



GEORGIA CARRY.ORG, INC.

P.O. BOX 142924 FAYETTEVILLE, GEORGIA 30214 info@georgiacarry.org

October 5, 2007

Re: Honoring firearms licenses issued by Arizona, Arkansas, and Maine

JOSEPH DROLET, ESQ.
Senior Assistant Attorney General
40 Capitol Square, SW
Atlanta, Ga 30334

Dear Mr. Drolet,

I am writing to you because it has come to our attention that three states' firearms licenses are now in a position to be honored by Georgia. Delays in Georgia's official honoring of their firearms licenses are, in two of three cases, resulting in Georgia firearms licenses not being honored when Georgia residents are visiting the other states.

ARIZONA

Arizona began recognizing and giving effect to Georgia's firearms license, along with every other state's firearms license, on September 21, 2006, when it passed HB 2074, abandoning its previous "dual reciprocity" scheme. In spite of the fact that Arizona has been recognizing and giving effect to Georgia firearms licenses within Arizona for over a year, Georgia has yet to announce any formal recognition of Arizona firearms licenses. GCO urges you to move forward with recognizing and honoring Arizona's firearms license. Most law enforcement agencies in Georgia look to the Attorney General's most recent list to determine whether an out of state firearms license is valid in Georgia, as they have no other way of researching every state's law. Please ensure that Arizona residents visiting this state are protected from unlawful arrest by giving recognition to the validity of Arizona's firearms license for Arizona residents visiting Georgia.

ARKANSAS

You and I spoke over the telephone about Arkansas on August 2, 2007. After I spoke with you, the Arkansas State Police contacted me to state that they have already requested that Georgia honor Arkansas firearms licenses, first by contacting the GBI in April, who directed them to the Office of the Attorney General. According to the Arkansas State Police, "On June 28, 2007 we sent a letter to Joseph Drolet at the Georgia AG's Office regarding the matter. We have yet to hear a reply. Any assistance you could give us in this matter would be appreciated." (Email from Cora

Gentry, Arkansas Department of State Police, cora.gentry@asp.arkansas.gov). Accordingly, I am trying to assist the Arkansas State Police by bringing this matter to your attention, in case the letter did not make its way to you.

Arkansas passed SB 268 early this year, which provided for expanded recognition of other states' licenses. In fact, Arkansas, pursuant to its amended Code section 5-73-402, now recognizes any state's license with the only caveat being that the other state must also recognize an Arkansas license. Georgia has yet to do so.

The Arkansas State Police already have Georgia's law on the matter. They are waiting for the official word from somebody who can speak for the State of Georgia on the status of Georgia law.

In case you were not aware, duck season starts soon, and many Georgia hunters will be heading for the duck hunter's paradise of Stuttgart, Arkansas. GCO urges the Attorney General to make it possible for these Georgia residents to visit Arkansas with a firearms license that is officially valid while visiting the state, thus protecting these Georgia hunters from arrest for carrying a concealed handgun. Although both states' statutes already provide that this is legal, Arkansas law enforcement agencies rely on their state police for a list, and the Arkansas State Police Department is waiting on the Georgia Attorney General's office.

MAINE

The state of Maine previously had reciprocity with only two states, and Georgia was not one of them. Maine's law suffered from the same defect as Arizona's old law, in that it required the cumbersome process of negotiating and entering into formal "reciprocity agreements" with other states and required "similar standards." A new law went into effect on June 18, 2007, which provides that Maine permits the concealed carry of a firearm by any person "[t]o whom a valid permit to carry a concealed firearm has been issued by another state if that state grants reciprocity to a permit to carry a concealed firearm issued by this State; or [f]rom a state that does not require a permit to carry a concealed firearm." That last one was added for visitors from Vermont. The first one, of course, will allow Georgia firearms license holders to carry concealed handguns in Maine, but only if Georgia will reciprocate. You may find this law in Title 25, chapter 252, section 2001-A(2)(F) (relating to threatening display or carrying a concealed weapon; Maine requires no license to carry openly). The bill that was signed into law was LD 148. In Maine, as in Arkansas, the State Police are tasked with the concealed carry permit administration. You may contact the Maine State Police through Sgt William Gomane, who is in charge of the Gaming and Weapons Unit.

State House Station 164
Augusta, ME 04333

telephone: (207) 624-7210
facsimile: (207) 287-3424

Sgt. William Gomane's email address - Bill.Gomane@maine.gov

In closing, I wish to quote from the amicus curiae brief that Attorney General Thurbert Baker joined in the Parker v. District of Columbia case, "The individual right to keep and bear arms is protected by the United States Constitution and [Georgia's Constitution] . . . Given the significance of this fundamental right, the States have an interest in ensuring that the Second Amendment is accorded its proper scope *in neighboring jurisdictions.*" (Emphasis added). And, "Finally, amici States have an interest in ensuring that their citizens who choose to travel to other jurisdictions while carrying properly licensed weapons remain free from unconstitutional arrest and prosecution . . ." Please ensure that these laudable principles enunciated by Georgia's Attorney General are put into effect between Georgia, Arizona, Arkansas, and Maine.

I hope you have found this correspondence helpful. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and, if GCO can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Edward A. Stone
President
GEORGIA CARRY.ORG