

For Immediate Release:
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The Coalition of New Jersey Firearm Owners wish to commend the commission established by Governor Christie's Executive Order 180 for their well researched report. We congratulate them on their findings of the arbitrary and capricious nature that many towns have held against those who are seeking to purchase a firearm whether it is for sport or self-defense. These problems were not unknown to members of the current administration, legislative branches, and our governing law enforcement agencies. The fact that the abuses are now well documented by the work of the ANJRPC and further documented on video by the NJ2AS means that the "Status Quo" of depriving citizens of the United States and residents of New Jersey with civil rights abuses, delays, and arbitrary, sexist and discriminative practices can no longer endure. We welcome a speedy resolution and a comprehensive solution to these problems; moves that will result in improvements, not just more bandages on already egregious legislation.

With regard to the clarification of the transport laws, again we welcome these items and trust that law abiding citizens will be able to sleep at night and will no longer have to fear prosecution by renegades abusing unclear law.

However, we wish to raise a point of concern, a potential dark underside to this report. Upon in-depth review, the recommendations of this commission are clearly stated; to not advance gun rights by expanding the definition of "Justifiable Need". Instead the intent of the commission is to try to preserve "Justifiable Need" with minor modifications in order that it may withstand intermediate scrutiny under a Constitutional challenge.

As noted in Section II, page 4 of the executive summary, this commission states: ***"We have also considered whether the "Justifiable Need" requirement remains consistent with the Second Amendment in light of the U.S. Supreme Court's Heller and McDonald decisions. Notwithstanding several recent cases that have upheld this requirement, we explain why it ultimately may not survive future court scrutiny"***.

We commend this commission's expert analysis of the history of Justifiable need, and how it has been *mis*interpreted and *mis*applied by the legislative, executive and judicial branches of New Jersey government in the past. We also recognize that it was not in the scope of this commission to make recommendations to change legislation or modify specific wording of the laws of New Jersey, but to recommend administrative changes that could be implemented without re-writing the current laws as they are written.

The recommendation to slightly increase the definition of "Justifiable need" is not a recommendation to expand the rights of New Jersey Citizens, but in fact an attempt to preserve the existing overbearing "Justifiable Need" requirement from

being struck down as Unconstitutional by the courts. This is crystal clear and is found in section IV, sub-section B, page 22:

“We conclude by noting that Wheeler itself appears to suggest that our proposed regulatory change should make it more likely that the “justifiable need” standard will survive future constitutional challenges. By emphasizing that an applicant need only “Show an objective reason... other than a generalized concern about becoming a crime victim to anticipate an attack necessitating the defensive use of a handgun,” the Wheeler court standard allows for the sort of meaningful self protection by law abiding applicant that we believe will be necessary (at a minimum) for our handgun permitting laws to survive constitutional scrutiny. Maintaining the Administrative code’s present misreading of Siccardi and Preis that an applicant must demonstrate a “Specific Threat” in order to obtain a carry permit seems likely to result eventually in a successful constitutional challenge to the justifiable need standard.

It is our recommendation that you contact your legislator and demand an end to “Justifiable Need” and that we as 2A supporters all come together and present a fair and reasonable method for law-abiding citizens to obtain a background checked license to carry a firearm for the purpose of self-defense. We citizens of New Jersey should not have to be raped, assaulted or murdered before presented the ability to legally defend our families, loved ones, friends, and ourselves outside of our homes. We would also like to remind all New Jersey citizens that the Police have no duty to protect any individual as ruled by the Supreme Court in Warren vs. District of Columbia, as well as other cases. The police are required to protect the general welfare of the overall public but have no requirement to provide any individual with “protection”. Their real purpose is to investigate crimes after they are committed.

You are, and remain, the first line of defense for you, your family and others, and you, should have the right to choose which method you desire to use as protection.

In conclusion, we are thankful for the commission's objective and deep analysis of New Jersey's convoluted firearms laws and thankful for this opportunity to continue a dialog regarding all 2A matters.

Coalition of New Jersey Firearms Owners is a 501 c(3) organization founded in 2015 with the express mission of advocating for Firearms Safety, Education and to end Justifiable Need.