

February 2, 2012

## LETTERS ON LETTERS

One side, then the other from Times readers

On any given issue, it's rare for letters sent to The Times to line up decisively on one side of the debate. But that's exactly what happened this week, when three controversial topics made headlines: a proposed interpretive center in the Ballona Wetlands, gun control and the priest sex abuse scandal in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

The Times published two letters opposing the Ballona Wetlands construction. And the preponderance of letters we published on the sex abuse scandal and gun control also took one side. We did, however, get contrary opinions in reader responses to those letters. Here are counterpoints on all three issues.

Attorney Jeffrey C. Briggs responds to a letter Thursday comparing marijuana regulation to gun control:

"What part of 'constitutional right' do Times readers not understand? Marijuana use, like driving a car, is not a constitutional right, and thus can be regulated. The right to keep and bear arms, however, has its own membership in the Bill of Rights. That does not mean no limits on those rights, but restrictions on them are given strict scrutiny by the courts. "We simply can't regulate any of our constitutional rights out of meaningful existence or they all will be threatened. But we can amend them if we want — a big difference, and hard to do, but thank goodness. Understanding that basic concept would move the debate along much faster."