



December 5, 2017

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals who champion the health of all people and communities, I write in strong opposition to H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act. In the wake of the recent devastating mass shootings and the ongoing gun violence throughout the nation, Congress should turn its focus to passing legislation to address the nation's gun violence epidemic rather than considering legislation that would likely expand the presence of guns in our communities and public spaces.

Gun violence is a serious public health threat in the U.S., resulting in more than 36,000 deaths in 2015 and we must take a comprehensive approach to address this ongoing crisis. Simply stated, H.R. 38 would take us in the wrong direction. The bill would require states that allow individuals to carry concealed weapons to recognize concealed carry permits from any other state – even if the issuing state's permitting requirements are significantly weaker. This would undermine the laws of states that have more comprehensive and strenuous requirements for obtaining such permits. In some states there is not even a requirement that gun owners receive a permit to carry a concealed weapon and other states do not require any weapons or safety training. Additionally, states with stricter concealed carry permit requirements would be helpless against preventing potentially dangerous individuals who have been convicted of violent offenses from carrying concealed weapons within their borders if an individual's home state laws still allow them to carry a concealed weapon.

Instead of considering legislation that would expand the number of guns carried in public, we ask you to work in a bipartisan manner to enact commonsense solutions that address the public health threat of firearm-related injuries and fatalities. Congress could do so by passing legislation to improve the existing National Instant Criminal Background Check System, requiring universal background checks for all firearm purchases and supporting and providing adequate funding for federal research and public health surveillance on firearm-related injuries and fatalities.

Sincerely,

Georges C. Benjamin, MD
Executive Director