

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-1316

March 2, 2012

The Honorable Michael J. Madigan
Speaker
Illinois General Assembly
300 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

The Honorable Tom Cross
Republican Leader
Illinois General Assembly
316 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Speaker Madigan and Leader Cross:

I am writing to voice my strong opposition as an Illinois resident and as a fellow policymaker to a series of gun control measures moving through the Illinois General Assembly.

Instead of moving in a positive direction towards reaffirming Second Amendment rights, the Illinois General Assembly is working to pass bills that further undermine what precious few gun rights there are in Illinois. Last August, I was proud to co-sign a letter authored by Representative Randy Hultgren to the elected leadership in State of Illinois encouraging them to join with 49 other states in enacting a conceal-carry firearms law. Last November, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the *National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act of 2011* (H.R. 822) by a wide bipartisan margin of 272 to 154, with the support of 43 House Democrats. But even if this bill became law, it would have little practical effect for Illinois residents because our state is the sole remaining outpost of resistance to a conceal/carry law.

However, instead of passing conceal/carry legislation, the Illinois House is now working on legislation moving in the opposite direction to ban and increase penalties on semi-automatic firearms (HB 1294, HB 1599), impose a 2 percent tax on ammunition (HB 5167), and create a firearms registry supported by a new fee (HB 5831). Illinois already has some of the nation's strictest firearms laws, including a requirement for gun owners to possess the Firearm Owners Identification (FOID) card. These bills are nothing but an assault on the constitutionally-protected right to bear arms. The United States Supreme Court affirmed in *McDonald vs. Chicago* that states cannot violate an individual's right to bear arms for lawful purposes under the Second Amendment. There is no evidence that gun registration does anything to keep illegal firearms out of the hands of criminals. Banning semi-automatic firearms, which are used in the biathlon competition in the Winter Olympics, and adding a \$65 firearms tax, a 2 percent ammunition tax, and a gun registry only punishes law abiding citizens.

I respectfully urge you not to adopt these bills but instead to work towards passage of a viable conceal/carry legislation for all of Illinois.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Donald A. Manzullo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "M".

Donald A. Manzullo
Member of Congress