



Wyoming Adopts “Constitutional Carry” of Firearms

An important step was taken yesterday in Wyoming toward restoring the constitutionally protected right of Americans to keep and bear arms, as that state became the second in less than a year to enact legislation affirming the right of its citizens to carry a concealed firearm without a special government-issued license. Following adoption in the state Senate, the vote of the House in the Wyoming legislature approved the bill by a vote of 48-8 several weeks ago, and Gov. Matt Mead (photo, left) signed it into law on March 3.



The right to carry a concealed firearm without a special license issued by the state is often referred to as “[constitutional carry](#).” Wyoming is now the fourth state in the Union that recognizes constitutional carry, joining Alaska, Arizona, and Vermont. Prior to Wyoming’s action, Arizona was the most recent state to adopt constitutional carry; Governor Jan Brewer signed the legislation in April of last year, and it went into effect a few months later, on [July 29](#).

It appears that the trend toward “constitutional carry” is likely to continue, with several states weighing adoption of measures similar to that which became law today in Wyoming. An article from the Associate Press declares that “Similar bills are pending in states including Colorado, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, South Carolina, and Utah. A bill has been introduced in Kentucky but hasn’t advanced while another was introduced for discussion in Idaho.”

In the aftermath of the Tucson tragedy, organizations opposed to Second Amendment-defined rights attempted to exploit the deaths and injuries that occurred when Jared Loughner allegedly attempted to murder Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D-Ariz.) However, the fumbling efforts of Pima County Sheriff Clarence Dupnik to politicize the tragedy appears to have backfired on the gun control lobby: rather than scaring the populace into surrendering more of their rights for the illusion of security, January 2011 gun sales [surged 9.7 percent](#) over the same month the previous year—an increase which builds on a trend in gun purchases since November 2008.

Undoubtedly, there are several factors are behind the movement at this time to restore more of the constitutionally recognized right to keep and bear arms to the people of the United States. Economics and a greater perceived need to be responsible for one’s own defense are among those factors. In the words of the AP article:

The push to expand permit-free carry of concealed guns is coming from people demanding the freedom to protect themselves in tough economic times without the requirement to pay for state permits, National Rifle Association spokesman Andrew Arulanandam said.

“It’s an organic movement,” Arulanandam said. “I think certainly we are leading the charge — I’m not hiding behind it. A lot of this is organic in the sense that it comes from people realizing that when something bad happens, it’s up to them to defend themselves and their loved ones. And



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when something bad happens, instant responders are better than ‘first responders.’”

Another factor in the push to expand the right of self-defense in the direction of the liberty enumerated in the Bill of Rights is the sense that many Americans have that their liberties have been steadily eroded for many years. The same concerns that animated Tea Party activists and other constitutional conservatives are active in the movement for constitutional carry. People who neglect the exercise of their constitutional rights may soon find those rights have been usurped by the State. First in Arizona and now in Wyoming, the people are pushing back.



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