



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on August 14, 2017

## Pressure Building to Pass National Reciprocity

With the newest Republican Congresswoman from Georgia, Karen Handel, [cosponsoring HR 38 last week](#), there are now 209 cosponsors of the national reciprocity bill. That bill was introduced in the House by Representative Richard Hudson (R-N.C.) in January with a companion bill being introduced in the Senate simultaneously by Senator John Cornyn (R-Texas). With Handel's endorsement, that means passage by the House is just nine votes away.



The bill has gained some significant momentum from various sources, including municipalities such as New York City, which has jailed travelers there for violating its stringent anti-gun laws. A video interview by [John Stossel on YouTube](#) of two unsuspecting citizens caught in New York City's web brought to light just how dangerous it is to travel there despite having followed all the rules.

Both Patricia Jordan and Avi Wolf were arrested for violating the city's strict gun laws. Even though they both had called TSA to get current on rules about flying with firearms, and had followed those rules carefully, each spent a day and a night in a New York City jail, months of uncertainty until their cases were settled (they each plea-bargained to being a public nuisance), and between \$15,000 and \$17,000 each for attorneys' fees. Stossel made the point that this is happening nearly on a weekly basis in the city.

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Especially annoying was the response of the city's district attorney to Stossel's query about the severity of the punishment for such minor violations of the city's rules: "We're not going to apologize for enforcing our gun laws."

Responded Stossel: "Give me a break! Prosecutors have discretion. They could be reasonable with these poor people who had no idea they violated New York's strange laws. But New York politicians don't want you to have a gun, so they will put you in jail to send everyone [else] a message."

The National Rifle Association's Institute for Legislative Affairs (NRAILA) is helping things along by making passage of the national reciprocity bill its No. 1 priority. It explained that in New York City:

Lawful possession requires a local license, which is not available to non-New York residents.... The Big Apple, in short, remains a Constitution-free zone as far as the right to keep and bear arms is concerned....

It is long past time for concealed carry reciprocity. Far too many good Americans have had their fundamental right to self-protection unfairly denied. If ruthless New York City politicians and bureaucrats "won't apologize" for jailing and fleecing innocent travelers, the Congress likewise should unapologetically enforce the U.S. Constitution, the supreme law of the land, and restore Second Amendments rights to all.

Passage was urged by *Conservative Daily*:



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The Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act would force states to treat concealed carry permits the same way they treat out-of-state driver's licenses. If you are allowed to carry in one state, you are allowed to carry in all states.

Here at *Conservative Daily*, we support Constitutional Carry. The 2nd Amendment to the Constitution should be the only "permit" a law-abiding American needs to defend himself in public.

Nationally known firearms expert and trainer Massad Ayoob weighed in on the matter on Sunday. He had just finished teaching a class in New Jersey, which he cryptically referred to as "operating behind enemy lines," adding that "more than a dozen states now have followed the Vermont Model in which no permit is required to carry a loaded handgun concealed for protection in public." But New Jersey "does not recognize carry permits from any other state." As a result New Jersey's Governor Chris Christie has repeatedly granted relief to people such as Shaneen Allen, whose case made national headlines a few years ago. Allen crossed over from Pennsylvania into New Jersey, was subjected to a routine traffic stop that got ugly when she told the officer that she was carrying a firearm. The fact she also had a Pennsylvania concealed carry permit didn't matter. She was jailed and only saw the light of day after Christie intervened.

Jerry Henry, the executive director of Georgia Carry, weighed in on the bill as well, writing in *Breitbart* last week that state "laws should simply address carry licenses the way many other licenses are addressed. With a driver's license issued in Georgia, I can drive my vehicle in any other state in this country ... providing I follow the laws of the state I am in at the time. My marriage license is treated the same way." Added Henry: "I have said for many years I should be able to carry anywhere a criminal carries."

Naturally, New York's Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance sees things differently:

If the residents of Idaho want to have a state when you don't need a permit to get a gun, I don't think New York should tell Idaho how to manage its public safety, and I certainly don't think the people of Idaho should tell New York City how to manage its public safety.

The trouble with that argument is that when Idahoans travel to New York City they don't expect to be treated like common criminals, thrown in jail, and be forced to pay thousands of dollars in legal fees to regain their freedom.

These arguments for national reciprocity are muting any discussion of the constitutionality of such a law. As constitutional lawyer Joe Wolverton wrote in *The New American*:

The problem plaguing Americans [is] looking to Washington, D.C. for permission to do that which is beyond their authority to rule....

Our Republic was not founded by men and women who looked to government for the green light for the exercise of timeless rights that have been enjoyed by their ancestors for years....

Promotion of a proposed federal law that would force states to recognize concealed carry permits issued by others states ... would be unconstitutional.

The House Judiciary Committee will be holding hearings on the bill in the middle of September. While it's expected to pass the House handily, it faces tougher sledding in the Senate where Democrats have promised a filibuster. Working for passage, however, is the political mathematics facing the Senate in 2018, where 24 Democrat Senate seats are open, including in many red states where national reciprocity is getting traction. As neither House Speaker Paul Ryan nor Senate Majority Leader Mitch



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McConnell seem interested in pushing the bill, it will have to have increasing public support for it to come to President Trump's desk for signing.

And he will sign it. On September 18, 2015, Trump said:

The right of self-defense doesn't stop at the end of your driveway. That's why I have a concealed carry permit and why tens of millions of Americans do too. That permit should be valid in all 50 states. A driver's license works in every state, so it's common sense that a concealed carry permit should work in every state. If we can do that for driving — which is a privilege, not a right — then surely we can do that for concealed carry, which is a right, not a privilege.

An Ivy League graduate and former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to *The New American* magazine and blogs frequently at [LightFromTheRight.com](http://LightFromTheRight.com), primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at [badelman@thenewamerican.com](mailto:badelman@thenewamerican.com).

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