



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on March 12, 2014

Bill to Register all Firearms in Illinois Introduced

[Another anti-gun bill](#) mandating (this time) the registration of every firearm in the state of Illinois (plus permission slips to purchase ammunition) was introduced last month by self-proclaimed LGBT activist and progressive Democrat Kelly Cassidy. Representing state district 14, Cassidy's bill is called simply: "Firearms Registration Act." Cassidy's goal is simple: She wants the Illinois State Police to know where every firearm in the state is, what its registration number is, who owns it, and where they live. From her bill:



Every person in the State must register each firearm he or she owns or possesses in according with the Act....

[The Act] provides that the Department of State Police must complete a background check of any person who applies for ... a registration certificate for a firearm that was lawfully owned or possessed on the effective date of the Act....

[The Act] provides that it is a Class 2 felony to sell or transfer ownership of a firearm to another person without complying with the registration requirements of [the Act].

She also wants the police to know who's buying and shooting ammunition:

[The Act] provides that a person shall not purchase or possess ammunition within this State without having first obtained a registration certificate identifying a firearm that is suitable for use with that ammunition.

Penalties for noncompliance are severe: A Class 2 felony in Illinois is three to seven years in jail, plus a fine not to exceed \$200,000.

This bill, if enacted, would raise significantly the present barrier against owning firearms in Illinois. A resident must have a Firearm Owners Identification (FOID) card and, under the state's new concealed carry law, he must be 21 or older, pass a 16-hour training course, pay a fee of \$100, and even then he might not receive his CCW (concealed carry weapon) permit. The law-enforcement agency considering his application can reject it "based on a reasonable suspicion that the applicant is a danger to himself or herself or others, or a threat to public safety." Any objections are then considered by a Concealed Carry Licensing Review Board, which can confirm or deny approval based upon a "preponderance of the evidence" presented by the agency.

At present, there is a 72-hour waiting period before a buyer can take possession of a handgun, while it's only 24 hours if he wants to buy a rifle or a shotgun. If he wants to make a private purchase, the seller must not only view his FOID card but must verify its current status and accuracy with the local police. Further, the seller must keep a record of the sale for 10 years.

Attempting to exercise the right guaranteed under the Second Amendment in Illinois is challenging



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even to the most patient and persistent. Others are simply deciding to go without.

None of this has anything to do with reducing crime because the restrictions only apply to those who are already following the law. For criminals, the bill — if enacted — would have little impact on their behavior or their ability to obtain firearms. Back in 1985, the Department of Justice reported that only about one in five convicted felons obtained their guns through legal channels. The rest obtained them through home invasions, theft, street sales, or in exchange for drugs or other illegal goods or services.

In 1991, the BATFE updated that study, reporting that only 13 percent — one in eight — “armed career criminals” got them through gun dealers, flea markets, or gun shows. More recently, a Bureau of Justice Statistics survey of prison inmates convicted of firearm crimes confirmed that same statistic: Eighty-eight percent of them obtained them illegally.

In light of those statistics, what is Cassidy really up to? Back in 1976, Nelson T. “Pete” Shields, then chairman of the National Council to Control Handguns (now called the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, or more simply, just the Brady Campaign), told *The New Yorker* magazine:

The first problem is to slow down the increasing number of handguns being produced and sold in this country. The second problem is to get handguns registered. And the final problem is to make the possession of all handguns and all handgun ammunition — except for the military, policemen, licensed security guards, licensed sporting clubs, and licensed gun collectors — totally illegal.

In 1995, California Democrat Senator Dianne Feinstein told CBS’ *60 Minutes*: “If I could have gotten 51 votes in the Senate of the United States for an outright ban — picking up every one of them, Mr. and Mrs. America, turn ‘em all in! — I would have done it.”

This isn’t the first time that Cassidy has inflicted her progressive proclivities upon innocent gun owners living in Illinois. Back in 2012, she introduced four bills requiring all private transfers of firearms to go through a Federal Firearms License (FFL) dealer, charging fees for such transfers, making it a felony for someone to transfer a firearm to a person whom he “knows is a street gang member,” and punishing anyone carrying a firearm for personal protection (if he can get permission for the state to do so) without the attendant FOID card.

Things haven’t been going well lately for the likes of Cassidy and her anti-gun fanatics. On June 26, 2008, the Supreme Court ruled in *District of Columbia v. Heller* that DC’s handgun ban was unconstitutional. Following that ruling, handgun bans in Wilmette, Morton Grove, Evanston, and Winnetka were repealed. Chicago and Oak Park retained theirs.

On June 28, 2010, the Supreme Court ruled in *McDonald v. Chicago* that handgun bans in Chicago and Oak Park were unconstitutional.

On December 11, 2012, the U.S. Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals ruled (in *Moore v. Madigan*) that Illinois’ concealed carry ban was unconstitutional and gave politicians in Springfield 180 days to change its laws. In addition, on September 12, 2013, the Illinois Supreme Court ruled that the state’s law prohibiting concealed carry was unconstitutional.

On January 5, 2014, the Illinois State Police began accepting concealed carry applications and on February 28, just days after Cassidy introduced her total registration bill, the police began issuing permits.

All of which is to say: Cassidy continues to fight a war that she and her progressive colleagues are losing. But so long-entrenched in Illinois is the anti-gun, anti-freedom mentality that final gasps of



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attempts to turn Illinois into a “gun-free” (“criminal safe”) zone may continue to be expected from legislators like her.

Just in case her bill comes out of committee favorably, the NRA has Illinois on high alert. A week after the introduction of the “Firearms Registration Act,” the NRA told its members:

Your NRA-ILA has zero tolerance for any sort of firearm registration legislation, and as history has taught us, registration invariably leads to confiscation....

NRA-ILA is closely watching this bill and all other Second Amendment-related legislation in Springfield, and will continue to provide updates.

A graduate of Cornell University and a former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at www.LightFromTheRight.com, primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelmann@thenewamerican.com.



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