“Concealed Carry Reciprocity” Forces States to Let Domestic Abusers Carry Concealed Handguns

- **Bottom Line:** “Concealed carry reciprocity” (H.R. 38 and S.446) would gut existing state laws carefully crafted to prevent domestic abusers and stalkers from carrying hidden, loaded handguns in public. It would make domestic violence survivors and entire communities less safe by forcing all states to allow domestic abusers and convicted stalkers to carry concealed handguns within their borders—and even making it easy for abusers to carry when they are legally prohibited from having guns at all.

- While “concealed carry reciprocity” would effectively repeal existing state protections against abusive dating partners, legislation from Sen. Klobuchar and Reps. Donovan and Dingell would protect victims of dating violence in all 50 states.

- **An astonishing share of gun violence in the U.S. is driven by domestic violence.**
  - More than half of women killed with guns in the U.S. between 2010 and 2014 – nearly 52 percent – were killed by intimate partners or family members.¹
    - And now women in the U.S. are as likely to be killed by dating partners as by spouses.²
  - Indeed, the majority of mass shootings in the U.S. are related to domestic or family violence. In at least 54% of mass shootings from 2009-2016, the shooter killed an intimate partner or family member.³
  - But when laws protecting domestic violence victims are on the books, they save lives: for example, cities in states that restrict access to guns by people subject to domestic violence restraining orders see a 25% reduction in intimate partner gun homicides.⁴

- **Federal law blocks abusers from possessing firearms if they have been convicted of a violent crime or are subject to a restraining order, but the law covers only spouses—and does not prohibit an abusive dating partner or a convicted stalker from having a gun.⁵**

- **A majority of states have taken steps to block abusive dating partners and/or convicted stalkers from carrying concealed handguns, but “concealed carry reciprocity” would undermine these state laws.**
  - Thirty-six states and DC block abusive boyfriends from carrying concealed handguns in public, and 28 states and DC do not allow convicted stalkers to carry concealed handguns.⁶
  - “Concealed carry reciprocity” would force all of these states to allow abusive boyfriends and convicted stalkers to carry hidden guns in their communities—even if these abusers and stalkers would not be allowed to carry or even have guns in the state.

- **“Concealed carry reciprocity” would override law enforcement authority to block people with domestic violence red flags from carrying concealed handguns in public.**
  - Twenty-five states and DC allow law enforcement to block people who pose a danger to the public from carrying concealed handguns. Local authorities are best positioned to know if a person has a red flag in their history—for example, domestic disturbances or assault arrests—and these laws are a crucial backstop against arming people with a dangerous past.
Recent research makes clear that law enforcement authority to block carry by these people helps keep the public safe.

- Research shows that, when states weaken law enforcement authority to deny concealed carry permits to people who pose a danger, violent crime rates rise by 13-15 percent over what would have been expected without the change. Using multiple methods, the researchers consistently found the same result: When more people are allowed to carry in public, violent crime goes up.7

By forcing all states to allow concealed carry by many people with no permit, “concealed carry reciprocity” would make it easy for prohibited domestic abusers to carry concealed handguns across the country.

- Twelve states do not require a permit—or a background check—to carry a concealed handgun in public, and “concealed carry reciprocity” would force all states to allow millions of “permitless” carriers within their borders.

- By enabling people with no permit to carry concealed guns across the country, “concealed carry reciprocity” would make it easier for domestic abusers who are prohibited from having guns to evade the law and carry them concealed from coast to coast.

- If police stop an out-of-state resident from one of the twelve permitless states, the person would not have a permit to present to law enforcement—meaning law enforcement would be unable to confirm if the person is a law-abiding gun owner.

While “concealed carry reciprocity” would eviscerate existing protections for domestic violence victims, legislation introduced by Sen. Klobuchar (S.1539) and Reps. Donovan and Dingell (H.R. 3207) would close loopholes in federal law and strengthen these protections.

- This legislation would take many of the same state laws that “concealed carry reciprocity” seeks to override and extend them across the country, prohibiting gun possession by abusive dating partners and convicted stalkers.

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1 U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplementary Homicide Report, 2010-2014.
4 Zeoli, AM, & Webster, DW. Effects of domestic violence policies, alcohol taxes and police staffing levels on intimate partner homicide in large US cities. Injury Prevention. 2010;16(2), 90-95.
5 Federal law generally prohibits current or former spouses, co-parents, and current or former co-habitants from possessing guns. Some state stalking crimes are felonies, and convictions are therefore prohibiting under federal law.
6 CA, CT, DE, FL, DC, HI, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MT, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NM, NY, NC, OH, OK, OR, RI, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WI, and WV prohibit dating partners convicted of abuse and/or under restraining orders from carrying concealed handguns in public. In AZ, CA, CO, DE, DC, HI, IL, IN, IA, LA, MD, MA, MI, MN, NV, NJ, NY, NC, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, TN, TX, VT, VA, and WA, all convicted stalkers are prohibited from carrying concealed handguns in public.