

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 7, 2008

John C. Sigler
President
National Rifle Association of America
11250 Waples Mill Road
Fairfax, VA 22030

Dear Mr. Sigler:

I write regarding *Mother Jones'* recent exposé of a reported National Rifle Association (NRA) operative who infiltrated a number of gun violence prevention organizations. This story contains serious allegations and I urge you to address them quickly.

According to *Mother Jones*, Mary McFate spent more than a decade rising through the ranks at several gun violence prevention organizations, including CeaseFire PA, Freedom States Alliance and States United to Prevent Gun Violence. At the same time, however, McFate—going by the name Mary Lou Sapone—reportedly was a paid “research consultant” for the NRA. As a result, McFate/Sapone was in a position to learn about, and to report back to the NRA on, the concerns, plans and strategies of various gun violence prevention groups.

In light of these serious charges, I call upon you to immediately:

- Admit whether these charges are true or false;
- If these charges are true, disclose the precise nature of the NRA’s relationship with Mary McFate/Mary Lou Sapone, including how much she was paid, the time periods for which she received payment and the services she provided;
- Make public the names (including any aliases) of any other NRA employees, consultants, members, or volunteers who have joined gun violence prevention organizations in order to report to the NRA on their activities; and
- Denounce and discontinue the practice of asking or encouraging NRA employees, consultants, members and volunteers to infiltrate gun violence prevention groups.

Although the NRA and I certainly have had our disagreements over the years, I hope that we can agree that the gun violence prevention debate should be based upon an open and honest exchange of ideas, not on underhanded tactics.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frank R. Lautenberg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

cc: Wayne LaPierre, Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer
Chris W. Cox, NRA-ILA Executive Director