

Brady Campaign



To Prevent Gun Violence

SENSIBLE GUN LAWS SAVE LIVES

BILL TO REPEAL D.C. GUN LAWS WOULD ENDANGER PUBLIC SAFETY AND THREATEN HOMELAND SECURITY

The House of Representatives recently passed H.R. 6842, a dangerous NRA-backed bill that would repeal D.C. gun laws. It would go far beyond authorizing gun possession for self-defense in the home, creating serious threats to public safety and homeland security.

The gun lobby is attempting to rush this legislation through Congress, claiming that it is needed to “restore Second Amendment rights in the District of Columbia.” However, this is unnecessary because D.C. has already rewritten its laws to comply with the Supreme Court’s recent Second Amendment decision in *D.C. v. Heller*. **D.C. allows residents to possess semiautomatic weapons** and keep them unlocked and loaded unless the owner knows a child is likely to access them. While the *Heller* decision struck down D.C.’s ban on handguns in the home, Justice Scalia wrote that a wide range of gun laws are “presumptively lawful.” *Heller* permits the types of common sense laws that this bill would eliminate.

H.R. 6842 would undermine federal anti-trafficking laws, allow teenagers to possess semiautomatic assault rifles, and prohibit D.C. from passing laws that could “discourage” gun possession or use, a provision so broad it could eliminate D.C.’s law banning high-capacity ammunition magazines that give assault weapons their extraordinary firepower. **At a time when terrorists continue to look for ways to attack our nation, passing this bill would be reckless and irresponsible.** The Senate should reject H.R. 6842.

DETAILS OF H.R. 6842

- **Undermines federal anti-trafficking laws** – H.R. 6842 would allow D.C. residents to cross state lines to buy handguns in neighboring states, undermining federal anti-trafficking laws (§10). For decades, federal law has barred gun dealers from selling handguns directly to out of state buyers (other than licensed dealers) because of the high risk this creates for interstate gun trafficking (18 U.S.C. § 922(b)(3)). **This means that gun traffickers could more easily obtain large quantities of guns outside D.C. to illegally distribute to criminals in D.C.**
- **Prohibits D.C. from enacting common sense gun laws** – H.R. 6842 would bar D.C. from passing any law that would “prohibit, constructively prohibit, or **unduly burden**” gun ownership by anyone not barred by already weak federal gun laws (§ 3). It would even bar D.C. from enacting laws or regulations that may “discourage” private gun ownership or use, including by felons, children or other

dangerous persons (*Id.*). This restriction is so broad and vague that it could **eliminate D.C.'s law banning the high-capacity ammunition magazines that give assault weapons their extraordinary firepower**. This bill would prohibit even basic safe storage requirements. **D.C. could not pass laws requiring shooting proficiency to use a gun, educating parents of the dangers to children of guns in the home, or even restricting teenage gang members without criminal records from possessing assault rifles.**

- **Repeals common sense restrictions on gun possession by dangerous or unqualified persons** – H.R. 6842 repeals common sense restrictions on gun possession in D.C. including:
 - repealing the prohibition on most persons under age 21 from possessing firearms (§ 5(b)(1)). It replaces current D.C. law with weaker federal limits that only bar anyone under 18 from possessing handguns (18 U.S.C. §922(x)), and it **repeals all age limits for the possession and carrying of long guns, including assault rifles.**
 - repealing the prohibition on gun possession by anyone who has committed a violent crime or recent drug crime (§ 5(b)(1)). It replaces this current D.C. law with the weaker federal ban that **allows gun possession by many persons who have committed violent or drug-related misdemeanor crimes** unrelated to domestic violence.
 - repealing the prohibition on gun possession by anyone voluntarily committed to a mental institution in the last 5 years (unless they have a doctor's certification) (§ 5(b)(1)). It replaces this current D.C. law with the weaker federal ban that **allows many persons who are dangerously mentally ill to obtain firearms.**
 - repealing the prohibition in D.C. law on gun possession by anyone who does not pass a vision test, including if they are blind (§ 5(b)(1)). D.C. would be **barred from having any vision requirement for gun use.**
- **Repeals registration requirements for firearms** – H.R. 6842 repeals even the most basic gun registration requirements (§ 5). **This means that police could no longer easily trace crime guns by tracing them to their registered owner.**
- **Repeals all safe storage laws** – D.C. recently passed legislation allowing guns to be stored unlocked and loaded unless the owner knows a child is likely to access them. H.R. 6842 repeals all safe storage requirements and prohibits D.C. from enacting new safe storage laws, even though every major gun maker recommends that guns be kept unloaded and locked (§§ 3, 7). **This means that D.C. could not prohibit people from storing loaded firearms near children, posing an extreme danger to the safety of D.C. families.**

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