

Gun Bills Review

The 2011 session was unique in the efforts the Network made to track and help defeat several “gun bills”. While we are not anti-gun as a general rule, some of these changes to law would have impacted employee safety negatively.

Clyde Dailey, MCUN Director of Government Relations, was in contact with the Governor’s office and several legislators throughout the session to express our concerns about HB 271 and HB 384 specifically. HB 384 would have allowed concealed weapons into public places previously prohibited (government buildings, bars, and financial institutions) and HB 271 would have allowed a person who was merely “eligible” to obtain a concealed weapon permit to carry concealed.

We had a rare state level Call to Action on these two bills and our credit unions responded with contact and testimony in strong opposition before the Senate Judiciary Committee. One was tabled, and the other was vetoed by the Governor.

The following firearms legislation from this session had potential impact on credit unions:

- **HB 201** Allow employees to keep firearms concealed in vehicle in workplace parking lot (Tabled in committee)
- **HB 271** Carry concealed if merely eligible to apply for permit (Vetoed)
- **HB 368** Allow employees to keep firearms in vehicle in workplace parking lot or while on employer’s business (Tabled in committee)
- **HB 384** Allow concealed weapons in previously prohibited places (Tabled in committee)
- **HB 558** Revise laws regarding students and firearms in school (Tabled in committee)

The Network was in contact with CUNA Mutual Group throughout the session for consultation on liability coverage impact. They were particularly concerned about the risk to employees for firearms that might be allowed on credit union premises.

Since 2009, Montana law (§45-3-1, M.C.A.) has allowed citizens to openly carry firearms. There is no exception for financial institutions. Private property owners still have a right to control their property, so we continue to recommend credit unions post signage to clearly prohibit weapons on the credit union premises. Employee safety and clear direction on how to react to and train for robbery situations is important. The Network still has a small supply of “No Weapons Allowed” signage available on request.