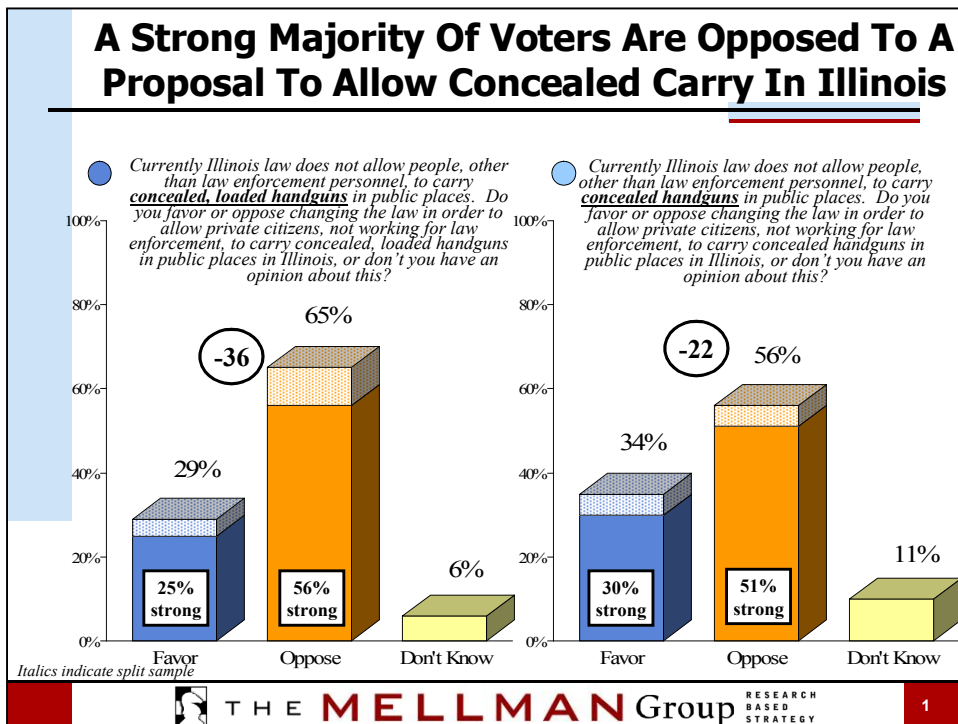


TO: Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence
FROM: The Mellman Group, Inc.
RE: Illinois Voters Strongly Oppose Concealed-Carry
DATE: March 31, 2011

This analysis represents the findings of a statewide survey of 600 likely 2012 general election voters in Illinois (interviews conducted March 23-27, 2011). Interviews were conducted by telephone using a registration-based sample. The margin of error for this survey is +/-4.0% at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error is higher for subgroups. Regions referred to in the memo are defined as follows: the Chicago region consists of voters residing in the city of Chicago; the non-Chicago part of Cook County is Cook County excluding the city of Chicago; the “collar” counties region is the Chicago media market excluding Cook County; the northern region includes the Davenport, IA-Moline, IL; Rockford, IL; and Quincy, IL-Hannibal, MO media markets; the southern region includes the Champaign-Springfield-Decatur, IL; Paducah, KY-Cape Girardeau, MO; St Louis, MO; Evansville, IN; Terre Haute, IN; and Peoria-Bloomington, IL media markets.

OPPOSITION TO LEGALIZATION OF CONCEALED-CARRY IS BROAD AND DEEP IN ILLINOIS



A large, 56% majority of Illinois voters oppose a proposal that would allow private citizens, not working for law enforcement, to carry concealed handguns in public places in Illinois¹ – including a 51% majority who not only oppose such a proposal, but oppose it “strongly.” Just 34% favor concealed-carry (11% don’t know).

That already large 56% majority opposed to concealed-carry shoots up to a nearly two-thirds

supermajority (65% oppose, 29% favor, 6% don’t know) when the question mentions that the change would allow the carrying of “concealed, loaded handguns” (rather than simply “concealed handguns”).

¹ Exact question wording: “Currently Illinois law does not allow people, other than law enforcement personnel, to carry concealed handguns in public places. Do you favor or oppose changing the law in order to allow private citizens, not working for law enforcement, to carry concealed handguns in public places in Illinois, or don’t you have an opinion about this?”

