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The State Senate
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

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June 4, 2010

Honorable Sonny Perdue
Governor of the State of Georgia
State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Dear Governor Perdue:

I am writing to urge that you sign Senate Bill 291, the firearms licensing bill that I brought to you at the beginning of the 2010 Legislative Session. This bipartisan bill passed the Senate and House by overwhelming margins.

The bill is in substantially the same form as when I brought it to you, except for changes that you requested or that were made so that the bill would be more consistent with your public statements. Specifically, we removed the original Section 6 that would have amended the Governor's emergency powers. Those emergency powers, with existing limitations, remain intact. The original Section 5 (in the final version, Section 3) remains in the bill and would prohibit the registration or seizure of firearms outside of those emergency powers.

We also made changes to the original Section 2 (in the final version, Section 1) dealing with the carrying of firearms at the airport so as to be consistent with the public statements you made at the time you signed House Bill 89, which authorized permit holders to carry firearms at all transportation terminals. The final version of Senate Bill 291 makes clear that permit holders may carry firearms in those areas of the airport where firearms are not prohibited or regulated by the federal government (e.g. parking lot, pick up and drop off lane, baggage claim, etc.). The final version is also consistent with your comments to the Associated Press on July 14, 2008 to the effect that your wife should be able to carry firearms as she walked from the parking lot to the terminal when picking up children or grandchildren at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.

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Allow me to address the outlandish criticism offered by Senator Frank Lautenberg, Congressman Hank Johnson and President Obama's Attorney General Eric Holder, among others. With regard to the airport, Senate Bill 291 applies only to holders of Georgia firearms licenses, and only to areas of the airport where firearms are not prohibited or regulated by the federal government. The suggestion that Islamic terrorists might obtain Georgia firearms licenses in order to brandish weapons at baggage claim is as ridiculous as Congressman Johnson's worry that the island of Guam might tip over because of the deployment of additional American soldiers. Please do not be deterred or cowed by the absurd claims of those who want Americans to be dependent on the government for everything from their health care to their personal safety.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue and your leadership of our state. If you have questions or concerns about Senate Bill 291, I hope that you will give me the opportunity to address them.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David J. Shafer', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David J. Shafer
State Senator, District 48

DJS/jf