Written by **James Heiser** on July 5, 2013

Illinois Governor Vetoes Concealed Carry Legislation

When a ruling last December by the U.S. Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals mandated that the State of Illinois legalize concealed carry of a firearm, it mandated that if the state did not act within 180 days, the court would take further action. As reported last month for *The New American*, the Democrat-controlled legislature managed to pass a bill with only days to spare, and the bill that passed was a compromise that did not please either side. The hope expressed by the various parties shaping the compromise bill was that it at least offered the hope of the bringing the state into compliance with the court's ruling. But now, a last moment veto by Gov. Pat Quinn (shown) is threatening to destroy that compromise and risks further direct involvement by the court in changing the state's laws that presently fundamentally hinder the free exercise of citizen's constitutional rights.

An article for FoxNews.com sets forth the changes that the Democratic governor is attempting to insert unilaterally into the concealed carry law:

> But, by using what is known as his "amendatory veto power," Quinn could imperil the carefully crafted deal, which now heads back to the legislature.…
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> Among those changes, he called for guns to be banned from any business where alcohol is served.
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> "Guns and alcohol don't mix. And I think it's very important that the legislature understand that message from the people of Illinois," Quinn said.
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> He also added a restriction so that licensed gun owners would only be allowed to carry a single concealed gun and one ammunition clip holding up to 10 rounds.

Critics are quick to note the arbitrary character of Quinn's modifications to the bill. For example, banning law-abiding citizens from being able to carry their concealed carry into any restaurant that happens to serve alcohol — regardless of whether that citizen even partakes of such beverages — simply illustrates the fact that Quinn's "amendatory veto" is an appeal to sentiment.

The measure of Gov. Quinn's confusion is evident in his July 2 statement to the Illinois House of Representatives:

> As Governor, it is my foremost duty to keep the people of Illinois safe. In the first half of this year, there were 843 shootings and 184 murders in the City of Chicago alone. There's no doubt that gun violence is a plague in many Illinois communities. That's why any changes to our state's gun policy must protect the people and minimize the risk of gun violence on our streets.

First, the governor has forgotten that his foremost duty is to uphold the law; as Article V, Section 8 of the Illinois State Constitution declares, the governor "shall be responsible for the faithful execution of the laws." At the moment, the state's failure to uphold the Second Amendment of the United States Constitution and the ruling of the circuit court raises a serious question of Quinn's role in the "faithful execution of the laws" that he is sworn to uphold.

Second, the governor's unwillingness to discriminate between the actions of criminals and acts of self-defense by law-abiding citizens bespeaks the confusion that reigns in the minds of gun control advocates. As reported by Bob Adelmann for *The New American*, studies continue to demonstrated that concealed carry reduces the level of violence, with Florida proving an superb example of this nationwide trend:

> When Florida passed the first "shall-issue" law requiring authorities to issue concealed weapons permits to qualified citizens upon request in 1987, critics warned that the Sunshine State would soon become the "Gunshine" State, with predictions of differences being settled by gun fights in the streets, and crime soaring. The exact opposite happened. As Guncite.com noted, "homicide rates dropped faster than the national average [and] through 1997, only one permit holder out of over the 350,000 permits issued, was convicted of homicide."

Given the recent history of the connection between public safety and concealed carry, Quinn's veto not only interferes with efforts by the legislature to bring the state into compliance with the U.S. Constitution, it also endangers the citizens of the state.

Quinn's actions may also have further consequences that he and other opponents of Second Amendment liberties may not like: The court may elect to eliminate all state statutes that currently prohibit concealed carry. When Quinn hesitated to act following passage of the legislation last month, Attorney General Lisa Madigan requested a month extension to allow the governor time to weigh his options. Now, Quinn's veto essentially guarantees that the state will not be in compliance with the court's ruling when the new deadline expires on July 9. By interfering with both a court ruling and the will of the people of Illinois expressed through the legislature, Quinn's actions could lead to a further collapse of the state's unconstitutional restrictions on the right to keep and bear arms. If such a development takes place, the governor and his legislative allies in Springfield may discover that the hard-won rights of the people will not be easily surrendered.