct prominent bone deformities that lead to painful corn formation.

Avera Sacred Heart Hospital Professional Office Pavilion
409 Summit St., Ste. 2600, Yankton • 668-8601

Avera Medical Group
Podiatry
Yankton

Terence Pedersen,
D.P.M.

Urological

Q Can diet play a role on preventing prostate cancer?

A. The following is a short list that summarizes dietary aspects of risk factors for prostate cancer:

- Keep your Vitamin D levels normal. Low Vitamin D is a risk factor for prostate cancer growth in bone.
- Diet high in fruit and vegetables and low in carbs can lower risk of prostate cancer.
- Low fat diet
- High dietary intake of Calcium has been identified as a possible risk factor
- Soy milk or protein can lower ones PSA level and possibly lower risk of prostate cancer
- Lycopene rich foods are good (tomatoes, tomato paste, watermelon, papaya, mango, oranges)
- Moderate exercise and weight control
- Any use of grape seed supplements in one study reduced the risk of prostate cancer by 41%. Other supplements including chondroitin, coenzyme Q, fish oil, garlic, ginkgo biloba ginseng, glucosamine or raw palmetto did NOT reduce the risk of prostate cancer.

Yankton Urological Surgery, Prof., L.L.C. 2009 Locust, Yankton • 689-1100
www.yanktonurology.com

Dr. Joseph Boudreau
MD, F.R.C.S.

Chiropractic

Q How do you define health?

A. We are trained to live in a blood culture. What are my blood chemistries and what do I need to do to make them 'normal'. The blood is the transport medium which delivers the medicine to make my blood chemistry better. Am I healthy when my numbers are right? Or, is there another way to attain health. Chiropractic teaches that the nervous system is the master system that controls all aspects of our health. Adjustments of the spine improve the way the nervous system operates. When the nervous system works better, the body can work better. Most of us have control over what we can do that makes us healthier or not. Have the conversation with your health professional. Visit us for more details about your health options.

2507 Fox Run Parkway,
Yankton, SD, 665-8073

first chiropractic CENTER

Sheila Fitzgerald,
DC

Fitness/Health

Q I have heard that exercise can improve your immunity to illnesses. Is that true?

A. Yes, exercise in moderate doses has been found to improve immunity. The challenge with this is making sure you are working hard enough to impact immunity but not so hard that it weakens your system. People who may see the most benefit are those that are going from no exercise to beginning routine of a 20-30 minute walk each day for example and older athletes. Those that exercise vigorously for 90 or more minutes can see a window of increased risk where viruses and bacteria have a better chance of sticking between 3-72 hours after that workout. It's best not to wear your body down too much. Each person can be affected differently, so know your limits.

501 Summit • 665-9006

Avera Sacred Heart Wellness Center

Angie O'Connor
Clinical Exercise Specialist

Pharmacy/Nutrition

Q I will be flying for a vacation soon. What do I need to know about traveling with my medications?

A. All medications and supplies are allowed through airport security. However there are some tips to make to things go smoothly. It is recommended, but not required to keep prescription medications in your original containers, labeled with your name. Putting a reasonable amount of pills in a pillbox is probably ok. Packing your medicines in a carry-on instead of checked baggage is a wise idea, as baggage is sometimes lost. It is also helpful to bring a current list of medications as well as the phone numbers of your doctor and pharmacy in case they would need to be contacted, should you become ill during your travels. Liquid medicines over 3.4 ounces and patients using medicines requiring a needle (ie -diabetics) may also carry on their medicines and supplies, but must tell the airport screener about these items. Liquid medicines should be placed in a clear plastic sealable bag to prevent spilling. It is safe to pass all medicines and supplies through the x-ray scanner, but you may request a visual screening. These rules apply to the US and Canada. If you are traveling elsewhere, it is recommended to check their rules regarding medications. Happy travels!

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Shona Jussel
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