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Honorable Sheriff William D. Gore
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Sheriff Gore,

I would appreciate clarification from you regarding a statement about CCW (Concealed Weapons Permit) applications found on your website, the statement reads as follows:

“Applications previously submitted that were held in abeyance pending a decision from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in Peruta vs. County of San Diego, et. al. will have no further action taken on them, however, they will be maintained for five years, pursuant to the Department's record retention policy.”

Your repeated policy regarding issuing CCWs is that you are seeking guidance from the courts on the “good cause” portion of State requirements. As you know, the en banc decision does state that concealed carry is not a right, however, this decision in no way indicates that your office is not able to issue CCWs for “self-defense” to applicants who fulfill all other state requirements. Therefore, there is no legal block for unfettered discretion to issue CCWs to applicants desperately in need of protection.

I have appreciated our continued discussion regarding expanding the group of applicants for CCW permits. In the past, you tasked me with suggesting applicants most in need of personal protection that do not already qualify under your current restrictive requirements. I suggested expanding permits to individuals whose employment determines they face a higher risk of being the victim of violent crime as determined by the owner or management of their employer. You rejected the proposal. I suggested expanding permits to individuals who face a higher risk of hate crimes and violence such as minorities, members of certain religious denominations, and the LGBT Community. You rejected the proposal.

It is important that all law-abiding individuals can protect their life and dignity outside their home. Unfortunately, the unwillingness of your office to use the authority given by the State to issue CCW permits makes this more difficult.

San Diego County consists of a diverse population of 3.5 million people, but less than 1,400 CCW permits have been issued. An alarming few have been issued to women, minorities, and LGBT individuals. You have publicly stated for years that your hands are tied by state law and are waiting for clarification from the courts. As already stated above, there is no legal block to begin issuing CCWs for self-defense.

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My organization has made repeated attempts to work with you on expanding your CCW issuance policies through reasonable, common sense measures. You refuse to budge. I urge you to keep your word and not simply pay lip service to the safety issues and civil rights of San Diegans. I urge you to accept "self-defense" as good cause to issue CCWs to applicants who have taken the necessary steps required by California law.

Thank you.

Michael Schwartz