



## National Task Force to End Sexual & Domestic Violence

March 21, 2025

The Honorable Jim Jordan  
Chair, Committee on the Judiciary  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jamie Raskin  
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Jordan, Ranking Member Raskin, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

Armed domestic abusers pose an existential threat to their victims, their families, and their communities. Most women who are murdered in the United States are killed by men they know, most of these men are current or former husbands or boyfriends, and most of these homicides are committed with guns, and particularly handguns.<sup>1</sup> A woman in the United States is killed every thirteen hours by an intimate partner with a gun,<sup>2</sup> and while intimate partner homicides committed by other means have decreased dramatically in recent years, the overall intimate partner homicide rate has increased, driven entirely by an increase in gun intimate partner homicides.<sup>3</sup> Overall, intimate partner homicides comprise more than a quarter of total homicides in the U.S.<sup>4</sup> Homicide is the leading cause of death for pregnant and postpartum women in the United States,<sup>5</sup> and one-third of children under the age of thirteen who are killed by firearms are killed in an intimate partner violence-related incident.<sup>6</sup> Most mass shootings are related to domestic violence,<sup>7</sup> and a plurality of law enforcement officers murdered on the job are killed responding to domestic violence incidents.<sup>8</sup> As a country, we can and must do more to disarm adjudicated domestic abusers.

Accordingly, we, the member organizations of the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence (NTF), comprising national organizations working to end domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking, and representing hundreds of member programs and hundreds of thousands of advocates and survivors, write to you today to urge you to **oppose H.R. 38, the *Constitutional Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act*. This bill undermines the safety protections guaranteed by federal and state laws for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, and**

**stalking, enabling domestic violence offenders to follow their victims across state lines with loaded, concealed handguns.**

In addition to being the weapon of choice for abusive partners intent on murder, abusive partners regularly use firearms as tools to terrorize and to exert power and coercive control over their victims. 13.6% of American women have been threatened by an intimate partner with a firearm, and of those, 43% had been physically injured with a gun, including being pistol whipped, shot, or sexually assaulted with a firearm.<sup>9</sup> A recent survey of victims of domestic violence indicated that, of those women who reported being threatened with firearms violence by their abusive partners, one quarter had a gun pointed at them and 10% had a gun shot at or near them.<sup>10</sup> An earlier study of contacts to the National Domestic Violence Hotline found that 24.6% reported that the abuser carried a concealed gun during the abuse and 23% reported that the domestic violence offender carried a gun across state lines in furtherance of the abuse.<sup>11</sup> A male abuser's mere access to a firearm increases the risk of intimate partner homicide of women by at least five times,<sup>12</sup> with other studies finding the increased risk to be as high as 1,000%.<sup>13</sup> Stalking is also a strong indicator of lethality, with one study of female murder victims in ten cities finding that 76% of women who were murdered by an intimate partner were stalked the previous year.<sup>14</sup> **Lawmakers have enacted strong, commonsense protections to prevent domestic violence homicides in states and localities across the nation and such protections must not be undermined by federally mandating concealed carry reciprocity.**

**Overriding State Possession Laws:** Federal law provides critical protections for victims and survivors of domestic violence, but they are incomplete. While domestic violence misdemeanants, including dating partners, are prohibited under federal law from possessing firearms as are respondents to final domestic violence protective orders protecting individuals in certain relationships with the respondent, there are notable gaps. First, the federal law prohibiting respondents to domestic violence protective orders from having guns does not cover dating partners who have not cohabited nor share a child in common with the victim. With most intimate partner homicides now being committed by dating partners rather than spouses, this is a fatal chasm in legal protections. Similarly, federal law does not prohibit respondents to ex parte domestic violence protective orders or people convicted of stalking their intimate partners or others from having firearms, even though research shows this is when victims are at the greatest risk of homicide. Many states have closed these gaps in order to protect their residents, but **H.R.38 would allow residents of other states that have not closed these loopholes to carry loaded concealed handguns they are prohibited from even possessing in the travel state.**

**Victim Relocation:** Often, victims of domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking

relocate across state lines to escape their abusers and seek refuge in states with stronger firearms protections. Because H.R.38 overrides both state concealed permitting laws and state possession laws, this safety measure would be denied to victims and survivors. An abusive partner or stalker could stalk their victim across state lines with a loaded concealed handgun, and local law enforcement would be unable to intervene until it was too late.

**States and Reciprocity Agreements:** Public safety needs differ by state and locality, and different states and local governments have made determinations based on their specific needs about who can carry concealed loaded handguns. The needs of a frontier community are very different from a high-density urban community. Currently, each state determines who can legally carry concealed, loaded firearms in public. Many states have enacted strong laws to protect victims and survivors from gun-enabled abuse beyond the vital but limited protection federal law provides. States enter into reciprocity agreements at their own discretion. H.R.38 would take away this local control by imposing states' concealed carry laws on other states, thereby undermining states' authority to make their own decisions as to what measures will provide the best protection for their residents.

