



March 4, 2014

Governor Nathan Deal	Senator David Shafer	Senator Ronnie Chance	Senator Steve Henson
Office of the Governor	President Pro Tempore	Majority Leader	Democratic Leader
203 State Capitol	321 State Capitol	236 State Capitol	121-B State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334	Atlanta, GA 30334	Atlanta, GA 30334	Atlanta, GA 30334
Fax: 404-657-7332	Fax: 404-463-5220	Fax: 404-657-9887	Fax: 404-463-2071

Lt. Governor Casey Cagle	Rep. David Ralston	Rep. Stacey Abrams
Office of the Lt. Governor	Speaker of the House	Minority Leader
240 State Capitol	332 State Capitol	408 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334	Atlanta, GA 30334	Atlanta, GA 30334
Fax: 404-656-6739	Fax: 404-657-8277	Fax: 404-378-3328

RE: Georgia Mayors Oppose HB 875

Dear Governor Deal, Lt. Governor Cagle, and Legislative Leaders:

As Georgia members of the national, bipartisan Mayors Against Illegal Guns coalition, we oppose HB 875, omnibus legislation that would endanger public safety by expanding Georgia's Stand Your Ground law to protect criminals, virtually eliminating the crime of illegally carrying guns on college campuses, and forcing cities and towns to allow guns into government buildings. We strongly urge you to reject HB 875 and write now to detail our concerns.

Most glaringly, the bill would dangerously expand the scope of the state's existing Stand Your Ground law. Research shows that Stand Your Ground laws are associated with as many as 700 additional homicides nationwide each year. And after Georgia passed its Stand Your Ground law, the number of justifiable homicides in our state increased by 83%. HB 875 would expand the law even further to protect felons who kill using illegally possessed guns.

Also alarming, this legislation essentially eliminates the crime of carrying guns on college and university campuses. Even though the Georgia Board of Regents and 78% of Georgia registered voters oppose allowing concealed carry on college campuses, this bill would effectively force colleges and universities to allow guns on campus by taking the teeth out of the crime. This legislation would prohibit jail time and even arrest for violators of this law, allowing a maximum penalty of a \$100 fine. Under HB 875, people who illegally carry guns on the campuses of Georgia's colleges and universities would be penalized less severely than if they were caught driving 15 mph over the speed limit.

HB 875 would also overrule local judgment by forcing cities and towns to allow guns in our government buildings. Local officials are best suited to determine public safety needs. By conditioning our authority to keep guns out of municipal and county buildings on the costly provision of security personnel, this bill would prohibit us from making the decisions we deem necessary to keep our employees and citizens safe. Georgia already preempts local

action on firearms broadly; we implore the General Assembly not to prevent us from keeping our own government buildings safe.

This bill is a matter of urgent public concern and would be taking our state in the wrong direction. We urge you to reject this dangerous bill.

Sincerely,

Signed by Georgia Mayors Against Illegal Guns

Mayor Kasim Reed of Atlanta, GA

Mayor Deke Copenhaver of Augusta, GA

Mayor Ted Terry of Clarkston, GA

Mayor Donna Pittman of Doraville, GA

Mayor James Thomas of Hinesville, GA

Mayor Robert Reichert of Macon, GA

Mayor June Bradfield of McRae, GA

Mayor Jim Still of Mountain Park, GA

Mayor Kathie de Nobriga of Pine Lake, GA

Mayor Jere Wood of Roswell, GA

Mayor Patricia Wheeler of Stone Mountain, GA

Mayor Ralph Moore of Union City, GA

CC Senate Judiciary Non-Civil Committee Members:

Chairman Senator Jesse Stone

Senator William T. Ligon, Jr.

Senator Curt Thompson

Senator Joshua McKoon

Senator Charlie Bethel

Senator John Crosby

Senator Vincent Fort

Senator Hunter Hill

Senator Ronald B. Ramsey, Sr.