

# Shooters Committee on Political Education

## Position Paper



A 4994

Gabryszak

No same as

**Establishes minimum age and circumstances for unlicensed individuals to possess pistols and revolvers.**

### PURPOSE

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This legislation would permit individuals to receive training in the safe handling of handguns under controlled conditions prior to the issuance of a license. The purpose is to provide for more effective pre license training.

### POSITION

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We support this proposal. Sound safety training is the greatest single step that can be taken to further firearms safety. Responsible firearms use is deeply ingrained in our national heritage. With firearms present in half of American homes, they are a fact of everyday life. Providing the means and environment for safely handling and using them insures the safety of everyone.

This legislation will remove the maximum age requirement of 21, therefore, allowing any person above the age of 14, who is not yet licensed, to handle a pistol at a shooting range, under the supervision of an instructor, and familiarize himself/herself with proper usage of that firearm. This legislation aims to promote safe practices and proper procedures among young shooters and sportsmen.

#### **Enable unlicensed individuals to receive training in handgun safety prior to obtaining a pistol license.**

The ability to handle firearms during pre-license training classes would permit a more effective pre-licensing course. With respect to the training of individuals in the safe handling of handguns, it seems counter intuitive not to make this training available before a license is issued. It makes even less sense to provide training without being able to handle a handgun. This is the equivalent of issuing a driver license and then learning to drive.

#### **New York is the only state that prohibits this type of training.**

All states with a licensing or regulatory system for handgun acquisition or possession require or strongly encourage hands on training from a qualified instructor prior to procuring a handgun. The objective of this training is to instill safe handling practices and the most successful way of implanting these practices is through supervised hands on training. It is much more effective than lecture, video or textbook training.

#### **Opening training to unlicensed individuals poses no safety problem.**

The structure proposed, limiting this training to shooting ranges and requiring supervision by certified instructors, is at least as and generally more restrictive than other states. Other states have a wide variety of firearms regulations but we do not know of any that prohibits the lawful possessor of a firearm from allowing another individual to use it in his or her immediate presence.