

Re: SB 554

Dear sirs and madams:

I have watched this bill evolve and the present form is much improved over earlier ones. The improvements are that local elected officials need to enact it and the administrators of the public entities have only the powers the local elected officials give them. If rights are to be restricted, then it should be by people accountable to the public.

And we are talking about the restrictions of rights. Yes, the bill, in current form, meets the conditions of the majority opinion in *Heller v DC*, written by the esteemed Justice Scalia. It only applies to public buildings. He did, however, imply that the right to carry is a general one, on a par with the right to possess, when he stated that the right to bear arms is the right to confront someone who wants to take one's life. This can happen anywhere. In fact, the reason for this legislation is that it can and does take place in public buildings.

There have been documented cases where a license handgun carrier has stopped a mass attack. The El Paso Wal-Mart incident is one of them. True, that was a private shopping center, but the principle is the same. Licensed carriers can be invaluable aids to law enforcement, and as the recent incident at a Texas shows, saviors of lives. I recall when an incident happened in the 90s (yes, I am that old) in Texas and a woman had a direct shot at a mass shooter. She could have saved lives, but the law prevented her from carrying. (They have since rectified that.)

I suggest a compromise. Before the courts put the hammer down on Illinois' unconstitutional restrictions on the right to keep and bear arms, the legislature offered a partial remedy. It would be an affirmative defense against having an unregistered gun if you used it in self-defense. I suggest that you have that in place here. A person caught in violation of the new rule, who used his or her gun in self-defense, or in the defense of innocents, would have a defense provided he or she had a valid OCHL

This compromise addresses both sides' interest. You restrict firearms in public buildings, and you allow for the carrying of firearms in your own defense

Make sense?

Thank you for listening.



Dr. Fred Young\

