

PRESS RELEASE

Georgia General Assembly Passes Major Overhaul of Firearms Laws *Largest change in Georgia firearms laws in 20 years expands rights of gun owners.*

Atlanta, April 4, 2008: GeorgiaCarry.org, Inc. (GCO) is proud to announce the passage of the most significant reform in Georgia's firearms laws in 20 years. After being forced to a Conference Committee by the Georgia Senate in February, the fate of HB 89 was uncertain. After much work at the grassroots level by both GeorgiaCarry.org and Rep. Tim Bearden (R-68), an agreement was reached by the members of the Conference Committee from both chambers.

The most notable changes in the bill are provisions allowing those in possession of a valid Georgia Firearms License (GFL) to carry firearms in restaurants serving alcohol where more than 50% of revenue is derived from the sale of food, in State Parks, and on public transportation. The restrictions placed on these new provisions prohibit GFL holders from consuming alcoholic beverages while carrying a firearm in any establishment serving alcohol as well as from carrying in places prohibited under Federal law as it pertains to public transportation. Other changes include allowing those eligible to obtain a GFL the ability to possess a firearm anywhere in their motor vehicle, provisions relating to the timely issuance of GFL's, and a straw purchase penalty for those purchasing firearms intended for disqualified persons.

Despite strong opposition from gun control advocacy groups, these changes to the existing laws do nothing more than bring Georgia up to par with a majority of states as to where firearms may lawfully be carried. In relation to restaurants serving alcohol, State Parks, and public transportation, these changes make Georgia the 38th, 37th, and 44th state respectively.

Rep. Tim Bearden, who originally authored HB 89 during the 2007 legislative session, was very quick to point out, "The changes we have made to the law affect only law abiding Georgians.

Criminals have been carrying guns in Georgia's 'gun free' zones, anyway. Now law abiding Georgians will have the ability to protect themselves and their families, and I am proud of the work the General Assembly has done, and I am proud of GeorgiaCarry.Org for supporting the right to bear arms."

GCO President Ed Stone added the following, "When seconds count, help is only six minutes away. This is why today's legislation is so important for Georgia, which joins the vast majority of other states in repealing restrictive laws governing bearing arms in parks, restaurants, and on mass transit. GeorgiaCarry.org wishes to thank Rep. Bearden for authoring this bill and for pushing so hard for the right to bear arms in Georgia over the last couple of years."

GeorgiaCarry.org would like to recognize Rep. Charlice Byrd (R-20), Rep. Timothy Bearden (R-68), and Sen. John Douglas (R-17), who are all members of GeorgiaCarry.org. GCO extends a special thanks to these members of the General Assembly for their efforts this year in continuing the fight for the right to bear arms in Georgia.

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GeorgiaCarry.org (GCO) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and improvement of Georgia's right to keep and bear arms. GCO's mission is carried out through selected litigation, grassroots legislative efforts, and active participation with elected officials at all levels throughout Georgia.