



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
HARRISBURG

THE GOVERNOR

December 2, 2021

TO THE HONORABLE SENATE OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 15 of the Pennsylvania Constitution, I am returning herewith, without my approval, Senate Bill 565, Printer's Number 1212.

This legislation, which eliminates the requirement for individuals to obtain a license before carrying or possessing a concealed firearm, will only exacerbate gun violence and jeopardize the safety of all Pennsylvanians.

Each year there are more than 1,600 victims of gun violence in Pennsylvania. These victims and communities deserve to have meaningful legislation passed to address the scourge of gun violence. I support many public policy proposals that would help solve this urgent issue, including safe storage legislation, extreme risk protection orders, enhanced reporting requirements for lost or stolen guns, and closing gaps in the background check system. Unfortunately, this bill would make gun violence worse and would put law enforcement officers at greater risk of harm.

I would like to make clear that this veto will in no way affect the rights of the 1.3 million Pennsylvanians who have legally obtained a license to carry or the millions of Pennsylvanians who legally own a firearm.

Currently, the law requires that an individual must apply for a license to carry a firearm concealed. During that application process, law enforcement does a background check to ensure that the individual is permitted to carry a firearm and is not a danger to the community. This legislation removes the requirement that an individual obtain a license, and with it, the ability of law enforcement to conduct a background investigation. Removal of the licensing background investigation will hinder the ability of law enforcement to prevent individuals who should not be able to carry a firearm concealed from doing so. Domestic abusers and other dangerous criminals should not have the ability to carry hidden weapons in our communities.

In states without concealed carry licenses, there is an 11 percent higher rate of homicide than those states who require a license. The Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association and the Pennsylvania District Attorneys Association both oppose this legislation, and there are no law enforcement organizations in Pennsylvania that support this bill. I stand with them, domestic abuse survivors and advocates, responsible gun owners, and victims of gun violence who have expressed their opposition to this dangerous bill.

For the reasons set forth above, I must withhold my signature from Senate Bill 565, Printer's Number 1212.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Wolf".

TOM WOLF
Governor