

# GrassRoots GunRights

P.O. Box 2446 Lexington, SC 29071 <http://www.SCFirearms.org>

May 7, 2007

The Honorable Glenn F. McConnell  
South Carolina Senate  
P.O. Box 142  
Columbia, SC 29202

RE: H. 3212

Dear Senator McConnell:

The best laws are those laws calmly and deliberately considered, and firmly grounded in principle, logic, and fact. The worst laws are those passed in the heat of emotion and based upon fears, erroneous information, and deceptions. H. 3212 is well grounded in principle, logic, and fact, and deserves to be enacted into law.

The single most important fact is that concealed weapon permit (CWP) holders in *EVERY* state have proven themselves to be law abiding citizens that are *NOT* a threat to the safety of other law abiding people. This fact holds true regardless of whether the CWP holder is required to obtain extensive "training", moderate "training", or no "training" at all. This fact was discovered and published by Dr. John Lott, and has withstood the scrutiny of the peer reviewed academic journal community. Thus, CWP "training" has been proven to have no positive impact upon public safety.

Another important fact is that people are creatures of habit. If one is a law abiding citizen on one side of a state border, then one will remain a law abiding citizen on the other side of a state border. Citizens of Georgia do NOT change from law abiding people in Georgia to reckless or homicidal maniacs simply because they cross the border into South Carolina. Thus, CWP holders from Georgia are no threat to the people of South Carolina.

The right to self-defense and the right to keep and bear arms are God given rights. Such rights should only be infringed when there is a compelling reason to do so, such as not allowing incarcerated individuals to possess firearms. Unsubstantiated fears are not compelling reasons to infringe upon fundamental God given rights.

H. 3212 is needed to protect the lives of South Carolina people when they travel. If H. 3212 is enacted into law, South Carolina CWP holders will be able to legally carry in more than 30 states. As it stands now, South Carolina only has reciprocity with 11 states, while at least 11 other states have already passed laws similar to H. 3212 that will recognize the CWP from another state.

Another argument in favor of enacting H. 3212 into law is that there are many CWP holders who choose which states they will vacation in based upon whether their own state's CWP will be honored there. South Carolina is losing tourism dollars to Georgia and Florida due to South Carolina's failure to honor other states' CWPs.

The opponents of H. 3212 cry that allowing CWP holders from Georgia into South Carolina will cause a bloodbath. These claims of "blood in the streets" are virtually the same claims that were made when the South Carolina CWP law was being considered in 1996. Such fear mongering claims were wrong then, and they are still wrong today. The fact is that such claims have *NEVER* proven to be true in any state. There is *NO* factual, principled, or logical basis for such claims.

Unfortunately, even SLED has gotten involved in trying to deceive the General Assembly about the merits of H. 3212. In the House General Laws subcommittee earlier this year, SLED falsely claimed that New Hampshire would issue a CWP to a 16 year old youth, and that then such youths would be allowed to carry guns in Myrtle Beach. Last year, SLED claimed that Florida issued CWPs to mentally incompetent people and felons, and thus South Carolina would be forced to allow such people to carry guns here.

SLED's claims are simply not true. SLED knows federal law prohibits people under the age of 18, mentally incompetent people, and felons from possessing handguns. SLED also knows state law can not allow that which federal law prohibits. SLED should be ashamed for making such claims, and the General Assembly should not allow itself to be manipulated by a state agency in this way.

Taking the above facts and principles into consideration, the only reasonable conclusion that can be reached is that H. 3212 should be enacted into law. There is no danger to the people of South Carolina. It allows good people from other states to exercise their right to self-defense while in South Carolina. It is good for tourism. But, most importantly of all, passage of H. 3212 will allow the good people of South Carolina to be able to protect themselves and their families whenever they travel to other states.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R D Butler". The letters are bold and slightly slanted, with a cursive-like flow.

Robert D. Butler, J.D.  
Vice President  
GrassRoots GunRights