

Gun Violence Prevention

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This issue is a 2013 LWVIL Legislative Priority.

To update, the LWVIL continues to be a coalition partner of the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence (IOCHV), founded in 1975. We are not an official member of the Brady Campaign but do participate in various projects as does ICHV.

There has been a great deal of action in the gun legislative area. Since Wisconsin adopted Concealed Carry Weapons (CCW) laws, Illinois remains the only state which does not allow CCW. Contrary to the pro-gun lobby publicity individuals are permitted to carry guns on their own land, in their abode or in their fixed place of business and may carry firearms for hunting and target shooting. Many CCW laws have been proposed in the state but so far have been defeated.

On the federal level the latest strategy to circumvent Illinois law in regard to CCW was the introduction of the National Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act (HR 822). The bill would allow residents of state who possess a CC Permit to legally carry in another state even if the permit holder would not be allowed or even possess a handgun in the state they are traveling. Although HR 822 passed, ten state attorneys general, including Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan sent a letter to the US Senate objecting to the Reciprocity Bill supported by the NRA in Congress.

Recently, a three-judge panel of the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals struck down the Illinois' laws that would prevent Concealed Carry in the state. The laws had been upheld by two separate district courts in Illinois. Fortunately, Attorney General Madigan announced that she has filed a petition asking that the 7th Circuit Court review the three judge panel's decision declaring Illinois' ban on concealed carry firearms in public unconstitutional.

Another active area in legislation has been to reinstate the ban on assault weapons and large capacity magazines (only 10 bullets instead of 100). Gov. Quinn filed an amendatory veto but the bills were not voted upon before the end of the last session.

LWVIL has sent out several Time for Action alerts to League members throughout the state this year. In addition to assault weapon bans and large capacity magazines, bills have included registration background checks and closing gun show loopholes.