

Federal Civilian Ground Marshal Program  
A Deeter Gun in the House

Perhaps we need to have more civilians armed with handguns by creating a federal civilian ground marshal program. Like the Minutemen that served so effectively during the American Revolutionary War, perhaps we need scores of civilians, armed and ready to spring into action. It's not unlike civilians who carry aerosol self-defense sprays. Armed civilians exist, to some unknown degree, everywhere with individuals acting independently who open carry or have concealed weapons permits (CWPs). An American Journal of Public Health (AJPH) article states that "We estimate that 9 million US adult handgun owners carry loaded handguns monthly, 3 million do so every day, and most report protection as the main carrying reason."<sup>1</sup>

After this section was written Sean Hannity, a FOX News talk show host and conservative commentator, suggested something remarkably similar. A Rolling Stone article states that "[Hannity's] ... plan to solve the gun violence epidemic in the United States once and for all: create a police state."<sup>2</sup>

Obviously *RollingStone* isn't privy to the definition of police state.

While technically not a civilian, the effectiveness of people being armed occurred on August 8, 2019, at a Walmart Neighborhood Market in Springfield, Missouri. A 20-year-old man wearing body armor and military-style clothing walked into the store carrying a "tactical rifle" and another gun and more than 100 rounds of ammunition. The man walked around inside the store and was stopped when "... an off-duty firefighter held the suspect—a 20-year-old man who was not immediately identified—at gunpoint until police arrived about three minutes after receiving an initial call."<sup>3</sup>

A more recent case in point was the December 29, 2019, shooting during a church service in White Settlement, Texas, where two people were killed and three people were injured before two armed members of the church security team shot and killed the perpetrator. Had they not been armed other people would have undoubtedly been killed. A CNN article states that "Texas Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick said the incident was over within six seconds thanks to the quick response of the security team members. Recent changes in Texas law allow licensed gun owners to carry firearms into houses of worship. 'Two of the parishioners who are volunteers on the security force drew their weapons and took out the killer immediately, saving untold number of lives,' he said."<sup>4</sup>

In fact, a *National Review* article states that "The FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] has recorded no fewer than 19 times in a five-year span (and that estimate may be low)—from 2014 to 2018—when active shooters were stopped or repelled by citizens. Seven times armed citizens stopped the shooting entirely. Twice an armed citizen engaged the shooter and caused him to flee the scene. Citizens stop active shooters less often than the police do, but it's crystal clear that armed citizens have saved lives. They've stopped massacres that would have further plunged American families and American

communities into deep grief. They've stopped massacres that would have further polarized American politics."<sup>5</sup>

If you consider how many firearms there are in the United States and how many Americans own them, civilians have considerable firepower. We just need to have them at the ready.

A *The Washington Free Beacon* article states that "The Small Arms Survey estimates there are 393,300,000 civilian-owned firearms in the United States. ... That means American civilians own nearly 100 times as many firearms as the U.S. military and nearly 400 times as many as law enforcement."<sup>6</sup>

A Pew Research Center article states the following:

Three-in-ten American adults (30%) say they personally own a gun, and an additional 11% say they live with someone who does, according to a Pew Research Center survey conducted in March and April 2017. Whether or not they personally own a gun, Americans have broad exposure to firearms: Nearly half of U.S. adults (48%) grew up in a household with guns, nearly six-in-ten (59%) have friends who own guns and around seven-in-ten (72%) have fired a gun at some point in their lives - including 55% of those who have never personally owned a gun.

Among Americans who own a gun, nearly two-thirds (66%) say they own more than one, including 29% who own five or more. A large majority of gun owners (72%) own a handgun or pistol, while 62% own a rifle and 54% own a shotgun. About three-quarters of gun owners (73%) say they could never see themselves not owning a gun.<sup>7</sup>

A *Business Insider* article states that "According to Pew, ... 62% of those who own just one gun have a handgun, including revolvers."<sup>8</sup>

A Crime Prevention Research Center (CPRC) white paper abstract/summary excerpt states that "In 2018, the number of concealed handgun permits soared to now over 17.25 million—a 273% increase since 2007. 7.14% of American adults have permits."<sup>9</sup>

Many people who can open carry without a concealed weapons permit (CWP) choose to have one for various reasons which, depending on state laws, include the following:

- Having a valid concealed weapons permit (CWP) generally puts law enforcement officers at ease when they're in contact with a civilian carrying a gun. If you're stopped by a law enforcement officer it's best practice to produce your concealed weapons permit (CWP) along with your driver's license or state identification even if you're not required to immediately inform him or her that you're carrying a gun.
- Even though open carry might be legal, a gun, particularly a holstered one, can easily become concealed. For instance, being forgetful, you put on a jacket.

