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# RICK GUNDRUM

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 58<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

## Testimony on Assembly Bill 518

Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety | October 20, 2021 | Room 417 North

Chairman Spiros, Vice-Chairman Horlacher and other distinguished Members of the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, thank you for the opportunity to testify on Assembly Bill 518 this morning. I am proud to have authored this legislation with my friend and Senator, Duey Stroebel, in order to remove unnecessary infringements on our Second Amendment rights.

Under current law, the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) issues licenses to go armed with a concealed weapon. DOJ may issue a license only to a Wisconsin resident or an active military member stationed in Wisconsin. In addition, DOJ must conduct a background check to ensure the individual is not prohibited from possessing a firearm.

Wisconsin law presently says that an out-of-state resident may go armed with a concealed weapon in the same manner as a Wisconsin licensee if the out-of-state resident has a valid license issued by another state and the issuing state is on a list that DOJ maintains of the states that perform background checks on applicants before issuing a license.

Assembly Bill 518 removes the needless requirement that the issuing state must be on a list maintained by DOJ. Should our bill become law, an out-of-state resident may go armed with a concealed weapon in the same manner as a Wisconsin licensee if the out-of-state resident has a valid license issued by another state.

The way Wisconsin presently approaches concealed carry reciprocity is confusing and creates a regulatory patchwork of acceptable licenses. This affects both visitors and part-time residents and requires them to traverse a confusing maze of burdensome red tape. Our bill will treat all licenses the same. It is important to note that our bill does not make any changes to statutory requirements for Wisconsin residents who wish to concealed carry in our state.

Wisconsin has many individuals who own secondary residences within the state. Additionally, many people travel across state lines for their job and they have a strong individual right, according to the Supreme Court of the United States decisions in *Heller* (2008) and *McDonald* (2010), to defend themselves, their family, and their property in emergency situations.

According to Tim Schmidt, who is the President and Founder of the U.S. Concealed Carry Association (USCCA), there are millions of new gun owners in the United States and 21 million gun sales last year alone. The 21 Million gun sales included a higher rate of women and minority groups. In addition, Mr. Schmidt had over 2,000 new instructors join their ranks of over 7,000 instructors across the country. It is apparent that as interest and enthusiasm for firearm ownership increases across the country, so does the understanding that proper training and education are a necessary part of being a responsible gun owner.

I am proud to have USCCA in my District. I would like to again thank the Honorable members of the Committee for the opportunity to testify today.



# DUEY STROEBEL

STATE SENATOR • 20<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

## Testimony on AB 518

*October 20, 2021*

Thank you Chairman Spiros, and members of the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety for holding a public hearing on AB 518. This legislation seeks to remove an unnecessary bureaucratic tripwire to some people in Wisconsin from having their concealed carry permit from being accepted.

Under current law, the Department of Justice (“DOJ”) is required to promulgate a rule to indicate what concealed carry licenses from other states we will accept in Wisconsin. The list is on a DOJ website<sup>1</sup> and it is likely not well known. Until brought to my attention by constituents recently, I had forgotten Wisconsin refused to recognize concealed carry permits from 5 states entirely and only some permits from 8 other states.

Wisconsin was one of the last states to allow for the concealed carry of a firearm with the passage of 2011 Act 35. All 50 states now have a concealed carry permit process. While I was brand new to the Legislature when I voted for what became Act 35, I believe the provision about limiting out-of-state permits was meant to reassure those wary of concealed carry that Wisconsin would not be overrun by irresponsible people from other states without standards. Ten years later we can safely say this fear is not justified now, if it ever was. The selective rejection of valid concealed carry permits does not serve a public safety purpose.

The five non-reciprocity states are Oregon, New Jersey, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. These are all states with a higher representation of democrats in their respective governments than Wisconsin has had since Act 35. If my colleagues on the other side are to be taken at their word, democrats with the opportunity would take any action necessary to protect their states from the dangers of gun violence. Do we believe that progressive Oregon, Vermont or New Jersey would have failed to act if their concealed carry permitting process was in some way dangerous?

The cost of failing to act is the worst kind of bureaucratic hassle: arbitrary enforcement of a little-known regulation impacting a small number of people who, although small, will be highly motivated to make a decision adverse to Wisconsin based upon that bureaucratic hassle. Tourists from these states for whom the 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment matters to them may well visit somewhere else. Some people looking to buy a summer cottage in the Northwoods may choose to take their investment elsewhere because, as part-time residents, they won’t be eligible for a Wisconsin permit even though their home state permits are invalid.

This restrictive rule negatively impacts Wisconsin’s economy and our culture of 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment freedom. I believe it is time we do away with it. Please support AB 518. Thank you.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.doj.state.wi.us/dles/cib/conceal-carry/reciprocity>

October 20, 2021

To the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety,

I am submitting written testimony in opposition to AB518 which is being considered by the committee today.

According to a recent report by WAVE and the Center for American Progress (CAP), since the passage of Wisconsin's law to allow people to carry concealed weapons (CCW) passed nearly a decade ago, evidence shows the following:

- Trends in Wisconsin suggest that the passage of the CCW law was associated with a rise in gun homicides.
- Wisconsin's CCW law is associated with "an increase in violent gun-related crime."
- "Gun theft increased significantly following the enactment of the CCW law" in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin legislators should not expand concealed carry reciprocity to allow people who are licensed to carry concealed weapons in other states—including states with CCW laws that include few or no training requirements and do not have a prohibition for people with dangerous histories—to carry concealed weapons in Wisconsin.

Expanding concealed carry reciprocity would weaken Wisconsin's already minimal concealed carry license requirements and create many challenges for law enforcement.

Wisconsin is on track for another record year of gun violence after Madison and Milwaukee saw record increases in 2020. AB518 takes us in the wrong direction, and I strongly encourage the committee to oppose this legislation.

Sincerely,

Heidi Rose

Program Director

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