



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 5, 2016

## Permitless Carry Passes in Missouri; Gun Sales Soar Nationwide

Three weeks ago Missouri [became the fourth state this year](#) to allow “permitless” concealed carry of firearms by its citizens, its legislators voting to override Democrat Governor Jay Nixon’s veto of the bill. Missouri joins West Virginia, Mississippi, and Idaho in allowing its citizens this year to enjoy rights enshrined in the Second Amendment to the Constitution, bringing the total of such states to 12.



As Tim Schmidt, president of the U.S. Concealed Carry Association — which provides training and liability insurance coverage for its members — put it:

States that focus on freedom realize that if self-defense is a natural-born right, and the Second Amendment truly affirms that natural-born right, you shouldn’t have to ask the government for permission to exercise it. [It’s] kind of like you don’t have to ask the government to exercise the First Amendment [right to free speech].

Missouri’s move to permitless carry (although containing restrictions on places where its citizens cannot carry, such as churches, airports, sports arenas, courthouses, liquor stores, schools, hospitals and polling places on Election Day) reflects the continuing paradigm shift toward the Second Amendment taking place across the country.

For example, in September firearms sales hit their 17th consecutive monthly high, according to the FBI, with overall gun sales up a breathtaking 27 percent from September a year ago.

And, according to the latest study released by John Lott’s Crime Prevention Research Center in July, concealed carry permit holders are approaching 15 million, nearly triple the 4.6 million citizens with permits in 2007, the year before President Obama was inaugurated for his first term. The study revealed the extent of that paradigm shift that has taken place:

- Six percent of the total adult population has a concealed carry permit;
- In 20 states more than 10 percent of adults have concealed handgun permits;
- Between 2012 and 2016 the number of women with permits has increased twice as quickly as the number of men with permits;
- Evidence suggests that permit-holding is increasing about 75 percent more quickly among minorities than among whites; and
- Concealed handgun permit holders are extremely law-abiding — even more law-abiding than police!

Along with the increased ownership of firearms, and the commensurate surge in the issuance of concealed handgun permits, has come a predictable decrease in violent crime. Notwithstanding the recent increase in violent crime attributable to the Black Lives Matter attacks on local police, between 2007 and 2015 murder rates across the country fell from 5.6 per 100,000 population to 4.7 — a 16



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percent drop. While the percentage of adults with permits soared by 190 percent in that period, overall violent crime fell by 18 percent.

Lott tracked the interest in, and growth of, concealed carry permits from years before Obama, and the surge since 2008:

Previously, the increase in permits had been relatively slow, growing from roughly 2.7 million permit holders in 1999 to 4.6 million in 2007. But the number of concealed handgun permits exploded during the Obama presidency. In December 2011, the Government Accountability Office estimated that there were at least 8 million concealed handgun permits. By June 2014, it was 11.1 million. Now, in 2016, the number is up to over 14.5 million.

In other words, during the eight years from 1999 to 2007, the number of permits increased by about 240,000 annually. During the next four years, the number of permits surged by 850,000 annually. Then, in 2012 and 2013, the yearly increase accelerated to 1,550,000. Then 1,690,000 last year and 1,730,000 this year.

Lott also thinks that the 14.5 million number could be much larger “due to old and missing data.” In states such as Wyoming where permitless carry has been the norm for years, many citizens carry without leaving behind a trackable number for Lott. Concluded Lott: “The total number of permits in the US is at least 14.5 million. Add in people who legally carry without a permit and the number clearly becomes much larger.”

The paradigm shift toward firearms ownership and concealed carry has also been reflected in the polls. In the year 2000 Gallup found that only about a third of Americans thought owning a gun made their home safer. By 2014 that percentage had almost doubled, to 63 percent. Pew Research tracked the same improvement. In December 2012 48 percent of Americans polled by Pew said that owning a gun “protected them from being crime victims” but two years later that jumped to 57 percent.

There’s also the ripple effect, according to Rasmussen: Neighbors without guns feel safer in neighborhoods where others are armed, by an astonishing 68-to-22 percent margin.

Fast forward to November 9. According to current polls and odds makers, Hillary Clinton is likely to be the next president. If she is true to her word, gun confiscation through legislation or Supreme Court ruling reversals would be her top priority. Assuming for the moment that she succeeds, just how would such confiscation take place? It is estimated that between 100 million and 160 million households own at least one firearm. The logistics, taking emotion or outrage over the ultimate infringement of the Second Amendment out of the conversation, would be staggeringly difficult.

If the same percentage of those determined to resist such confiscation, by force if necessary, as those actually participating in George Washington’s Continental Army during the Revolutionary War — [four percent](#) — applies, then between 4 and 6.5 million households would have to be forcibly disarmed.

Aside from the statistical challenges, such attempts would likely end in a civil war, with a most uncertain outcome, at least at this moment in history. The irony, of course, is that threats of confiscation by both President Obama and President-in-waiting Hillary Clinton have resulted in greatly reduced chances of that confiscation happening because citizens, seeing what’s coming, are increasingly enjoying their privileges, and their responsibilities, that come with the right guaranteed by the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.



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