

The Language of Liberty Series



Response Time "Zero": Gun-Free Zones vs. Concealed Weapons Gary O. Perkins, Missouri CSG Student

Current laws should be changed to allow concealed carry weapons (CCW) permit holders to be armed in gun-free zones (GFZ).

Below are two scenarios to consider:

First, you have a CCW permit and are out for a normal day. You find yourself in a GFZ. Therefore, you don't have your gun as current law prohibits this. Now a shooting breaks out. Without your gun, what do you do? Do you flee or hide? Unfortunately, being unarmed, your options are limited. The outcome for you and fellow citizens may be completely out of your control. Although law enforcement in our nation is outstanding and officers are trained for such events, their response is reactive, taking several minutes. That means people die.

Now the second scenario: Laws allow you to be armed in GFZs. You are now a potential first responder instead of being helpless and defenseless. In this scenario, the shooter has unknowingly lost a vital advantage. Conditions may allow you to end the threat or at least minimize deaths. However, because of your CCW training, you understand the conditions under which it may be best to not engage the shooter if you can't do so safely.

Which scenario potentially offers you a better outcome? What does your gut, your natural survival instinct tell you?

Statistics show that gun sales and CCW applications spike after news reports of shootings. People instinctively realize the need to assert their inherent, natural right to take responsibility for their own protection.

Those who apply for a CCW must take a gun safety course that includes shooting range time. Knowledge is power. Individuals who are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with guns become more confident with that knowledge. Crime statistics prove the gun crime rate for CCW permit holders is near non-existent.

Here are some gun facts:

- Defensive Gun Use (DGU) by citizens occurs more than 2.5 million times a year. In 15.7% of DGU incidences, a firearm saved lives.
- A government study indicates significant DGUs nationwide. Defensive gun use is six times that of criminal gun use, proving that citizens who carry deter crime without incident. This proves out the saying “An armed society is a polite society”.
- 80% of DGUs involve concealed handguns.
- 77% of all gun crimes occur in public.
- States tracking violent crime data on CCW permit holders show consistently low rates.
- From 1987-2014, Florida issued more than 2.5 million CCW permits. Out of those, only 168 CCW permit holders, or .0067% of the total, committed firearm crimes.
- Likewise, Texas data for 4,295,434 CCW permits from 1996 to 2011 indicate 30 crimes, or .0007% of CCW holders.
- Of all the alternatives to prevent mass public shootings, law enforcement officers cite trained civilians with CCW permits as the most effective solution. Eighty-six percent (86%) believe mass-shooting casualties would likely have been reduced or avoided all together.

Law abiding citizens must not be left defenseless because of the

abundance of sensationalized media reports that fit the narrative for gun control. The statistics simply do not bear out the disproportional news reports. Actually, the facts show just the opposite. Where there is more gun control, there is more violent crime against citizens. According to USA Today, [Chicago](#), now with their strict gun control laws in place, has just experienced a drastic spike in gun related violence, proving this reality.

What a predator does with a weapon has more to do with the evil intent of the heart than the availability of guns. Guns are no more the cause of murder than spoons are the cause of obesity or cars the cause of drunk driving.

The statistics prove that more than 99% of the time, people with ill intent obtain guns illegally, regardless of gun laws. They will avoid the legal paper trail at all costs. If not guns, these predators will use other means to commit crimes. [Data from nations](#) that have banned guns show an astounding increase in the number of violent crimes on an unarmed society, using illegally obtained guns, knives, hammers, and other objects.

The Gun-Free School Zones Act of 1990 has not made schools immune to shootings. Why? Criminals, by definition, ignore the constraint of laws.

Some schools have a law enforcement officer on-site, often referred to as resource officers. Although a good start, this is insufficient. School policy should allow CCW permit holders on staff to exercise their natural right to self-defense at school. The same should apply in other GFZs, allowing citizens to conceal carry. Such changes would create multiple lines of defense with citizens as potential first responders in an active shooter event. Soft targets would disappear. People with evil intent would be put on notice that citizens have taken action to defend themselves, and are no longer defenseless victims.

In each area with CCW or Constitutional carry laws in place, violent crime remains lower than gun-restricted areas. If armed citizens

were causing issues in the course of carrying their legal weapons, rest assured, it would be lauded on every news outlet, ad nauseam.

A fear-based message concerning guns relies on silencing the actual data and instead, using a purely emotional narrative with unfounded talking points. Ignore fear-based arguments that tout so-called “common sense” gun control. The faulty arguments against gun ownership are not grounded in fact, defy real common sense, and are only emotional talking points.

Exercising our natural right to self-defense is the best deterrent to perpetrators of gun crimes. Instead of ridiculous “Gun-Free Zone” signs, the signs should read: “Criminal Free Zone: Protection Provided by Armed Citizens” Then, response time for citizen first-responders would become zero.

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