

## Lt. Governor Simon's Firearms Working Group meets with health care professionals

Written by Kara Beach

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Simon, members hear how gun laws intersect with trauma, health care and mental health fields

SPRINGFIELD – February 27, 2013. Lt. Governor Sheila Simon's Firearms Working Group met today with experts in trauma, mental health care, domestic violence prevention and public health fields to learn how gun laws affect quality of life issues.

The working group, comprised of freshmen Senators and Representatives from across the state, is meeting with stakeholders on all sides of the gun safety debate as the General Assembly considers Illinois' first law to allow Illinoisans to carry concealed firearms.

"The intersection of guns and domestic violence can be tragic," said Simon, a lawyer who has prosecuted domestic battery cases. "As the General Assembly considers gun legislation, it is important that we balance public safety with our Second Amendment right."

The working group met with experts from the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network, the Center for Prevention of Abuse in Peoria, the Illinois Association of Court Clerks and the Illinois Department of Public Health.

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The meeting comes one day after the House began discussing significant gun reforms, including dozens of firearms-related amendments filed to House Bill 1155. Illinois has until June to pass a law that permits people to carry concealed guns in public spaces.

Currently Illinois is the only state in the nation with a law that bans carrying concealed firearms. The law was declared unconstitutional in December by a three-member panel of the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, and the state was given 180 days to pass a constitutional law.

Over the next month, the working group will continue meeting with stakeholders on all sides of the debate – from hunters to law enforcement to education professionals – to promote dialogue and work toward consensus on pending legislation. Please visit [www.ltgov.il.gov/gun](http://www.ltgov.il.gov/gun) for additional information about the working group.

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