

## Lt. Governor Simon, members of Firearms Working Group release concealed carry checklist

Written by Kara Beach  
Monday, 01 April 2013 13:56

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*Legislators urged to consider 10 principles including constitutionality and local input, while evaluating legislation*

SPARTA – April 1, 2013. Lt. Governor Sheila Simon and members of her Firearms Working Group today urged the General Assembly to use their checklist of principles when evaluating concealed carry legislation. The checklist released today was derived from meetings the group held this spring with stakeholders on all sides of the gun debate.

“Rhetoric can get in the way of common sense law-making,” said Simon, a former Southern Illinois prosecutor. “This checklist cuts through the volatile language and gets at the heart of what we need to pass a concealed carry law that is constitutional and prevents needless deaths.”

Lt. Governor Simon’s Firearms Working Group met with gun owners and advocates, parents who lost children to gun violence, domestic violence prevention professionals, mental and public health experts, law enforcement officials and educators from urban, suburban and rural communities across the state. Recently the group talked with Rep. Brandon Phelps (D-Harrisburg), the sponsor of House Bill 997, which allows for concealed carry of firearms in Illinois.

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Simon said the voices reflected deeply-held beliefs on an issue that is not partisan, but regional in Illinois. Both gun rights and violence prevention advocates urged the freshmen senators and representatives who comprise the Firearms Working Group to pass reasonable restrictions that balance the constitutional right to keep and bear arms with the responsibility to prevent violence.

Currently Illinois is the only state in the nation with a law that completely 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 Illinois now has until June to pass a law that permits people to carry concealed guns in public spaces.

Despite coming to the group with a wide variety of opinions, these members of the Firearms Working Group reached common ground on the checklist: Sen. Melinda Bush (D-Grayslake), Sen. Tom Cullerton (D-Villa Park), Sen. Bill Cunningham (D-Chicago), Sen. Michael Hastings (D-Orland Hills), Sen. Andy Manar (D-Bunker Hill), Sen. Julie Morrison (D-Deerfield), Sen. Steve Stadelman (D-Rockford), Sen. Patricia Van Pelt (D-Chicago), Rep. Christian Mitchell (D-Chicago), Rep. Emanuel Chris Welch (D-Hillside), and Rep. Kathleen Willis (D-Addison).

The 10 points on the checklist are:

**Constitutionality:** The concealed carry law must uphold the right to keep and bear arms, consistent with the U.S. Supreme Court's interpretation of the Constitution.

**Basic Qualifications:** Concealed carry permits should be issued only to adult residents of Illinois who hold valid Firearms Owner Identification Cards (FOID) and do not pose a danger to themselves or others.

**Funding:** The concealed carry law should also create a fund made up of user fees in order to finance the concealed carry permit application and renewal process.

**Permitting Authority:** The Illinois State Police (ISP) should be the permitting authority for concealed carry, and the ISP should maintain a database of permits issued.

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**Local Input:** County sheriffs and local law enforcement authorities should be allowed to provide the ISP with information about whether an applicant poses a safety risk if the applicant were allowed to carry a concealed firearm.

**Background Checks:** Prior to issuing concealed carry permits, comprehensive criminal background checks should be conducted along with investigations into an applicant's mental health history, record of substance abuse and history of domestic violence.

**Firearm Training:** Concealed carry permit applicants should be required to complete firearm safety and live fire training prior to receiving and renewing permits.

**Permits:** Lost, stolen or destroyed concealed carry permits should be reported to authorities in a timely manner.

**Sensitive Places:** Concealed firearms should be prohibited in certain public places, such as schools, which is consistent with U.S. Supreme Court guidance. Private property owners should also be able to prohibit concealed weapons on that property.

**Violations:** An applicant who violates the concealed carry law or makes material false statements on concealed carry permit applications should be subject to criminal penalties.

The checklist's release comes on the same day Lt. Governor Simon visited the World Shooting & Recreational Complex in Sparta to learn firsthand about safe gun operation. Please visit [www.ltgov.il.gov/guns](http://www.ltgov.il.gov/guns) for additional information about the Firearms Working Group.

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