

NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERSHIP TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE

March 24, 2015

Dear Senator:

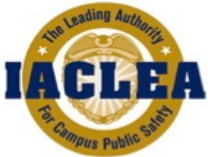
I write on behalf of the National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence (the Partnership) to share our strong opposition to S. 498, which would federally mandate preemption of state concealed carry firearm laws. The Partnership is an alliance of the nation's law enforcement leadership organizations concerned about the unacceptable level of gun violence in the United States.

S. 498 would drastically undermine states' concealed carry licensing laws and unduly jeopardize public safety. This legislation would require states to recognize out-of-state visitors' concealed carry permits even if those visitors have not met the standards for carrying a concealed weapon in the state they are visiting – effectively overriding state laws.

State concealed carry laws vary widely. The screening and safety training requirements differ from state to state, and not all states require background checks and safety training before issuing their permits. Thus, S. 498 would reduce national concealed carry standards to the least common denominator. Because many states issue permits to nonresidents, this legislation would enable dangerous individuals to bypass stricter requirements for carrying in their own states and receive concealed carry permits from states with more relaxed, very minimal requirements.

Preempting state concealed carry laws is extremely dangerous, as doing so puts the public and law enforcement officers at great risk. If passed, S. 498 would create potentially life-threatening situations for law enforcement officers. During traffic stops, it would be nearly impossible for officers to verify the validity of nearly 50 different concealed carry permits, forcing them to make split-second decisions for their own safety in an already hazardous situation.

In 2014, gunfire was the leading cause of death for officers killed in the line of duty, and officer firearm fatalities rose 56 percent from the previous year. Alarming, in the last few years, ambushes of police have been a leading cause of officer firearm fatalities. We must do far more to protect our officers and the citizens they serve from gun violence, rather than placing them in greater danger, as this legislation would do.



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State and localities should maintain the right to legislate concealed carry laws that best fit the needs of their communities. We respectfully urge every member of Congress to oppose S. 498 and work to better protect our nation's law enforcement officers and the citizens they serve.

Sincerely,

Chief Jim Johnson, Baltimore County, MD
Chair, National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence

Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association (HAPCOA)
International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA)
International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)
Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA)
National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives (NAWLEE)
National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE)
Police Executive Research Forum (PERF)
Police Foundation (PF)