

New Poll: Majority of Illinois Voters and Gun Owners Support Restrictions on Concealed Carry Bill & Stronger Gun Laws

“Who do you represent?”:

***Over 1,000 Gun Violence Victims & Community Leaders Demand Answers from
Elected Officials at Advocacy Day Rally***

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Springfield, Illinois -- As the Illinois State legislature moves toward the deadline on a court-mandated vote on passing legislation that would allow citizens to carry loaded, concealed handguns in most public places, the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence (ICHV) and over 1,000 gun violence victims and community leaders rallied at the State Capitol for “Advocacy Day,” and released a groundbreaking new poll indicating that the majority of Illinois voters among all political parties -- including gun owners -- support a restrictive concealed carry bill and stronger gun laws overall.

“We stand here with a poll today to remind our elected officials that, while they are playing politics in Springfield, the majority of voters back home in their districts – Democrats, Republicans, Independents and gun owners – all want stronger gun laws and they will hold them accountable for their votes,” said ICHV Executive Director Colleen Daley to the crowd as they rallied in front of the Lincoln Statue at the State Capitol. “With near universal support for so many of these common sense measures, such as background checks, it really begs the question of our elected officials that continue to oppose them: Who do you represent?”

Currently, the Illinois State Legislature is under a court mandate to pass a concealed carry law by June 9th. ICHV and other leading advocates have been fighting for a restrictive “may issue” concealed carry law that gives local law enforcement discretion on who receives permits and requires applicants to demonstrate the need for a license. Over the years, studies have shown that “shall issue” states that do not allow such discretion have experienced higher incidents of gun crime, and concealed carry permits have been put into the hands of dangerous criminals.

In addition, gun safety leaders stated that it would be irresponsible for the state to pass a concealed carry law unless it includes other measures that would close deadly loopholes that make it easier for criminals and other dangerous individuals to illegally obtain guns, including universal background checks, titling guns like cars and mandatory reporting of lost/stolen guns.

“The people of Illinois are making their voices heard in the fight for stronger gun safety laws and it is now up to our legislators to act,” Governor Quinn said. “I applaud ICHV and everyone here today who all agree that we cannot wait any longer to enact changes that will make the people of this state safer. We must move forward with common sense gun laws so that these weapons are kept out of everyday public places and out of the hands of wrongdoers. Now is the time.”

Overall, the poll indicated that 62 percent of all Illinois voters are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports a strong and restrictive concealed carry law with even more provisions, such as universal background checks, limiting ammunition magazines, banning military-style assault weapons, and registering guns. And if the question is limited to background checks as the only additional gun law, 68 percent are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports a strong gun law that includes background checks on all gun sales.

“States across the nation that have suffered recent high profile mass shootings involving children, such as Colorado and Connecticut, are already responding to these tragedies by passing stronger gun laws. It is inexplicable that our

children are getting gunned down nearly every day here in Illinois – even six-month-old infants – yet, our legislature appears focused only on weakening gun laws by passing concealed carry, rather than strengthening them,” said Father Michael Pflieger.

Below are key findings and recommendations from a survey of 600 registered voters in Illinois, with an additional 300 oversample of Will and DuPage counties. The phone survey was conducted from March 27 through April 2, 2013.

Concealed Carry:

The poll revealed that 78% of voters overwhelmingly support requiring applicants for concealed carry licenses to demonstrate that they have a clean record and can demonstrate why they need to carry loaded concealed handguns in public.

High percentages of voters also favored tight restrictions on where individuals may carry them:

Restricted Location	Total Support	Own Gun	Dem	Ind	Rep	Will/DuPage
Places that serve alcohol	81	80	87	77	76	84
Schools/School grounds	77	75	84	75	69	77
Casinos/Stadiums	76	76	81	77	67	83
Festivals/Street Fairs	74	72	83	71	65	75
College Campuses	72	69	81	69	62	75
Buses/Trains	65	59	77	59	54	64

Overall Stronger Gun Laws:

There is almost universal support for including other gun safety laws, such as universal background checks, to prevent guns from being put into the wrong hands of criminals or dangerously, mentally unstable individuals:

Policy	Total Support	Own Gun	Dem	Ind	Rep	Will/DuPage
Criminal Background Checks on all Gun Sales	95	94	96	93	94	94
Reporting Lost/Stolen Guns	93	94	95	93	88	92
Gun Dealer Licensing by State	92	92	95	94	86	93
Register Guns & Notify Law Enforcement on Sale and Transfer	82	81	92	77	71	85
Limit Ammo to only 10 Rounds	68	65	85	62	52	67
Ban on Military-Style Assault Weapons	67	57	81	61	54	68

“Those of us that have lost children to the senseless shootings in this state will never be able to understand the lack of urgency among our elected officials to do something to stop the violence,” said Pam Bosley of Purpose Over Pain, whose 18-year-old son, Terrell, was shot-and-killed on church grounds, while on the way to choir practice. “As I have walked through the State Capitol today, I have wondered how is it possible that over 80% of our state supports stronger gun safety laws that could save the next child’s life from gun violence, but our own elected officials continue looking the other way? It is unconscionable. Most of us know that more guns on our streets, our buses or in our schools is not the answer. Yet, they are not doing anything. How did they even get elected in the first place if they won’t fight for us?”

The noon Advocacy Day rally concluded with a charge that all advocates spend the day at the State Capitol arranging discussions with their local legislators and recording their positions on common sense gun measures. Throughout the day, the group used social media to post photos with legislatures and their progress in winning their support at **#commonsense4illinois**.