



September 5, 2017

Ms. Dana Loesch
Special Assistant, Public Communications
National Rifle Association
11250 Waples Mill Road
Fairfax, VA 22030

Dear Ms. Loesch,

As the trade association representing high quality, trusted digital content companies -- including many news organizations -- we were taken aback by your recent [criticism](#) of *The New York Times*.

In part, the purpose of journalism in the United States is to “afflict the powerful.” This includes large organizations across the political spectrum, including the NRA. Quite frankly, if the NRA didn’t feel some pressure from news organizations like *The New York Times*, our free press wouldn’t be doing its job, even if you virulently disagree with the coverage.

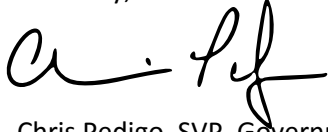
As you are undoubtedly aware, the primary author of the Second Amendment was James Madison. Madison also had something to do with the First Amendment as well. In an 1822 letter to a Kentucky senator, Madison explained the rationale for press freedom when he noted: “A people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with power which knowledge gives.” Knowledge is gained through healthy debate. That’s why it’s your equal right to express your disagreement with viewpoints expressed by *The New York Times* or any other news organizations. The Constitution and its amendments are not ripe for cherry picking.

However, when you use such incendiary language as “we’re coming for you,” it is our right to suggest in the strongest terms that your behavior is blatantly irresponsible as it may incite violence against journalists. Ninety-nine people out of a hundred would interpret this language as threatening and to suggest otherwise is disingenuous at best and dangerous at worst. Bottom line: It is un-American to threaten journalists.

On September 13 at the Newseum, we’re hosting [Press Freedom: Lessons from Around the World](#), a public event to discuss the importance of a free press. You can register for the public event [here](#). We encourage you to attend our event so you can reacquaint yourself with the importance of a free press as well as the real threats faced by journalists.

Clearly, our Founding Fathers understood the value of a free press and sought to shield journalists from political pressure. As such, we encourage you to focus on defending the Second Amendment. We'll take care of protecting the First.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Pedigo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chris Pedigo, SVP, Government Affairs
Digital Content Next