

Illinois Sheriffs' Association

PRESS RELEASE

February 8, 2013



For Further Information Contact:
Greg Sullivan
Executive Director
217-753-2372

Springfield, IL. – The Illinois Sheriffs' Association at their Winter Training Conference adopted the attached resolution which mirrors the National Sheriffs' Association Resolution passed at their Mid-Winter Conference in Washington, D.C. Seventy-three Sheriffs were in attendance at the Conference held in Springfield. The Sheriffs also voted unanimously not to support the proposed legislation House Bill 132 that bans certain weapons.

Sheriffs from across the state of Illinois believe that it is their responsibility and duty to uphold the Constitution including the Second Amendment. Rational law abiding citizens are not the cause of random acts of horrific violence in our communities. The focus should be primarily on the lack of mental health services in our country.

County jails continue to detain individuals who have been remanded to the Department of Human Service Mental Health Division for treatment. On February 1st there were sixty-six (66) of these individuals waiting for placement, some of which have been waiting for over four months.

Illinois Sheriffs' Association
401 East Washington
Springfield, Illinois 62701



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WHEREAS, the elected Sheriff is recognized throughout the United States as the Chief local law enforcement officer and is directly accountable to the people through the electoral process; and

WHEREAS, all Sheriffs take an oath of office to enforce and defend the United States Constitution and State Constitution and laws; and

WHEREAS, a primary mission of Sheriffs is to ensure public safety; and

WHEREAS, gun safety is vitally important to our nation's public health and the 3,080 Sheriffs of this nation; and

WHEREAS, the cause of violence, including gun violence, must be addressed on many fronts, including improved mental health treatment, media violence, drugs, gangs, breakdown of the family, strengthening laws that prevent or reduce the access of legally prohibited persons to firearms and vigorous enforcement of existing laws; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Sheriffs' Association represents the interest of all Sheriffs who are sworn to support and defend the United States Constitution; and

WHEREAS, Sheriffs strongly support our citizens' protected right to bear arms under the Second Amendment and the Illinois Sheriffs' Association does not support any laws that deprive any citizen of the rights provided under the Constitution and Bill of Rights; and

WHEREAS, the doctrine of judicial review grants to the United States Supreme Court and the lower courts the power to determine the constitutionality of any law and Sheriffs do not possess the legal authority to interpret the constitutionality of any law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Illinois Sheriffs' Association supports the rights conferred by the Second Amendment and further recognizes the ultimate authority of the courts in interpreting the scope of those constitutional rights.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FIREARMS

1. **Rule of Law.** Sheriffs recognize the rule of law in the United States in which the Supreme Court and lower courts are the ultimate authority in determining the constitutionality of any law.
2. **Second Amendment.** Sheriffs support and are sworn to uphold the constitution and the Bill of Rights, including the Second Amendment.
3. **Comprehensive approach.** Gun control alone will not solve the problem of guns and extreme violence. Society needs a thoughtful and comprehensive approach to this many faceted issue.
4. **Records Access.** Law enforcement must have access to relevant records to determine whether a person is legally prohibited from possession of firearms by major improvements in the National Instant Check System.
5. **Mental Health Records.** Law Enforcement must have access to mental health records for accurate background checks, for responding to 911 calls and for responding to those who suffer from mental issues.
6. **Mental Health Treatment.** There must be great expansion of treatment resources for those that experience mental illness. We have an epidemic of untreated mental illness across the country, and there is a strong link between untreated mental illness and the increased risk of committing violent acts.
7. **Vigorous Prosecution.** The Sheriffs support the vigorous prosecution of those who violate existing gun laws, including enhanced sentences.
8. **Gun Safety Incentives.** The Sheriffs support enhanced firearms safety efforts including incentives to promote both safe and secure storage and use of firearms.
9. **Training.** The Sheriffs enhanced training, best practices policies and procedures and adequate resources for law enforcement, schools and those who operate other public facilities, to address active shooters and other safety threats.
10. **Culture of Violence.** The Sheriffs recognize the culture of violence on the internet, on television, in movies, and especially violent videogames, have a negative influence on our nation's youth.
11. **Schools.** The Illinois Sheriffs are committed to protecting our children in their neighborhoods and in school facilities.