

Topic: Gun bills

Legislation aims to create a fair system

Eleanor Dwight (letter, Feb. 21) is uninformed about the concealed-carry bill. Like many, she didn't take the time to read what she wrote about, instead relying on "I heard" or "I was told."

At least she recognizes everyone statewide should be treated equally and fairly in exercising rights and privileges. It's disappointing that she details her agreement with "loaded."

Carrying an unloaded handgun is dangerous, and the law doesn't care if it's loaded or unloaded when committing a crime — criminals don't seek permits or carry unloaded handguns. She's right, "... this bill does go far beyond minimum standards." The rest of her diatribe needs correcting.

"... issue a permit to anyone who can pass a background check." The bill has the same process Larimer County Sheriff Jim Alderden adopted from citizen's input: Must be a legal resident of Colorado, 21 years old, allowed to own and purchase a firearm per federal law, doesn't abuse alcohol or use illegal drugs, isn't subject to a restraining order, has certified handgun training and can pass a background check.

"... would nullify the ... policy the ... commissioners ... passed regarding firearms at work." The bill doesn't allow local governments to enact laws superceding state or federal laws, the very reason for uniform standards. A permit is needed to legally carry a firearm concealed — no one should know you're carrying, and having a per-



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Soapbox

mit has never created a criminal.

"... police ... forced to allow ... concealed loaded guns into bars, hospitals, sports arenas, universities, shopping malls and parks." There's that word — "loaded." Police won't be "forced" into anything.

The bill has important provisions. Permitted — in your private (not work) vehicle for lawful and defensive purposes and hunting, etc.; not permitted — at any public elementary, junior or senior high school; at any public or private building that bans weapons and/or screens for weapons — including her concerns. It allows a private property owner, tenant, employer or business to decide the issue.

"... Colorado will recognize as valid any permit issued by another state." If they recognize Colorado's permit, just as they recognize your driver's license and trust you'll be as responsible with your handgun as you would your car within their state.

"... undermines local control and does not give leeway to local authorities." Several provisions invalidate this. Denial — if the sheriff finds the person may be or has been dangerous; revocation — violation of this or any law that indicates a danger; and pre/post application — the sheriff must consult

with police departments and other local law enforcement agencies as necessary.

Ms. Dwight is biased against gun owners. She accepts that a uniform permit process is needed, but she either wants every place restricted or unloaded concealed carry. How would she spot a concealed handgun and know it's "loaded?"

Individuals carrying concealed don't cause people to run scared (duh, they wouldn't know), they don't test reactions by exposing their handguns (likely loaded) and haven't been compelled to just suddenly shoot someone. Most people cannot fathom the right or ability of self-defense, instead relying on others for protection.

What about that person carrying concealed — citizen or police officer? Nationwide incidents of permit holders committing crimes are no more than police officers unjustly firing their weapons. Both have happened, but rarely. Why trust one more than the other? Why distrust one more than the other? There's no foundation for this.

There may be a day when someone attempts to abduct you at gunpoint (presumed "loaded," if not, you're OK) and someone else could defend you. Should they ask your position on carrying concealed and loaded? Do you need to know if it's a citizen or police officer, or will one frighten you more than the perpetrator?

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