

WISCONSIN SENATE REPUBLICANS

ISSUE BRIEFS FOR THE 2015-16 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

PUBLIC SAFETY: GUN VIOLENCE

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HISTORY

One in every three Wisconsinites own a gun and the majority use their firearms safely and responsibly. Statewide, Wisconsin has a very low rate of death due to firearms, with approximately 10 injuries for every 100,000 people in our state. For the 2015 gun deer season, only 1.3 injuries were reported for every 100,000 hunters. Nationally, we rank very low in rates of deaths due to injuries caused by firearms.

However, the city of Milwaukee is an exception to the statewide trend of responsible firearm ownership. 145 homicide victims were shot in Milwaukee in 2015, the highest number of homicides since 1993 when 160 people were killed. The spike was a 69% increase from 2014- a larger increase than Baltimore, St. Louis, and Washington D.C.

Legislative Republicans are committed to making Milwaukee a safe place to live, work, and play. We are highly concerned about Milwaukee's homicide and shooting rates and took action in the 2015 legislative session to both empower legal gun owners and hinder criminals.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

2015 WI ACT 23 (SB 70)- Corrects an oversight in Wisconsin law to restore qualified retired and off-duty law enforcement officers' ability to carry concealed weapons in school zones. Off-duty and retired police officers are certified every year and committed to public safety. Correcting this oversight in our concealed carry law will eliminate an unnecessary hurdle for law enforcement and provide an additional level of safety to our schools.

2015 WI ACT 67 (AB 75)- Under this bill, a concealed carry permit applicant who is stationed in Wisconsin for at least one year while in active service in the U.S. armed forces is eligible for a license if otherwise qualified. This common sense measure will allow those who risk their lives day in and day out to protect our country to lawfully carry concealed and protect themselves in Wisconsin.

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2015 WI ACT 68 (AB 77) - Allows residents of Wisconsin who were formerly employed in law enforcement in another state to apply to carry concealed in Wisconsin. Officers put themselves in harm's way on a daily basis for the safety of others. This bill honors that service by affording them the opportunity to continue to protect themselves and those around them while living in our great state.

2015 WI ACT 109 (AB 220) - Creates a mandatory minimum prison sentence for criminals who possess a gun and commit certain crimes after being convicted of certain violent felonies. Current Wisconsin law generally prohibits a person from having a gun if they have been convicted of a felony, but unfortunately sometimes this is not enough to keep them from re-offending. Creating a mandatory minimum sentence will help make violent felons think twice before buying a gun, and help make our communities safer for us all.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACTION

- *11/6/2015*- The Joint Finance Committee provided funding for two new Milwaukee County district attorneys to focus on prosecuting gun-related crimes.
- The Department of Justice has issued over 300,000 concealed carry permits since the legislature enacted legislation allowing the issuance of concealed carry permits in Wisconsin.