



Virginia Refuses to Honor Concealed Carry Permits From 25 States

Virginia's Democrat Attorney General Mark Herring announced Tuesday that the Old Dominion State will no longer recognize concealed carry permits from 25 states that had previously been recognized. The move has angered many who feel it is an end-run around the right to keep and bear arms. There may be political fallout for Herring, as well.

Many states honor other states' concealed carry permits. Sometimes reciprocity is required (state A will honor state B's permits *only if* state B will honor state A's permits). Some states will honor other states' permits regardless of whether the other states honor theirs. This allows a concealed carry permit holder from one state to carry his weapon concealed when traveling to other states.

Virginia currently recognizes concealed carry permits from 30 states, allowing those visitors the same level of personal protection they enjoy in their own states. It is good for tourism and other business; those who take seriously their ability and responsibility to defend themselves and their families take that into consideration when planning family vacations and other trips. Now, all of that is changing.

Herring said Tuesday that Virginia will no longer recognize permits from 25 of those 30 states, effective February 1, 2016. His "logic" — if this writer can stretch the word that far without it breaking — is that those 25 states have low standards for those who obtain permits leading to them issuing permits to "fugitives, convicted stalkers and drug dealers," according to a [report](#) by the Associated Press.

That is a strange claim considering that one of those states, Kentucky, performs *monthly background checks* on permit holders to ensure they are still qualified to hold the permit. As *Concealed Nation* [reported](#), "Their rationale is simple: if a person commits a felony after getting his or her concealed carry handgun, how else will the Kentucky State Police know about it and be able to revoke his or her permit?" So if a permit holder in Kentucky fails to come up clean on the background check each month, his permit is suspended. According to *Concealed Nation*, any of the following is cause for immediate suspension:

- Felony conviction and/or imprisonment
- Indictment for any charge that carries with it imprisonment of up to a year's time
- Subject to a restraining order
- Renouncing U.S. citizenship
- Dishonorable discharge from the armed forces
- Documented mental illness





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- Drug abuse or treatment for drug abuse
- Misdemeanor or felony charges of domestic assault

Herring said his office sent letters to the 25 states on Tuesday making them formally aware of his decision. The states are:

Alaska
Arizona
Arkansas
Delaware
Florida
Idaho
Indiana
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Minnesota
Mississippi
Montana
Nebraska
New Mexico
North Dakota
North Carolina
Ohio
Pennsylvania
South Carolina
South Dakota
Tennessee
Washington
Wisconsin
Wyoming

Because of reciprocity agreements requiring Virginia to recognize their permits in order for Virginia permit holders to conceal carry in their states, Virginians who previously enjoyed the unhindered right of self-defense in six of those states, will no longer be able to do so. Those states are:

Florida
Louisiana
North Dakota
Pennsylvania
South Carolina
Idaho

The other states (other than Delaware, Minnesota, Washington and Wisconsin — which already do not honor permits from Virginia) will presumably continue to allow Virginians who hold a permit to conceal carry in their states.

Herring referred to his decision as “a common sense step that can help make Virginians and our law enforcement officers safer by ensuring that our concealed carry laws and safety standards apply to



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everyone in Virginia, whether they are a resident or a visitor.” He did not cite even *one case* in which a concealed carry permit holder from another state had made “Virginians and our law enforcement officers” unsafe.

According to a [report](#) by *The Virginian-Pilot*, the Virginia Citizen’s Defense League has accused Herring of making his decision as a payoff for political contributions:

The Virginia Citizens Defense League, a gun-rights group, sent an email to its list Tuesday morning saying the announcement was done to pay back former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg for his campaign donations in Virginia legislative races this fall.

Bloomberg’s Everytown For Gun Safety group spent \$2.2 million for two Democrats in state Senate races.

“I’ve never heard of a single case of an out-of-state permit holder causing problems in Virginia,” said Philip Van Cleave, president of the gun-rights group.

Whatever Herring’s financial or party considerations, it is clear that this should not be viewed as an isolated incident, but instead as a “first step” in the plan to further roll back the God-given right of self-defense guaranteed by the Second Amendment. Josh Horwitz, executive director of the anti-gun organization Coalition to Stop Gun Violence (CSGV), said, “Virginia’s lack of enforcement of its own standards has been irresponsible and dangerous.” He added, “While the Commonwealth has plenty of room to improve their own standards for issuing concealed carry permits, the actions taken today by the Attorney General are a good first step toward making Virginia a safer place for its citizens and visitors alike.”

As if disarming law-abiding citizens has ever made them safer. If that tired old theory bore any good fruit, the recent San Bernardino shooting, which claimed the lives of 14 and left another 22 seriously injured, could not have happened. California has some of the most restrictive gun laws in the nation. Quite the contrary is true. If Californians were afforded the opportunity to defend themselves and a few concealed carry permit holders had been there to act, it is likely that the ISIS-inspired radical Islamists would have been stopped before so many lives were lost.

Certain Virginia lawmakers are ready to act to correct Herring’s assault on the Second Amendment. Republican state Delegate Rob Bell — who is running for Herring’s office — said the decision was just more “Washington-style overreach from a nakedly partisan attorney general.” Another Republican delegate, Lee Ware, has introduced legislation to take away the power of the state police to conduct surveys, such as the one on which Herring leaned for this draconian exercise.

Herring was narrowly elected to his office in November 2013, when he managed to squeak past the Republican candidate, Mark Obenshain. He ran on a platform that included taking politics out of the office. Virginia House Speaker Bill Howell is not impressed. In a statement he released after Herring’s announcement, he said, “Despite promising to take politics out of the Attorney General’s office, Mark Herring consistently seeks to interpret and apply the law of the Commonwealth through the lens of his own personal, political opinions.” Howell added, “He is damaging the integrity of the office he holds.”

Not only is he “damaging the integrity of the office he holds,” he is endangering lives to do it. As Philip Van Cleave of the Virginia Citizen’s Defense League said, “People that have concealed handgun permits are trying to protect their lives, some of them are under threat. Maybe an ex spouse is threatening their lives and they are carrying a gun because they could be murdered the next time they come across that spouse. This is disarming the very people that could use a gun the most.”



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