

On Average, Concealed Carry Permit Holders are More Law Abiding than Government Police

by Vance R. Parker JD, MBA | Jan 11, 2020

“2nd Amendment critics commonly portray concealed carry permit holders as dangerous to American society. Following the recent December 29, 2019, West Freeway Church of Christ church sanctuary attack near Fort Worth, Texas (where a volunteer concealed carry permit holder neutralized the active shooter six seconds after the shooter’s first shot^[i]), presidential candidate Michael Bloomberg stated: “you just do not want the average citizen carrying a gun in a crowded place.” It’s the job of the police to “have guns and decide when to shoot.”^[ii]

The facts do not support Bloomberg’s assumptions. The police will not always be at the scene of a crime right away, to protect every crime victim. In addition to ignoring the U.S. Constitution’s 2nd Amendment, and recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions (see *District of Columbia v. Heller*^[iii] and *McDonald v. Chicago*^[iv]), Bloomberg does not acknowledge that concealed carry holders, as a group, are exceptionally responsible American citizens. Statistically, concealed carry holders are self-selected to represent one of the safest subgroups within American society.

Compared to society at large, police officers are very safe on average, and represent a significant deterrent to crime. According to a study in *Police Quarterly*, police committed an average of 703 crimes (including 113 firearms violations) annually from 2005-2007.^[v] With 683,396 full-time law enforcement employees nationwide in 2006, there were about 102 crimes by police per 100,000. That’s a low rate of crime compared to the U.S. population as a whole, at 3,813 crimes per hundred thousand people, which is 37 times higher than the police crime rate.^[vi]

But, concealed carry permit holders are even more law-abiding than government police, on average. According to economist John R. Lott, Ph.D., formerly the chief economist at the United States Sentencing Commission, it is extremely rare for concealed carry permit holders to break the law—it is difficult to think of other groups of adults anywhere in the U.S. nearly as law-abiding.^[vii]

For example, in Florida between June 30, 2018, and July 31, 2019, Florida revoked 1,080 concealed handgun permits, including for permit-holder misdemeanors or felonies, with 100 of these revocations eventually being overturned.^[viii] This represented an annual revocation rate of 10.4 permits per 100,000.^[ix]

In 2018 within Texas (the last year for which data is available), 163 permit holders were convicted of a misdemeanor or felony, representing a conviction rate of 11.5 per 100,000.^[x] Combining the Florida and Texas data, **concealed carry permit holders are convicted of misdemeanors and felonies at less than one-sixth the rate for police officers.**^[xi]

Focusing only on firearms violations, among police, firearms violations occur at a rate of 16.5 per 100,000 officers. Among concealed carry permit holders in Florida and Texas, the firearms violation rate is only 2.4 per 100,000 or **one-seventh of the rate for police officers.** The data are similar in other states.^[xii]

In North Carolina, former Charlotte-Mecklenburg County Police Chief Dennis Nowicki previously stated: “The concerns I had [with respect to concealed carry permits] with more guns on the street, folks may be more apt to square off against one another with weapons – we haven’t experienced that.”^[xiii]

References

[i] Church live video feed posted on Bitchute (warning: graphic content): <https://www.bitchute.com/video/HqURuaj2Hus7/>

[ii] Dana D. Kelley, *Pandering is Insulting*, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (January 10, 2020), <https://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2020/jan/10/pandering-is-insulting-20200110/>

[iii] District of Columbia v. Heller, 554 U.S. 570

(2008). See <https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/07pdf/07-290.pdf>

[iv] McDonald v. Chicago, 561 U.S. 742

(2010). See <https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/09pdf/08-1521.pdf>

[v] Phil Stinson, J. Liederbach, and T.L. Freiburger, *Exit Strategy: An Exploration of Late-Stage Police Crime*, Police Quarterly 13 (December 2010), at 413-435. Data on the number of full-time law enforcement employees is available from the FBI Uniform Crime Reports from 2005 to 2007, Table

74 (https://www2.fbi.gov/ucr/05cius/data/table_74.html).

[vi] John Lott, Jr., *How Gun Control Advocates Play the Mainstream Media for Suckers*, The Hill (May 16, 2017), <https://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/crime/333473-how-gun-control-advocates-play-the-mainstream-media-for-suckers>

[vii] John R. Lott, Jr. *Concealed Carry Permit Holders Across the United States: 2019*, Crime Prevention Research Center (September 27, 2019), at 37, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3463357

[viii] Concealed Weapon or Firearm License Summary Report (October 1, 1987 – June 30, 2017), http://www.freshfromflorida.com/content/download/7499/118851/cw_monthly.pdf

[ix] Lott at 38.

[x] See <https://www.dps.texas.gov/RSD/LTC/Reports/ConvictionRatesReport2016.pdf>

[xi] Lott at 38.

[xii] *Id.*

[xiii] Chief Dennis Nowicki, Charlotte-Mecklenburg North Carolina Police, News, and Observer, (November 24, 1997).”