



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

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TO: The Mayor

FROM: Tom Cochran, CEO and Executive Director *Tom Cochran*

RE: Call Your Senators to Oppose the Thune Amendment

Yesterday South Dakota Senator John Thune offered an amendment to the defense authorization act which would override state laws by mandating that states allow the carrying of loaded concealed weapons by anyone permitted to carry concealed weapons in another state, even if that person is barred from possessing guns under the law of the state in which they wish to carry. The Thune amendment would preempt existing state and local laws and jeopardize public safety.

The so-called "Respecting States Rights and Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act," S.845, would apply in the 48 states that allow concealed carrying of firearms and would effectively allow the concealed carry laws of one state to nullify the restrictions on gun possession of other states. In the state where the carrying occurs, only the state laws governing the locations where concealed guns may be carried would be enforceable against the gun carrier, but not laws regulating who may lawfully possess guns.

Tomorrow morning the Senate is expected to debate the Thune amendment for two hours and then vote on it – around noon. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has announced that passage of the amendment will require 60 votes. **We expect a close vote and ask again that you contact your Senators and urge them to oppose Senator Thune's amendment.** If you have already contacted your Senators, thank you for your efforts. If not, there's still time to do so.

While all Senators should be contacted, there are several on whom amendment opponents are focusing. They include Senators Ben Nelson (FL), Evan Bayh (IN), Richard Lugar (IN), Amy Klobuchar (MN), Jeanne Shaheen (NH), Ron Widen (OR), Jeff Merkley (OR), Robert Casey (PA), Arlen Specter (PA), Pat Leahy (VT), Bernie Sanders (VT), Jim Webb (VA), John Warner (VA), Jay Rockefeller (WV), Herb Kohl (WI), and Russ Feingold (WI). If any of these Senators represent your city, please be sure to contact them. If they do not represent your city but you have a connection with any of them, please contact those Senators as well.

Attached is a statement in opposition to the Thune amendment which Conference President Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels released yesterday. As Mayor Nickels' statement indicates, the Thune amendment is part of an across-the-board assault on gun safety by the gun lobby. It is critical that we stop this assault in its tracks.

If you have any questions please contact the Conference's Director of Public Safety, Laura DeKoven Waxman, at lwaxman@usmayors.org or (202) 489-7534. Also please send Laura copies of any written communications which you send to your Senators.