



New Hampshire Firearms Coalition

NH's Only No-Compromise Gun Rights Organization

January 26, 2016 – Alan M. Rice

Testimony to New Hampshire House Transportation Committee

Good Morning. For the record, my name is Alan Rice and I am the Vice President and Training Director of the New Hampshire Firearms Coalition. An organization representing thousands of law abiding firearms owners, dealers and manufacturers. I am also here on behalf of our partners at Gun Owners of America. A national organization representing hundreds of thousands of law abiding firearms owners.

Both organizations are strongly supportive of HB 1132 which will repeal the ban on carrying a loaded rifle or shotgun in a car.

You may hear from the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department that allowing loaded rifles and shotguns in vehicles will promote poaching. That is no more true than allowing flashlights in cars will enable “shining deer”. I am wondering, will the Fish and Game Department next seek to outlaw flashlights?

HB 1132 is NOT a hunting or wildlife bill. It is a Second Amendment Civil Rights bill. Period. Specifically, HB 1132 seeks to restore rights that have been taken away because a previous legislature was swayed by the emotional arguments of the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department. A department that is well known for its heavy handed enforcement tactics.

As you may be aware, current law allows the carry of loaded pistols and revolvers in motor vehicles as long as the carrier has a valid New Hampshire Pistol/Revolver License. This law has served our state well. However, some people prefer a rifle or shotgun for self defense. Still others will load their rifle before they leave home for a range trip. Sometimes, while at the range a person may receive an emergency call from home and be forced to leave hastily. Should any of these people face prosecution because they forgot to unload their rifle? We don't think so.

Many New Hampshire residents live in rural areas: a sudden encounter with a wild animal or criminal is a daily risk and law enforcement in rural areas could take as long as 30 or 40 minutes to respond. Cars break-down. Tires go flat. We believe that those driving in rural areas should ALWAYS have handy a loaded rifle or shotgun. Helping the law abiding to protect themselves is far more important than preventing poaching!

As for the people who do live in cities or big towns, they shouldn't be at risk of prosecution for having a loaded rifle or shotgun in a car or truck. Especially in an area where's there's nothing to hunt (except maybe bargains on Route 101A in Amherst or Nashua or South Willow Street in Manchester).

State V. Sterndale is a New Hampshire Supreme Court decision which requires any police officer - wishing to search a car - to get a search warrant. In New Hampshire, a car is like a home; subject to Fourth Amendment protections! Therefore, just as law abiding people may possess a loaded rifle or shotgun in their home, they should be able to carry a loaded rifle or shotgun in a car.

Accordingly, I ask that you vote HB 1132 “ought to pass” without any amendments or changes.

I thank the committee for your time and attention and I will happily answer any questions that you may have.