



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on February 1, 2016

## Virginia to Continue Honoring Concealed Carry

Virginia's governor, Terry McAullife, has "agreed to restore handgun reciprocity" with the 25 states that Virginia's Democrat Attorney General Mark Herring canceled a mere six weeks ago, according to a release from Republican Virginia Delegate James Edmunds.

In fact, the restoration comes before the change was set to go into effect, meaning gun owners living in or visiting the Old Dominion state will continue to enjoy the right to keep and bear arms without interruption.



In late December, Attorney General Mark Herring announced that Virginia would no longer recognize concealed carry permits from 25 of the 30 states that had previously been recognized. As *The New American* [reported](#) then:

Many states honor other states' concealed carry permits. Sometimes reciprocity is required (state A will honor state B's permits only if state B will honor state A's permits). Some states will honor other states' permits regardless of whether the other states honor theirs. This allows a concealed carry permit holder from one state to carry his weapon concealed when traveling to other states.

Virginia currently recognizes concealed carry permits from 30 states, allowing those visitors the same level of personal protection they enjoy in their own states. It is good for tourism and other business; those who take seriously their ability and responsibility to defend themselves and their families take that into consideration when planning family vacations and other trips. Now, all of that is changing.

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This writer also predicted that Herring would suffer political fallout as a result. His unilateral decision would have meant that six of the states affected by the change — because they require reciprocity in order to recognize Concealed Carry Permits (CCPs) from other states — would have banned Virginia CCP holders from concealing when visiting those states. Those states are:

- Florida
- Louisiana
- North Dakota
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- Idaho

At the time, the *Virginian-Pilot* [reported](#) that the Virginia Citizen's Defense League has accused Herring of making his decision as a payoff for political contributions:

The Virginia Citizens Defense League, a gun-rights group, sent an email to its list Tuesday morning saying the announcement was done to pay back former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg for his



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campaign donations in Virginia legislative races this fall.

Bloomberg's Everytown For Gun Safety group spent \$2.2 million for two Democrats in state Senate races.

"I've never heard of a single case of an out-of-state permit holder causing problems in Virginia," said Philip Van Cleave, president of the gun-rights group.

*The New American* pointed out that whatever Herring's financial or party considerations, it is clear that this should not be viewed as an isolated incident, but instead as a "first step" in the plan to further roll back the God-given right of self-defense guaranteed by the Second Amendment.

As we reported:

Josh Horwitz, executive director of the anti-gun organization Coalition to Stop Gun Violence (CSGV), said, "Virginia's lack of enforcement of its own standards has been irresponsible and dangerous." He added, "While the Commonwealth has plenty of room to improve their own standards for issuing concealed carry permits, the actions taken today by the Attorney General are a good first step toward making Virginia a safer place for its citizens and visitors alike."

Virginia's Democrat governor, Terry McAuliffe, stood behind Herring's heavy-handed anti-gun approach. Virginia Republicans immediately reacted by proposing legislation to overturn the decision and put pressure on both Herring and McAuliffe. Republican delegate Lee Ware introduced legislation to take away the power of the state police to conduct surveys, such as the one on which Herring leaned for this draconian exercise. And, as *The Inquisitr* reported, "Republicans who control both houses of the Virginia legislature at one point considered [pulling the funding](#) for Gov. Terry McAuliffe's armed state police bodyguards."

As the pressure mounted, McAuliffe reversed the decision. But there are still points of concern. While this may be a classic case of politicians seeing the light only after they feel the heat, it could also be a classic case of two steps forward and one step back.

According to the release from Delegate Edmunds:

I am very pleased with the hard work that has been done and the resulting common sense legislation I co-patroned that will now be moving through the General Assembly," stated Delegate James Edmunds.

The deal will include requirements that state police be present at all gun shows for voluntary background checks and will also prohibit anyone from carrying a firearm who has been subject to a permanent protective order for domestic violence.

"Both of these concessions are sensible solutions," stated Delegate Edmunds, "and I am pleased that all law abiding CCP holders can now continue to carry into reciprocating states as before."

"This is a great victory for law abiding handgun owners!"

The requirement "that state police be present at all gun shows for voluntary background checks" is new. Virginia has never required background checks for private purchases — whether at a gun show or not. While this stops short of *requiring* the background check (Edmunds was careful to emphasize that the background check is voluntary), it should certainly be viewed as a step toward requiring them in the future.

A McAuliffe spokesman said, "This is a bipartisan deal that will make Virginians safer. It also



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demonstrates that Democrats and Republicans can work together on key issues like keeping guns out of dangerous hands.” Republican House Speaker William Howell agreed, “Bipartisanship requires give and take by both sides,” he said, adding, “This agreement restores reciprocity for law-abiding Virginians while sending a clear signal about domestic violence. There’s a lot to like here.”

It has been said that in America, we have two parties: the evil party and the stupid party. Occasionally they get together and do something that is both evil and stupid. We call this “bipartisanship.”

This may prove to be one of those times. While Virginians and those in the other states impacted by this new turn have something to celebrate, they should remain cautious in their joy and maintain the vigilance that is necessary to remain free and able to exercise their God-given rights.



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