



July 17, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Office of the Speaker  
235 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Senate Majority Leader  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**Re: 400 Mayors Call on Congress to Respect State Autonomy and Protect Public Safety by Voting NO on the Thune Concealed Carry Amendment**

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Reid:

As members of Mayors Against Illegal Guns, a bi-partisan coalition of more than 400 mayors representing more than 56 million Americans, we are writing to express our strong opposition to Congressional bills pushing for the Thune Concealed Carry Amendment. If passed, this legislation will infringe upon the ability of state and local governments to protect their citizens with sensible, constitutional, community-specific laws and regulations regarding the carrying of hidden handguns. It will empower gun traffickers, making it easier for them to transport the guns they sell to criminals without being apprehended by law enforcement. Finally, the bill threatens the safety of our police officers by making it far more difficult to distinguish between legal and illegal firearm possession.

The Mayors Against Illegal Guns coalition has long believed that the issue of concealed carry regulation is one best left to cities and states. Our coalition believes that what state officials, law enforcement and legislators decide are the best policies for rural areas may not be the best for big cities – and vice-versa.

It is very common for states to set standards for carrying guns on city streets that go beyond simply whether an applicant is able to pass a federal background check. Many states, including those with strong gun rights traditions, have enacted common sense concealed carry laws that prohibit carrying by persons regarded as unusually dangerous and criminals convicted of certain misdemeanors, or that require safety training for anyone who wants to carry concealed firearms. For example:

- At least 31 states prohibit alcohol abusers from obtaining a concealed carry permit, including South Carolina, which prevents “habitual drunkards” from carrying guns.
- At least 35 states prohibit persons convicted of certain misdemeanor crimes from carrying concealed firearms, including Pennsylvania, which bars carrying by those who have been convicted of impersonating a law enforcement officer and other misdemeanor offenses.
- At least 31 states require the completion of a gun safety program prior to the issuance of a permit, including Nevada, which requires a 40-question written exam

and live fire training from three different positions with a certified instructor as components of their required gun safety course.

This legislation would eviscerate all of these standards, moving concealed carry permitting to a new national lowest common denominator.

Each state ought to have the ability to decide whether to accept concealed carry permits issued in other states. 9 states have chosen to allow concealed carrying by all out-of-state permit holders. However, 12 states choose not to recognize any out-of-state permits. And 29 states recognize permits only from selected states – typically from states with equivalent or higher standards. Any of these options should be available – and it should be each state’s choice to make.

This legislation will also aid and abet gun traffickers. In December 2008, Mayors Against Illegal Guns issued a first-of-its-kind report illustrating how traffickers already rely on states with weak laws as a source for the guns they sell illegally. In fact, the report showed that 30% of crime guns crossed state lines before they were recovered, meaning traffickers and straw purchasers often purchase guns in one state and then drive them to their destinations, often major cities hundreds of miles away. This bill would frustrate law enforcement by allowing criminal traffickers to travel to their rendezvous with loaded handguns in the glove compartment. Even more troubling is that a trafficker holding an out-of-state permit would be able to walk the streets of their city with a backpack full of loaded guns, enjoying impunity from police unless he or she was caught in the act of selling a firearm to another criminal.

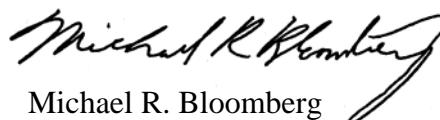
Finally, this law would not only frustrate our police officers, it would endanger them. Policing our streets and confronting the risks inherent in even routine traffic stops is already perilous enough without increasing the number of guns that officers encounter. Ambiguity as to the legality of firearm possession could lead to confusion among police officers that could result in catastrophic incidences. Congress should be working to make the job of a police officer more safe – not less.

