
WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF KATIE NOVOTNY IN OPPOSITION TO
SB745

March 14, 2023

I am a gun owner, advocate for the right to self-defense, certified range safety officer, and a competitor in firearms competition. I oppose SB745.

Rather than increasing the penalties for non prohibited persons carrying without a permit (absent any other crime), the penalties should be reduced to a civil fine. There are already different penalties for prohibited persons or felons who are caught carrying firearms. The penalty for ordinary people should only be harsh enough to encourage people to instead apply for their Handgun Permit, now that we have a “Shall Issue” permitting scheme post Bruen.

The cost to obtain a Handgun Permit is not inconsequential. You have class fees, fingerprinting fees, cost for photographs, and then the actual permit fee. There are portions of this state where training is not readily accessible, and firearms generally cannot be transported on public transportation, making it even more difficult for some people.

A Johns Hopkins study even shows that many people carry without a permit in dangerous neighborhoods because they do not feel safe due to violent crime, and they do not feel protected by the police due to events such as those surrounding the Gun Trace Task Force. (<https://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-gun-policy-and-research/docs/reducing-violence-and-building-trust-gun-center-report-june-4-2020.pdf>)

The bottom line is that increasing penalties for non prohibited persons from carrying without a permit, absent any crime, is not how you reduce the violence plaguing our state. It simply encourages more of the same stop and frisk practices that have led to distrust of the police in the communities where citizen cooperation is most desperately needed to solve actual crimes of violence.

Because of these reasons above, I request an unfavorable report.

Respectfully,

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