

Good afternoon. I am the following testimony in opposition of senate bill 554. As an avid outdoorsman and conceal carry permit holder, I ask that you balance the harm to Second Amendment rights with the end goals of senate bill 554 and whether or not they will be achieved. We all abhor gun violence. I am personally for any law that will significantly reduce gun violence and is not simply based upon emotion. Unfortunately, this bill is purely based upon emotion and there are no peer reviewed studies I am aware of demonstrating this will lead to any reduction in gun violence. In fact, it may increase gun violence. Concealed carry permit holders by and large do not cause illegal firearm violence. These people are law abiding citizens. Permit holders must pass a police background check in order to obtain a permit. As such there are already significant safeguards in place to ensure permits are not issued to dangerous people.

As written, this law causes confusion as to where and when a permit holder can carry. If a permit holder inadvertently strays into a forbidden carry zone, they are unwittingly committing a felony. This is completely unfair. Based upon my knowledge of the men and women who carry concealed, I suspect the vast majority of conceal carry holders will follow any law that is implemented by our legislature. As such, they will leave their gun in their vehicle if they enter a building where concealed carry is legal. In addition to subverting this person's second amendment right to self defense, this also creates an opportunity for criminals to steal the firearm. The unintended effect will increase the number of firearms with criminals. If there was a significant number of people using these permits to commit crimes, I would understand the reason for proposing this law. There are no instances of this that I am aware of. Perhaps advocates can point to a situation where a shooter happened to also be a permit holder but it was not the issuing of the permit that caused the crime to occur.

This law significantly affects our Second Amendment rights to protect ourselves. Many people who conceal carry do so because they are ill-equipped to protect themselves either by advanced age or physical ability. A woman who is attacked by a rapist or an elderly person confronted by a man armed with a knife stands little chance if unarmed. They can scream and hope the attacker flees as opposed to stabbing them. Or just allow themselves to be victimized. Please do not punish law abiding citizens by significantly abridging their second amendment rights by passing a law what will have NO EFFECT on reducing gun violence.

Alex Dunn