We urge every member of Congress who respects the prerogatives of local law enforcement, wishes to shield communities from gun trafficking, and strives to protect our nation’s police officers to take immediate action to oppose and vote against this legislation.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Menino  
Mayor of Boston  
Coalition Co-Chair



Michael R. Bloomberg  
Mayor of New York City  
Coalition Co-Chair

Mayor Larry P. Langford, Birmingham, Alabama  
Mayor Thomas Henderson, Center Point, Alabama  
Mayor Carroll L. Watson, Lincoln, Alabama  
Mayor Samuel L. Jones, Mobile, Alabama  
Mayor Ron Davis, Prichard, Alabama  
Mayor Omar Neal, Tuskegee, Alabama  
Mayor Carolyn Floyd, Kodiak, Alaska

Mayor Patrick Hays, North Little Rock, Arkansas  
Mayor Carl A. Redus, Pine Bluff, Arkansas  
Mayor Jane P. Kennedy, Campbell, California  
Mayor Cheryl Cox, Chula Vista, California  
Mayor Robert Wasserman, Fremont, California  
Mayor Marc Searl, Hemet, California  
Mayor Roosevelt F. Dorn, Inglewood, California

Mayor Sukhee Kang, Irvine, California  
Mayor Larry Burrola, Irwindale, California  
Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Los Angeles, California  
Mayor Rob Schroder, Martinez, California  
Mayor Jim Ridenour, Modesto, California  
Mayor Paul Eaton, Montclair, California  
Mayor Ronald V. Dellums, Oakland, California  
Mayor Sue Severson, Orinda, California  
Mayor Jean M. Benson, Palm Desert, California  
Mayor Pamela Torliatt, Petaluma, California  
Mayor Jennifer Hosterman, Pleasanton, California  
Mayor Jonathan Harrison, Redlands, California  
Mayor Gayle McLaughlin, Richmond, California  
Mayor Dennis Donohue, Salinas, California  
Mayor Patrick J. Morris, San Bernardino, California  
Mayor Jerry Sanders, San Diego, California  
Mayor Gavin Newsom, San Francisco, California  
Mayor Chuck Reed, San Jose, California  
Mayor Miguel Pulido, Santa Ana, California  
Mayor Marty Blum, Santa Barbara, California  
Mayor Susan Gorin, Santa Rosa, California  
Mayor Joseph D. Serrano, Sr., Santa Fe Springs, California  
Mayor Ken Genser, Santa Monica, California  
Mayor Paul Miller, Simi Valley, California  
Mayor Ann Johnston, Stockton, California  
Mayor Anthony Spitaleri, Sunnyvale, California  
Mayor Morris Vance, Vista, California  
Mayor Abbe Land, West Hollywood, California  
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Mayor Raymond Marin, North Miami Beach, Florida  
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Mayor Clausie W. Smith, Bonner Springs City, Kansas  
Mayor Joe Reardon, Kansas City, Kansas

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Mayor Elaine Walker, Bowling Green, Kentucky  
Mayor John Link, Edgewood, Kentucky  
Mayor Jerry Abramson, Louisville, Kentucky  
Mayor Susan Barto, Lyndon, Kentucky  
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Mayor Francis Slay, St. Louis, Missouri  
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Mayor Eugene Kulick, Little Falls, New Jersey  
Mayor Frank W. Minor, Logan Township, New Jersey  
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Mayor Jay Williams, Youngstown, Ohio  
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Mayor Kenneth Lockhart, Brentwood, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Justin M. Taylor, Carbondale, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Kirk R. Wilson, Carlisle, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Helen Thomas, Darby, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Libby White, Doylestown, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Heather Ann Bruno, Downingtown, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Wayne T. Murphy, Edgeworth, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Robert H. Brain, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Joseph J. Cisco, Ellwood City, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Winfield Iobst, Emmaus, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Joseph Sinnott, Erie, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Harry W. McLaughlin Jr., Fox Chapel, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Fred C. Moyer, Jr., Freeburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Gerald C. Yob, Freemansburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor William E. Troxell, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Karl E. Eisaman, Greensburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Cathryn H. Rape, Harmony, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Stephen R. Reed, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Norah Hawkes, Hatboro, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Joseph R. Dodson, Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Betty Esper, Homestead, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Nicholas Yanosich, Industry, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Sandra Green, Kutztown, Pennsylvania  
Mayor J. Richard Gray, Lancaster, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Jayne C. Young, Lansdowne, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Robert P. Carpenter, Laporte, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Fred Feltenberger, Laureldale, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Trish Ward, Lebanon, Pennsylvania

