



# Gun Owners of Maine News Bulletin

March 2017

## THE ROAD AHEAD: 2017 GUN BILLS

### New Year Brings New Threats, Opportunities

With the convening of the 128 Maine Legislature, a whole new crop of bills that will affect the gun rights of Mainers are under consideration. Some are good for gun owners, and some are bad; some bear directly on firearms matters, and others are more indirect, but all are important. We'll list each bill we're tracking, and give you some information about why it's important.

#### ***Bills we Oppose:***

**LD 343**, *An Act To Prohibit the Discharge of a Firearm within 300 Feet of a State-owned Boat Launching Ramp*, is a needless expansion of restrictions on firearms use with no rational basis in safety. Existing laws already apply, and there are no special safety considerations associated specifically with state-owned boat ramps.

**LD 351**, *An Act To Allow Municipalities To Prohibit Weapons at Municipal Public Proceedings and Voting Places*. is an attempt by municipalities to remove their citizens' right to be lawfully armed on municipal property. This overreaching bill would enable municipalities to exclude citizens who choose to be armed from any municipal meeting and from any voting place. Voting places could remain off-limits at all times, even when no election is taking place.

### State of New Hampshire Passes Constitutional Carry!

On February 22, 2017, New Hampshire Governor Sununu signed SB 12 into law, making New Hampshire the 12th Constitutional Carry state in the country, and joining its neighbor, Maine, which passed Constitutional Carry in 2015.

With New Hampshire's new permitless carry law, Northern New England is now a three-State Constitutional Carry zone, encompassing Vermont, the original permitless carry state, Maine and New Hampshire.

We congratulate our NH neighbors on their victory, and welcome them to the ranks of Constitutional Carry states.

**LD 352**, *An Act To Require a Dealer To Sell a Gun Lock with Every New Firearm*. is a completely unnecessary bill which could only have been drafted by a legislator who doesn't know that virtually every new firearm is already equipped with a gun lock. **The law would require Maine dealers to provide locks approved by laboratories certified by the California Department of Justice**, actually placing the gun rights of Maine citizens into the hands of another State.

**LD 443**, *An Act To Allow Municipally Funded Hospitals To Prohibit the Presence of Firearms on Their Property*, is yet another attempt by municipalities to create useless, feel-good but dangerous local gun-free zones.

**LD 501**, *An Act To Increase Firearm Safety*, would require all purchasers of any type of firearm, whether from a dealer or from a private individual, to provide documentary proof to the seller that he or she has successfully completed an approved firearms safety course. Even if you have owned and used guns for 50 years, you would still be required to present a written course certificate to buy any firearm in the State of Maine. Unenforceable as written, it could form the basis for full-blown firearms licensing.

**LD 1154**, *An Act To Provide a Voluntary Method of Determining Whether a Purchaser of a Firearm Is Prohibited from Possessing a Firearm without a Background Check* is a bill which would create a "voluntary"

(for now) registry of firearms owners, and would place a visible indication on a driver's license that the bearer is listed on the registry.

## ***Bills We Support***

***LD 9, An Act To Prohibit the Creation of a Firearms Owner Registry***, would explicitly prohibit the State of Maine or any political subdivision from keeping a list of firearms or firearm owners.

***LD 44, An Act To Lower the Age Requirement To Carry a Concealed Handgun***, extends permitless carry to those 18 years of age or older, undoing the last-minute amendment to the original bill which excluded young adults.

***LD 350, An Act To Repeal Certain Requirements Concerning the Sale and Purchase of Firearms***, eliminates the backdoor registry-in-waiting that Maine law requires dealers to maintain and make available to law enforcement without warrant.

***LD 574, An Act To Amend the Provision of Law Requiring Disclosure of the Possession of a Firearm under Certain Circumstances***, removes the requirement for permitless carriers to immediately notify law enforcement that they possess a concealed handgun during a routine traffic stop or detainment.

***LD 595, An Act Prohibiting a Law Enforcement Officer from Confiscating a Firearm under Certain Conditions***, prohibits supervising officers from ordering other officers to confiscate firearms pursuant to federal law or federal executive order.

***LD 598, An Act To Strengthen Maine Citizens' Right to Self Defense***, repeals the requirement that permitless carriers to notify law enforcement that they possess a concealed firearm.

***LD 693, An Act To Clarify the Laws Governing Hunting from a Vehicle***, clarifies that the law prohibiting shooting or having a loaded firearm in or on a vehicle applies only while hunting, as originally intended.

***LD 31, LD 715 & LD 796***, all seek to reform Maine's citizen initiated bill process to prevent abuse by well-funded outside interests who wish to buy access to our ballot and to place their laws on our books, like the recent Question 3 referendum. Each bill differs in the details, but all would require that signature-gathering represent the entire state in some manner, such that heavy signature gathering in only one region of the state would not qualify for the ballot.

## ***It Only Works If You Help***

As you can see by this list -- which may still to continue to grow -- there are a lot of bills that we need to pay close attention to, supporting the good ones and opposing the bad ones. Gun Owners of Maine is a grassroots gun rights organization; that means that our power and effectiveness comes from you. We need you to add your individual voice to the chorus of other Maine gun owners. We can keep you informed of developments on these bills, and when your action -- phone calls, emails, maybe even showing up in Augusta for a hearing -- is needed, but we need to you take action. If we each make that call, or send that email, or show up at an important event, we can not only successfully defend our gun rights, but we can continue to extend them.

We have shown, time and again, that the political power of the Maine gun owner is formidable. Please help us stay strong in the face of the constant threats from those who would extinguish our gun rights.

Stay connected to us by joining the Gun Owners of Maine Facebook group, or sign up for email alerts on our web site at <http://www.gunownersofmaine.org/getalerts> . If you'd like to support us in a more tangible form, consider becoming a supporting member by joining at <http://www.gunownersofmaine.org/join> .

Thank you, Together, we can keep Maine the way it ought to be.

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*Gun Owners of Maine, Inc. is a volunteer, grassroots Maine nonprofit corporation dedicated to preserving and protecting the right of the people to keep and bear arms, and assists members and nonmembers alike in locating training and educational resources to further responsible firearms handlings and ownership. Gun Owners of Maine is a nonpartisan citizen activist group and does not endorse any political group.*

*Help support our mission to defend and extend gun rights by being an informed gun owner. Like our Facebook Page and join our Facebook Group (just search for Gun Owners of Maine), and visit our web site at [gunownersofmaine.org](http://gunownersofmaine.org).*

*Consider a membership or a donation if you would like to help financially support our work.*

