April 14, 2021

The Honorable Governor Greg Abbott

The Honorable Lt. Governor Dan Patrick

The Honorable House Speaker Dade Phelan

Honorable House Members of the 87th Texas Legislature

Honorable Senate Members of the 87th Texas Legislature

Dear Elected State Officials:

Law-abiding Texans should not have to beg the government for permission and pay a fee to exercise their God-given right to self-defense. That is why Constitutional Carry is the most important issue to come before the Texas Legislature in over a quarter century relating to the right to keep and bear arms.

Constitutional Carry is the simple concept that says if you can legally possess a firearm, then you can carry it to protect yourself and your loved ones.

The Texas Conservative Grassroots Coalition recognizes that "The Right of the People to Keep and Bear Arms" is protected **both by the U.S. Constitution and by the Constitution of the State of Texas.** Yet, Texas requires a License to Carry (LTC) for handgun carry. This permitting process creates an undue burden on this unalienable right to self-defense.

Over 30 states recognize the right of legal gun owners to carry handguns openly without first obtaining a permit; **and 20 of those states recognize Constitutional Carry – open or concealed carry of handguns without a permit, including several states added this year** (Iowa, Utah, Tennessee, and Montana).

Texas should be leading the way on gun rights. Unfortunately, we missed the chance to be in the top 20 states to pass Constitutional Carry – **even though bills have been filed in Texas every session since 2015.** Texas is in the minority of states that still generally criminalizes carry of handguns without a permit.

This means that a single mother who lacks the time or the means to obtain her License to Carry ***is denied her right to carry a gun to protect herself and her kids*** because she does not have a government permission slip. It means that a father who lost his job during the shutdowns and is delinquent on taxes or child support (despite doing his best to support his family) is denied his ability to carry to protect his loved ones – because he is barred from even applying for an LTC. ***This is not freedom.***

During the past year, a record number of Americans have purchased firearms. It is also clear that an enormous number of Texans realized that they are safest when they are prepared to be their own first defenders. The record number of gun rights bills filed in the Texas legislature reflect this resurgence of interest in protecting the right to keep and bear arms. However, **no other piece of legislation comes close to doing as much for Texans' gun rights as Constitutional Carry bills that repeal the permit requirement for law-abiding Texans to carry a handgun.**

Members of the Texas Legislature can no longer attempt to declare themselves as being in favor of the Second Amendment without taking action to pass Constitutional Carry. **For the safety and security of all Texans, we urge you to prioritize passing a bill to recognize the right of all who can legally possess a firearm to carry handguns, openly or concealed, without a permit.**

Sincerely, the undersigned grassroots political opinion leaders and influencers, *

Rachel Malone, Texas Director, Gun Owners of America, SD 22

C.R. "Dick" Saulsbury, Saulsbury Companies, SD 31

JoAnn Fleming, Executive Director, Grassroots America - We the People PAC

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Cindy Asmussen, Delegate, Republican Party of Texas, SD 5

Deborah Bailey, Chair, Coke County Republican Party: past Secretary, San Angelo TEA Party, SD 28

Dottie Barnes, Co-Founder, Conservative Society of Navarro County, SD 22

Jim Barnes, Pres. McAllen TEA Party; Valley Conservative Newsletter Editor, SD 20

Anna Bartosh, Treasurer, San Angelo TEA Party; Legislative Chair, San Angelo Republican Women, SD 28

Peter Batura, Vice President, Texans for Immigration Reduction and Enforcement (TFIRE), SD 17

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Trevor Dupuy, Founder, Horseshoe Bay Conservative Caucus, SD 24

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Roger & Terri Hall, Founders & Steering Committee, We the People - Liberty in Action, SD 24

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Maggie & Carroll Wright, Founding member & past President, Lone Star Patriots, SD 22

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Mary-Margaret Wrinkle, Secretary, Franklin County Republican Party, SD 1

Ruth York, Vice President, Tea Party Patriots of Eastland County; Precinct Chair, Eastland County Republican Party, SD 28

Pastor Greg Young, Nationally Syndicated Radio host, Chosen Generation Radio, SD 24

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