It is the year 2030. Over the past 15 years, technology has evolved to the point where it is possible to manufacture digital, or “smart”, guns. A smart gun has one or more of the following features:

1. Switching the gun out of safety mode requires two people to simultaneously (within a few seconds of each other) speak the code that unlocks the safety. One of those people must be holding the gun.
2. Firing the gun requires the holder to authenticate before firing, via a fingerprint on the trigger, an iris scan in the site, or some other biometric belonging to the owner of the gun.
3. The gun includes a programmable “bug” that would disable its use if the gun is not returned to a pre-determined home zone within a specified time period (e.g., 1 hour) after being moved out of the home zone.
4. The gun has a tag that emits a sound or signal so that the gun’s location can be accurately determined.
5. The gun will not fire if it detects alcohol on the breath of its holder.
6. The gun has a chip that classifies it as “consumer”, “law enforcement” or “military”. Different classes of guns have different capabilities. Consumer guns cannot be fired if aimed at a person.
7. The gun has a GPS mechanism that prevents it from firing if it is inside a pre-determined perimeter, such as a school ground, a playground, a movie theater, or a shopping mall.
8. The gun can be tracked and/or rendered inoperative remotely by the owner and by law enforcement.
9. The gun has sensors that can detect if the gun is being used inappropriately, such as by a child or in the execution of a crime. The gun cannot fire if the sensors indicate a high probability of inappropriate usage.

Congress is debating a bill that would render all non-smart guns illegal. A legal gun must include at least five of the nine features described above. Anyone found in possession of a non-smart gun would be subject to a fine of not less than $100,000 and a prison term of not less than 5-years.

Pro Group: You are lobbyists advocating for the passage of this bill to Congress. Your goal is to convince Congress that smart guns are necessary and will help prevent future catastrophes. You must also recommend which of the nine features are necessary, and which are optional.

Con Group: You are lobbyists advocating against the passage of this bill. Your goal is to convince Congress that smart guns are ultimately not any more effective at curbing violence than non-smart guns; they will not prevent future catastrophes and they may even be unconstitutional.

Jury Group: You are members of Congress trying to decide what is best for the nation. It is up to you to determine whether or not to pass this bill, making non-smart guns illegal.