

Good afternoon Madam Chair and Members of the Committee

My name is Richard Turnquist, I'm an NRA Life Member, a Certified Range Safety Officer and Basic Pistol Firearms Instructor, and a concealed carry permit holder.

I'm here to speak to you today in support of SB 18-097 and would like to thank Senator Neville and others for sponsoring this bill.

Senators, the right to life is an inalienable right that is intrinsic to us as human beings. It is not granted by government, and indeed the core function of government is the preservation of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

A corollary of this right is the right to armed self-defense. There is functionally no difference between a legally qualified individual concealed carrying a firearm with a permit or openly carrying a firearm without a permit. Putting on a cover garment to conceal a weapon that was until the moment before openly carried should not make a person who does not have a government permission slip a criminal.

The fact is that the world grows more dangerous by the day. Colorado has grown more dangerous in the years since the 2013 gun control laws were passed, with the murder rate in Denver alone increasing by 9.9% ~~in Denver~~ from 2015 to 2017. **One in three murders is committed in Denver,** and Denver has an open carry ban which is, in my opinion, unconstitutional, and puts law abiding citizens who lack a concealed carry permit at risk, and criminalizes their right to armed self defense.

This bill makes sense. It expands a fundamental right to people who are already legally qualified to exercise it. As law abiding citizens, someone who may need to carry because they fear for their life is compelled to carry openly, which makes them a target and makes the people around them uncomfortable. This bill would allow them to exercise their right to self-defense in a lawful manner.

As for the persons who should not possess or carry guns – they will continue to do so regardless of any law you enact or fail to enact in this building.

Thank you. I will now be glad to answer your questions.

Source Denver Post July 11, 2017

Marble, Sonnenberg, Hill, Court, Fenberg