



# El Paso Bishop, gun store weigh in on Texas 'constitutional carry' bill debate

By Gabriella Caracciola - Wednesday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021

EL PASO, Texas (KFOX14) — A bill currently making its way through the Texas legislature would allow Texans 21 years and older to carry handguns without a permit.

The current law requires Texans to complete a training class, a shooting class, take an exam, and pay an application fee, but if this bill becomes a law, those extra steps would all be eliminated.



*Handguns on display at El Paso store (Credit: KFOX14 / CBS4)*

At Sportsman's Elite, an El Paso gun store, customers have been asking all week about the 'constitutional carry' bill.

"They want people to have that ability that right to carry a gun, and we're on the same page with them and a lot of people was like well this is great, you know, this has been a long time coming for Texas," Richard Garcia, the Director of Training Sportsman's Elite said.

However, many El Pasoans are against the legislation, including El Paso Bishop Mark Seitz.

On Wednesday, he joined a group of religious leaders from across the state in speaking out against the bill.

Seitz said a major issue he has with the proposed law is that it removes training requirements.

"We have in society is that guns are seen as a way of solving problems," he said. "Even as a means of self-defense, training is needed to assure that they do not simply put innocent people that risk."

Garcia said he agrees that proper training is important for gun owners but he said he's still "100 percent" in support of the bill that would make official training courses optional.

"This is a huge responsibility, and it's not something that should be taken lightly," he said. "Anybody's ability to be able to carry a firearm with them for self-defense is something that they should be able to do without necessarily having to go through a lot of hoops per se."

The bill is currently waiting for a vote in the state senate after passing in the Texas house last week.



*I actually come from a family in which gun ownership and hunting was part of our life," Seitz said. "Our country has always agreed that there should be some limits on the disbursement of weapons and their presence in public places.*