



Iowa Gun Owners

Iowa's Only No Compromise Gun Rights Organization
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Memorandum of Support for HSB 254

DATE: March 1, 2021

TO: Public Safety Sub-Committee Members Holt, Klein, Wessel-Kroeschell

FROM: Aaron Dorr, Chairman of Iowa Gun Owners, on behalf of our members and supporters across Iowa

RE: Support for HSB 254

Chairman Holt, Representative Klein, and Representative Wessel-Kroeschell, on behalf of the members of Iowa Gun Owners I would like to express our support for House Study Bill 254, especially the sections dealing with Constitutional Carry law and the phase out of Iowa's permit to acquire pistols and revolvers.

The members of this sub-committee are well aware of what Constitutional Carry is, so I will just quickly summarize our member's support for this crucial piece of legislation.

HSB 254's Constitutional Carry provisions would make Iowa's existing 'Shall Issue' laws optional for law-abiding gun owners, and allow them to carry a firearm for any lawful purpose without being forced to pay fees, obtain government permission, or add their name to a state or federal database.

Undoubtedly, anti-gun organizations funded by Michael Bloomberg's money will try to convince you that passage of this legislation will lead to a spike in violent crime, and that peaceful gun owners will suddenly become blood-thirsty killers looking for a reason to spark a confrontation if Iowa's concealed carry process becomes optional.

This is something that the legislature, and all of Iowa, has heard many times before.

In 2010, when Iowa enacted 'Shall Issue' legislation, we heard the same panicked statements. The reality is that with hundreds of thousands of additional Iowans now carrying concealed, we've seen no meaningful increase in Iowa's crime rates at all.

In 2017, when Iowa passed 'Stand-Your-Ground' law, the media and many state legislators all but said that Iowans would see duels on Main Street if the law allowed them to defend themselves in public without first having to retreat. Of course, that hasn't happened either.

When Iowa passes Constitutional Carry legislation, if anything, crime rates will fall as more law abiding Iowans will be able to carry a firearm without having to jump through any political hoops first.

Anyone who says otherwise would have to explain how Alaska, Arkansas, Arizona, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, South Dakota, Oklahoma, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming have already enacted this legislation with no negative impact on their violent crime rates.

And while some law enforcement organizations may oppose this legislation as they've done in the past, they too would be at odds with what their colleagues in Constitutional Carry states have said about the impact of this legislation.

A year after West Virginia passed it in 2015, WV State Police Spokesman Lt. Michael Baylous described the impact Constitutional Carry had on their state:

"When comparing the raw data from 2015 and 2016, there does not appear to be an overall significant difference in the number of violent crimes committed with firearms. Some counties experienced an increase in gun-related incidents, while others experienced a decrease."

Idaho passed Constitutional Carry legislation in 2016, in a political effort that I helped direct on behalf of our sister organization, the Idaho Second Amendment Alliance.

And in a July 1, 2017 article in Washington State's Spokesman-Review that dealt with the impact that Constitutional Carry had on Idaho, Nez Perce County Sheriff Joe Rodrigues stated that "nothing has changed," and he also noted that the number of residents applying for concealed carry permits hadn't dropped, either.

In many states, police associations are very much opposed to any expansion of gun rights, but this article went on to state that even the Idaho Chiefs of Police Association agreed that Constitutional Carry had not resulted in an increase in crime.

The same thing would be true regarding Division 1 on this bill, which phases out the need for a government-issued permit to purchase a handgun or revolver.

The only people that the current law is impacting are the hundreds of thousands of law abiding citizens that currently follow it. Current law does nothing to stop a violent criminal from getting his hands on a firearm and committing a violent crime.

Consequently, retiring that section of current law would do nothing but restore freedom to Iowans who should never have been required to obtain permission to buy a handgun in the first place.

The opponents of Second Amendment freedom like throw out one line statements like, 'the data supports the gun-control argument.'

That's pathetic. The real data about gun control is sickening.

Turkey established gun control in 1911. From 1915 to 1917, 1.5 million Armenians were exterminated in the Armenian Genocide.

The Soviet Union established gun control in 1929. Between 1929-1953, nearly 20 million dissidents were exterminated.

China established gun control in 1935. Between 1948-1952, 20 million political dissidents were exterminated.

Guatemala established gun control in 1964. Between 1964-1981, 100,000 Mayan Indians were rounded up and exterminated.

Uganda established gun control in 1970. Between 1971-1979, 300,000 Christians were rounded up and exterminated.

Cambodia established gun control in 1956. Between 1975-1977, 1 million educated people were rounded up and exterminated.

You see, tyrannical governments are the biggest killers of innocent people that our world has ever seen.

Many gun control activists and enemies of self-defense point to Australia and New Zealand as examples of policies America should implement when it comes to disarming the American people.

But just because the governments of Australia and New Zealand haven't turned on their own citizens and started slaughtering them yet, doesn't mean that the examples cited above should be discounted.

And this brings us to the primary reason why our members support HSB 254 and the two sections that I have discussed today.

You see, while studies, facts, anecdotes, and state by state comparisons are helpful to bring some sanity to the cries from the gun control crowd, they are not the reasons why this sub-committee and the legislature should pass this legislation.

Even the fact that these freedoms are enshrined in our great Constitution is a secondary reason to advance this bill.

The truth is that our right to keep and bear arms is a God-given right, a direct extension of the 6th Commandment that God gave to Moses on Mt. Sinai, and that is why this sub-committee should advance HSB 254, because these rights come from God.

These rights were never about hunting or target shooting.

They have always been in place so that free people could defend themselves against criminals and tyrants alike, the way our Founding Fathers did when they liberated us from the tyranny of England.

Gun owners in Iowa have spoken very loudly about this issue, going all the way back to the 2010 election cycle.

After House and Senate Democrats voted Constitutional Carry legislation down in 2009 and 2010 and Iowa Gun Owners exposed those votes, gun owners removed Senators Rick Mullin, Rich Olive, Bill Heckroth, Staci Appel, Becky Schmitz, and Keith Kreiman from office.

In the House, Representatives McKinnley Bailey, Mark Kuhn, John Beard, Doris Kelley, Gene Ficken, Ray Zirkelbach, Geri Huser, Eric Palmer, Larry Merek, Mike Reasoner, and Paul Shomshor all lost their elections due, in large part, to their votes against this bill.

In 2014, Senator Daryl Beall was removed from office by gun owners after they learned of his votes against Constitutional Carry and his support for gun control, thanks to Iowa Gun Owners.

In 2016, after a multi-year effort to block Constitutional Carry and other pro-gun bills, Senators Mike Gronstal, Steve Sodders, Brian Schoenjahn, Mary Jo Wilhelm, Thomas Courtney, and Chris Brase were all removed from office after Iowa Gun Owners ran radio, TV, digital and direct mail campaigns in their districts, exposing their votes.

In 2020, after Michael Bloomberg hit Iowa with several million dollars in digital ads with an expressed goal of flipping the legislature, gun owners re-elected the current majorities and defeated anti-gun candidates like Abby Finkenauer, Theresa Greenfield, J.D. Scholten, and Joe Biden. As always, Iowa Gun Owners was there to highlight their records every step of the way.

So on behalf of the members of Iowa Gun Owners, we whole heartedly support HSB 254 and urge the members of this sub-committee to advance this bill to the full committee, as is.

If I can answer any further questions about this legislation, feel free to call our office at 515-309-7858 or email me at director@iowagunowners.org.