**Law Enforcement, Permitless Carry, and Background Checks:** This bill assumes that law enforcement need only look at an individual's out-of-state concealed carry license to verify their eligibility to carry a firearm. However, 29 states have enacted laws to allow their residents to carry concealed loaded handguns with no background check and no training. The proliferation of permitless carry and the lack of a centralized national database for concealed carry permits makes it virtually impossible for law enforcement to determine whether or not someone is lawfully carrying a firearm, and H.R.38 would prohibit law enforcement from taking action to verify an individual's status—including if the only proof of the right to carry they provide is a driver's license. The bill also assumes that federal firearms prohibitors apply to all persons asserting the right to concealed carry reciprocity. Even when a background check is required before a permit is issued, prohibited abusers often erroneously pass background checks, because the federal background check databases are missing records relating to federal and many states' domestic violence prohibitors. Plus, H.R.38 punishes law enforcement for doing their jobs, creating a private right of action against any law enforcement officer who detains or arrests an individual in accordance with their state law. This will have a chilling effect on law enforcement actions to protect victims from armed abusers.

**Unnecessary:** Proponents of H.R.38 claim it is necessary to allow individuals to travel from one state in which they can legally possess and carry concealed firearms under state law to another state in which they can likewise legally possess and carry

concealed firearms under state law. Federal law already allows firearms to be transported across state lines in this case, provided the firearms are unloaded and safely stored in a locked container.<sup>15</sup>

**Simply put, H.R.38 imperils the lives of victims, survivors, their children, their families, their friends, and their communities.** On behalf of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, we urge you to oppose federally mandated concealed carry reciprocity. Please contact Rachel Graber ([rgrab@jwi.org](mailto:rgrab@jwi.org)) with questions.

Sincerely,

The National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence

---

<sup>1</sup> Violence Policy Center. (2024). *When men murder women: An analysis of 2022 homicide data*. <http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2024.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Fridel, E. E. & Fox, J. A. (2019). Gender differences in patterns and trends in U.S. homicide, 1976-2017. *Violence and Gender*, 6(1), 27-36. DOI: 10.1089/vio.2019.0005

<sup>4</sup> Kivisto, A. J., Magee, L. A., Phalen, P. L., & Ray, B. R. (2019). Firearm ownership and domestic versus nondomestic homicide in the US. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 57(3), 311-320. DOI: 10.1016/j.amepre.2019.04.009

<sup>5</sup> Wallace, M., Gillispie-Bell, V., Cruz, K., Davis, K., & Vilda, D. (2021). Homicide during pregnancy and the postpartum period in the United States, 2018–2019. *Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 138(5), 762–769. <https://doi.org/10.1097%2FAOG.00000000000004567>

<sup>6</sup> Fowler, K. A., Dahlberg, L. L., Haileyesus, T., Gutierrez, C., & Bacon, S. (2017). Childhood firearm injuries in the United States. *Pediatrics*, 140(1). DOI: 10.1542/peds.2016-3486

<sup>7</sup> Geller, L. B., Booty, M., & Crifasi, C. K. (2021). The role of domestic violence in fatal mass shootings in the United States, 2014-2019. *Injury Epidemiology*, 8(38). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40621-021-00330-0>

<sup>8</sup> Breul, N., & Luongo, D. (2017). *Making it safer: A study of law enforcement fatalities between 2010-2016*. Community Oriented Policing Services and National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. <https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter/ric/Publications/cops-w0858-pub.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Adhia, A., Lyons, V. H., Moe, C. A., Rowhani-Rahbar, A., & Rivara, F. P. (2021). Nonfatal use of firearms in intimate partner violence: Result of a national survey. *Preventive Medicine*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ympmed.2021.106500>

<sup>10</sup> Battered Women's Justice Project & National Domestic Violence Hotline (2024). *2024 domestic violence and firearms report: A survey to learn more about survivor experiences with firearms and abuse*. <https://bwjbp.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/for-publication.2024-Domestic-Violence-and-Firearms-Report-by-BWJP-and-NDVH-12.4.2024.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> National Domestic Violence Hotline. (2014, June 18). *Hotline focus survey provides firsthand look at intersection of firearms & domestic violence; highlights need for stronger laws and equal protection*. <https://www.thehotline.org/news/hotline-focus-survey-provides-firsthand-look-at-intersection-of-firearms-highlights-need-for-stronger-laws-and-equal-protection/>

---

<sup>12</sup> Campbell, J. C., Webster, D., Koziol-McLain, J., Block, C., Campbell, D., Curry, M. A., Gary, F., Glass, N., McFarlane, J., Sach, C., Sharps, P., Ulrich, Y., Wilt, S. A., Manganello, J., Xu, X., Schollenberger, J., Frye, V., & Laughon, K. (2003). Risk factors for femicide in abusive relationships: Results from a multisite case control study. *American Journal of Public Health, 93*(7), 1089-1097. doi:10.2105/AJPH.93.7.1089

<sup>13</sup> Spencer, C. M. & Stith, S. M. (2020). Risk factors for male perpetration and female victimization of intimate partner homicide: A meta-analysis. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 21*(3), 527-540. doi: 10.1177/1524838018781101

<sup>14</sup> McFarlane, J. M., Campbell, J. C., Wilt, S., Sachs, C. J., Ulrich, Y. & Xu, X. (1999). Stalking and intimate partner femicide. *Homicide Studies, 3*(4), 300-316.

<sup>15</sup> 18 USC 926A