

**GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE UPDATE:  
GUNS AT THE CAPITOL  
Melinda Frame & Marty Couretas**

On April 30, armed protesters upset by Governor Whitmer's stay-at-home orders due to the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated at the Michigan Capitol and inside of the Senate chamber. In doing so they provoked local outrage and national attention. Michigan is one of four Midwestern states that permit weapons on Capitol grounds (including Minnesota, Wisconsin and Kansas). On May 14, armed protestors again demonstrated, and the Legislature adjourned their sessions and closed the Capitol building.

The Michigan Capitol Commission, which is responsible for its upkeep and which banned signs from Capitol buildings in 2012 to protect the infrastructure, was asked to consider the prohibition of weapons on Capitol property. On May 11, the Commission voted to study their jurisdiction in this matter, resulting in the creation of a study committee that will discuss this issue with legislative leaders, legal counsel, and the governor.

Concurrently, several House bills and one Senate resolution have been introduced addressing the open carry of firearms within Michigan government buildings. These bills/resolutions have been assigned to the Committee on Government Operations for review.

**House Bill 5783:** Would expand Gun Free Zones to include all buildings owned or leased by the state; introduced on May 12 by Tyrone Carter (district 6) with 19 co-sponsors.

**House Bill 5784:** Would expand Gun Free Zones with concealed carry to include all buildings owned or leased by the state; introduced on May 19 by Julie Brixie (district 69) with 19 co-sponsors.

**Senate Resolution 0118 (2020):** A resolution to urge the Michigan State Capitol Commission to prohibit firearms in public areas of the Capitol building and grounds and to install security checkpoints.

Although interest in legislation banning firearms on Capitol grounds has currently captured the public's attention, passage in the 2019-2020 legislative session is unlikely. To learn more about the positions of candidates at every level of government, visit [VOTE411.org](http://VOTE411.org).