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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Colorado Open Carry Gives Rampage Shooters a Head Start**

Halloween morning erupted in a horrible carnage on the streets of a near-downtown Colorado Springs neighborhood. A gunman armed with an AR-15 shot and killed a bicyclist and two women before being shot and killed by the police.

Quite alarming was response of the dispatcher to a 911 call reporting a man with an assault rifle walking down the street. According to the Washington Post, when “Naomi Bettis called 911 to report a man with a long black rifle outside her home,” the dispatcher began telling her about the open carry law, indicating it was legal for the man to be carrying the rifle publicly. Bettis then hung up, but called back when the “man with the gun opened fire on a bicyclist outside her door.”

Bettis said “I don’t think she thought it was an emergency until I made the second call.” The shooter then continued walking down the street, shooting and killing the two women.

Although all the details have yet to emerge, it appears that police were not dispatched to the scene until the shooting began (Colorado Springs police have yet to release the 911-dispatch tapes.).

Carrying a rifle, especially a military assault rifle, on public streets and in the public arena is not normal behavior. Tom Mauser, who lost his son at Columbine High School, said “this is what happens when we try to normalize abnormal behavior. The delayed response might very well have cost one or more lives.”

Ted Pascoe, board member of Colorado Ceasefire, noted that “there is no way for an average citizen to ascertain whether the gun-toting individual is a good guy or a bad guy.”

Ceasefire asks: Should citizens be required to wait until the shooting starts before invoking a police response?

Eileen McCarron, also of Colorado Ceasefire, summed it up by stating “Open carry gives rampage shooters a head start. It is time for Colorado legislators to return our streets to normal. The open carry of weapons is bizarre and dangerous behavior. It should not be blithely accepted in an era of deadly mass shootings.”

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