- You wish to carry a loaded gun in your vehicle.
- You wish to carry a gun in places where open carry prohibits it.
- Generally, it facilitates procuring guns. For instance, you might be able to take immediate possession of a purchased or transferred firearm that has a waiting period for taking possession of it.
- State laws can be complicated and can change so having a concealed weapons permit (CWP) is indemnification.
- The process of obtaining a concealed weapons permit (CWP) might include a firearms training course and if it does, you'll benefit from it.

The Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act (LEOSA) is a federal law, enacted in 2004, that allows two classes of persons—the “qualified law enforcement officer” and the “qualified retired or separated law enforcement officer”—to carry a concealed firearm in any jurisdiction in the United States, regardless of state or local laws, with certain exceptions.<sup>10</sup> Regardless of that, some, probably a lot, of the 17.25 million concealed weapons permit (CWP) holders are undoubtedly issued to law enforcement officers and security officers. Some jurisdictions issue concealed weapons permits (CWPs) automatically to law enforcement officers and perhaps security companies do the same. In addition, some law enforcement officers and security officers choose to have a concealed weapons permit (CWP) so they can carry firearms off duty that aren't authorized by their agency.

Regardless, the bulk of the 17.25 million concealed weapons permit (CWP) holders are civilians who should be encouraged to routinely carry a handgun. A ConcealedCarry.com article states that “... every concealed carry permit holder should feel empowered and encouraged to carry every day; ... .”<sup>11</sup> Indeed.

The following are ideas for a federal civilian ground marshal program:

- Limit participation only to individuals who have a valid state concealed weapons permit (CWP).
- Designating specifically which handguns and what ammunition are allowed in a federal civilian ground marshals program.
- Provide a high value tax credit for civilian ground marshals who purchase the designated handgun and provide a high value tax credit of an equal amount to those who already own a designated handgun.
- Make federal funds available for federal civilian ground marshals program training not unlike the comprehensive 132-hour training course for school marshals in Florida.
- Enactment of a federal Good Samaritan law that provides a significant level of immunity for federal civilian ground marshals.

Perhaps an even better idea is to convince the National Rifle Association (NRA) to sponsor a federal civilian ground marshal program and provide the training. This could be offered as a compromise. They sponsor a federal civilian ground marshal program and those so inclined will stop pushing for banning guns and agree to limits on regulating them. That's not likely, but

perhaps there's a way for the National Rifle Association (NRA) to become an ally of sorts. Heck, let's see if we can get them to pay for a federal civilian ground marshal program. Does that concept sound familiar?

It used to be important to have a doctor in the house—today that's not as important as it used to be unless it's an emergency room physician. Many doctors today are specialists and generally don't have expertise in emergency medical care. So, while a doctor in the house is always a good thing, it's more important today to have a gun—or guns—in the house. For you younger people house in this case doesn't mean where you live, it refers to venues of all types.

Based on exhaustive research for this book the one best remedy for mass shootings is for there to be a gun—or guns—in the house and elsewhere. We need a lot more good guys carrying guns. Physical security is a must, but it's expensive, intrusive, and not always effective. Arming more Americans is costless, discreet, and can be highly effective.

However, let me make it abundantly clear, arming more civilians could come with a price. Accidental discharge of firearms by civilians resulting in death or injury could increase, there might be a rise in civilians who otherwise would have used their fists who shoot instead, there might be an increase in civilians shooting bad guys when it's unjustified. Worse, more civilians could be at grave risk and might get injured or killed themselves, particularly if responding law enforcement officers or security officers failed to differentiate them from the perpetrator, or there might be an increase in civilians injuring or killing other civilians or even law enforcement officers or security officers. No doubt armed civilian scenarios we can't even imagine will probably increase. But all of it pales as compared to what we're currently facing. The problems that arming a lot of civilians will create, perhaps serious ones, might just be the lesser of two evils.

Update:

MEBMX (MEB MediaX) recommended more armed civilians in 2020. In fact, we recommended it in conjunction with our call for a Federal Civilian Ground Marshal Program which is described in detail in our [eBook](#) *Soft Targets and Crowded Places (ST-CP): Hotels, Movie Theaters, Nightclubs, School Buses, Shopping Malls, Ski/Ride Resorts, and Summer Camps*.

Interestingly, the following article dated 2023 further proves the need:

[Cases Where Armed Citizens Have Stopped Active Shooter Incidents](#)

## Bibliography

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