



Legislative Action

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Shame on Colorado Senate for Disregarding Public Safety

Republican Senators gave a repeat performance from last year and aligned with their gun lobby supporters while callously ignoring public safety concerns and common sense. A majority of the Senate voted in favor of Senate Bill 017 (Permitless Concealed Carry) on the 3rd and final senate reading. No Democrat voted for the bill. Last year's bill died in House committee, which is the likely path of this year's try.

Polling indicates that Republican senators are out of step with their constituents. A 2016 PPP poll shows that 76% of gun owners oppose permitless concealed carry, as well as 69% of NRA members. Furthermore, 88% of western voters opposed permitless CCW (2015 Strategies 360 poll).

If SB017 becomes law, every adult in the state could self-evaluate as to his or her suitability for carrying a hidden handgun. No background check, no training and no sheriff discretion. Twenty years ago, the demands of the gun lobby were to set up state systems for concealed carry, now that is not enough, and the lobby demands we totally dispense with the requirement for a permit.

The debate was distinguished by some intriguing discussions. Sen. Tim Neville, the bill's primary sponsor, stated we have a "God-given inalienable right to keep and bear arms." Sen. Linda Newell wondered where this is found in any form of religious document. She then stated that she stood with her peaceful and nonviolent God. Sen. Kevin Lundberg retorted that "This is a bill calling for peace."

Unfortunately, Lundberg continued on by stating "The arc of justice has been moving toward the citizens of this great nation to defend themselves in troubled times." Eileen McCarron, president of Colorado Ceasefire Legislative Action said "This garbled rewording of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s statement that 'The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice' is insensitive and offensive. King was himself a victim of gun violence."

We urge Colorado's House of Representatives to put the people's safety first and stop this ill-advised and unpopular legislation in its tracks.

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