

HB 1911 and HB 1927 - Removing the License to Carry Requirement in Texas - Unsafe for Gun Owners and the Public

What these bills do:

- Eliminate the requirement to obtain a "License to Carry" (LTC) to carry a handgun in public
 - A License to Carry requires the holder to pass a background check and receive safety training. That will be gone if this bill passes.

The License to Carry Helps Law Enforcement Ensure that Prohibited Individuals aren't Carrying Guns

- The Texas Municipal Police Association and the Houston Police Officers' Association are opposed to unlicensed carry. This bill would make law enforcement's job more difficult.
- In 2020 in Texas there were 1,049 convictions for unlicensed carry of a weapon, and 1,147 convictions of unlicensed possession by a felon. There were 147 convictions for deadly conduct by discharge of a firearm. Only one was an LTC holder.

Not Safe for Large Urban Areas with High Crime Rates

- No large state with a major metro area like Houston allows residents to carry handguns with no background check or training. The states that have passed permitless carry are mostly rural.

States that Enact Permitless Carry See Increased Gun Violence

- After other states have weakened or eliminated their license to carry requirements, those states have experienced an 11% increase in handgun homicide rates and a 13-15% increase in violent crime rates.^{1 2}

More Mass Shootings in Texas and No Action by the Texas Legislature

- Texas saw 64 mass shooting during the two years leading up to the 2021 session, including the El Paso Walmart shooting in August 2019 where 23 people were killed and 23 were injured, and the August 2019 Odessa shooting where eight people were killed and 23 were injured. Afterwards, both the Speaker of the Texas House and the Lt. Governor announced the creation of Select Committee on Mass Violence Prevention and Community Safety in each respective chamber. Both committees were given the charges to "examine ways to keep firearms out of the hands of individuals who would not pass a federal background check." In response, the Texas Legislature has passed no bills out of any committee this legislative session that would help keep guns out of the wrong hands.

Recent Texas Statistics on LTC that Illustrate the Issue

- In 2020 in Texas DPS suspended 3,412 licenses, denied 2,422 licenses, and revoked 573 licenses. That is over 6,000 Texas gun owners who, if either of these bills pass, will have the ability to carry their handguns in public.

U.S. Supreme Court Decision DC v. Heller

- One of our last and most powerful legal safeguards against mass gun violence is language in the Supreme Court decision DC v. Heller by Justice Scalia where he writes the 2nd Amendment is "not the right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner whatsoever and for whatever purpose." District of Columbia v. Heller, 554 U.S. 570 (2008).

¹ Siegel, Michael and Claire Boine. "What are the Most Effective Policies in Reducing Gun Homicides?" Rockefeller Institute of Government, March 29, 2019.

² Donohue, John J. et. al. "Right-to-Carry Laws and Violent Crime: A Comprehensive Assessment Using Panel Data and a State-Level Synthetic Control Analysis." National Bureau of Economic Research, June 2017.