Mayor John L. Mark, Liverpool, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Gerard J. McGlone, Jr., Malvern, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Russell LaRew, Marianna, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Angela Adkins, Midland, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Karen Bartosh, Midway, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Jeffrey L. Repasky, Mount Oliver, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Thomas Reenock, Northampton, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Michele Pettrini Avvisato, Old Forge, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Geoffrey L. Henry, Oxford, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Ardele R. Gordon, Parkside, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Michael Nutter, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Morris S. Williams, Pine Gove, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Luke Ravenstahl, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
Mayor John D.W. Reiley, Pottsville, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Tom McMahon, Reading, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Walter Niedermeyer, Slatington, Pennsylvania  
Mayor James C. Kennedy, South Coatesville, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Bill Welch, State College, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Charles Baughman, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Paul R. McArdle, Summit Hill, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Luke Duignam, Tatamy, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Jay R. Stover, Telford, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Pamela Murphy, Thompsontown, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Dale W. Deiter, Tower City, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Regina T. Beck, Trainer, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Adam R. Forgie, Turtle Creek, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Mary Jane Haskins, Ulysses, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Emerson Fazekas, Versailles, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Tina Hagenbuch, Weissport, Pennsylvania  
Mayor John Andzelik, West Mifflin, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Shane J. Keller, West Reading, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Thomas M. Leighton, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Mayor John A. Thompson, Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Mitchell Mogilski, Sr., Wind Gap, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Larry Markel, Windsor, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Jacqueline B. Mosley, Yeadon, Pennsylvania  
Mayor John S. Brenner, York, Pennsylvania  
Mayor David Cicilline, Providence, Rhode Island  
Mayor Joseph Riley, Charleston, South Carolina  
Mayor Robert D. Coble, Columbia, South Carolina  
Mayor Joseph T. McElveen, Jr., Sumter, South Carolina  
Mayor Dave Munson, Sioux Falls, South Dakota  
Mayor David Shumaker, Bristol, Tennessee  
Mayor Tom Beehan, Oak Ridge, Tennessee  
Mayor A C Wharton, Shelby County, Tennessee  
Mayor Will Wynn, Austin, Texas  
Mayor Bill White, Houston, Texas  
Mayor Richard Ward, Hurst, Texas  
Mayor Bob Kiss, Burlington, Vermont  
Mayor Christopher C. Louras, Rutland City, Vermont  
Mayor William B. Euille, Alexandria, Virginia  
Mayor Paul D. Fraim, Norfolk, Virginia  
Mayor Annie M. Mickens, Petersburg, Virginia  
Mayor James W. Holley III, Portsmouth, Virginia  
Mayor Dwight C. Jones, Richmond, Virginia  
Mayor Peter B. Lewis, Auburn, Washington  
Mayor Cary Bozeman, Bremerton, Washington  
Mayor Greg Nickels, Seattle, Washington  
Mayor Bill Baarsma, Tacoma, Washington  
Mayor Royce E. Pollard, Vancouver, Washington  
Mayor David Edler, Yakima, Washington  
Mayor Tom Kennedy, Beaver Dam, Wisconsin  
Mayor Jeff R. Speaker, Brookfield, Wisconsin  
Mayor Thomas M. Taylor, Franklin, Wisconsin  
Mayor James J. Schmitt, Green Bay, Wisconsin  
Mayor Dave Cieslewicz, Madison, Wisconsin  
Mayor Tom Barrett, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Mayor Richard Johns, Rhinelander, Wisconsin  
Mayor Al Richards, Saint Francis, Wisconsin  
Mayor Andrew Halverson, Stevens Point, Wisconsin  
Mayor David Ross, Superior, Wisconsin  
Mayor Kristine M. Deiss, West Bend, Wisconsin  
Mayor Ronald J. Krueger, Watertown, Wisconsin  
Mayor Larry Nelson, Waukesha, Wisconsin

Cc: All other members of Congress