

GUN LAWS

Religious leaders speak against Texas bill that could allow you to carry gun without license

By Nick Natario - Wednesday, April 21, 2021

HOUSTON, Texas (KTRK) -- In case lawmakers in Austin vote on constitutional carry legislation, a group of religious leaders from across the state spoke out against it.

The bill, known as HB 1927, passed the House and could allow Texans to carry a handgun in public without a license.



With gun violence on the rise in Houston, and around the country, this group of religious leaders does not feel the time is right.

The law would allow Texans to carry a handgun without a license. But several law enforcement agencies and unions from Houston and across the state oppose this.

In case the Senate votes, a group of religious leaders from across Texas made their voices heard on Wednesday.

"House Bill 1927 cannot be allowed to pass when we follow God's most basic law, to preserve and protect the lives of God's beloved," said Pastor Jessica Cain.

The Network of Texas IAF Organizations said it's concerned about growing gun violence. It worries that allowing anyone 21 and up to be able to carry a handgun without training will make the gun problem worse.



Rev. Jessica Cain

"I'm very concerned about people who are not trained to respond to a situation in a

large group of people pulling out their guns and killing people in the crossfire," Bishop Mark Seitz explained. "I think it makes our churches much less safe."

But not everyone agrees. Bill Cawthon of the Republican Liberty Caucus said making Texans take the license to carry course doesn't change much.

"I'm sorry, I know the Houston Police Officer Union said 'How do we know they're going to be proficient?' If they've had two hours of handgun training, they're not proficient," Cawthon explained.



While Texas gun stores foresee a great fortune with a "constitutional carry" bill poised to pass the state legislature, a police officers' union is looking at the challenges the law poses.

Cawthon points to the fact Texans can already carry a rifle or shotgun in public. He said although training wouldn't be required, he believes most would still seek it.

"Everybody wants anybody who owns a firearm to have training, to have safety training, to have some knowledge of it," Cawthon said.

With gun violence on the rise in Houston, and around the country, this group of religious leaders doesn't feel the time is right.

"We're burying our kids, not because of natural death but, because of gun violence," Reverend Darryl Croom said.

"You'll find no scripture that will support this type of legislation," Pastor John Ogletree explained.

With about a month left in the legislative session, religious leaders wanted to make that point ahead of any vote.