Opposition to carrying concealed handguns cuts across traditional political cleavages. A 62% majority of independents oppose concealed-carry (31% favor), as do 63% of Democrats (24% favor). When voters are made aware that concealed handguns could be loaded, opposition increases to 72% among Democrats and to 63% among independents. Fifty-three percent (53%) of Republicans favor the plan (39% oppose) when asked the version of the question without the word “loaded,” but when asked about carrying “concealed, loaded handguns” a large 57% majority of Republicans oppose concealed-carry (37% favor).

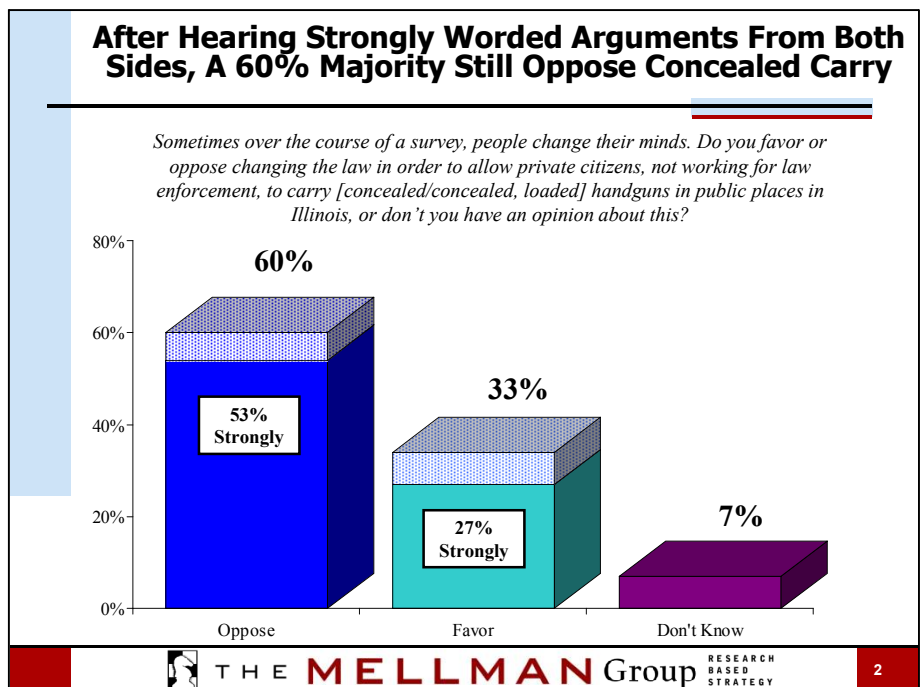
Opposition to the proposal is also widespread across ideological lines. A 57% majority of moderates oppose concealed-carry (30% favor), and so do 66% of liberals (25% favor). Conservatives are evenly divided in their response to the version of the question without the word “loaded” (46% oppose, 47% favor) but with the addition of the word “loaded,” anti-concealed-carry sentiment grows quite strong, with a 62% majority of conservatives opposing concealed-carry (37% favor).

Moreover, opposition to concealed-carry is strong across the state. In Chicago, voters oppose concealed-carry by an overwhelming 72% to 23%. In the non-Chicago part of Cook County, a 53% majority oppose concealed-carry, while only 1-in-3 (33%) favor the idea. In the “collar counties,” opposition reaches 63% (30% favor). In northern Illinois, voters are evenly divided (43% oppose, 43% favor), while in the south, voters are divided as well, although they lean slightly more toward support than opposition (42% oppose, 47% favor).

Opposition to concealed-carry is even stronger around the state when it is made clear that the concealed weapons can be loaded. In Chicago, voters oppose concealed-carry by an overwhelming 86% to 12% when the word “loaded” is used. In the non-Chicago part of Cook County, a 59% majority oppose concealed-carry of “loaded” weapons, while only 34% favor the proposal. In the “collar counties,” 60% are opposed % (30% favor) when the word “loaded” is used. In northern Illinois, voters overwhelmingly oppose (73% oppose, 24% favor), and in the south a 55% majority oppose carrying “loaded” concealed weapons (40% favor).

OPPOSITION TO CONCEALED-CARRY IS QUITE ROBUST, REMAINING VIRTUALLY UNCHANGED AFTER VOTERS HEAR STRONG ARGUMENTS ON BOTH SIDES

We presented voters with powerfully worded arguments on both sides of the concealed-carry issue. On the supporters’ side, voters heard this statement: *“Supporters of the proposal say that because everyone has a right to defend themselves and a Constitutional right to bear arms, everyone who is of age, passes a criminal background check and attends gun safety classes should be able to get a permit to carry a concealed*



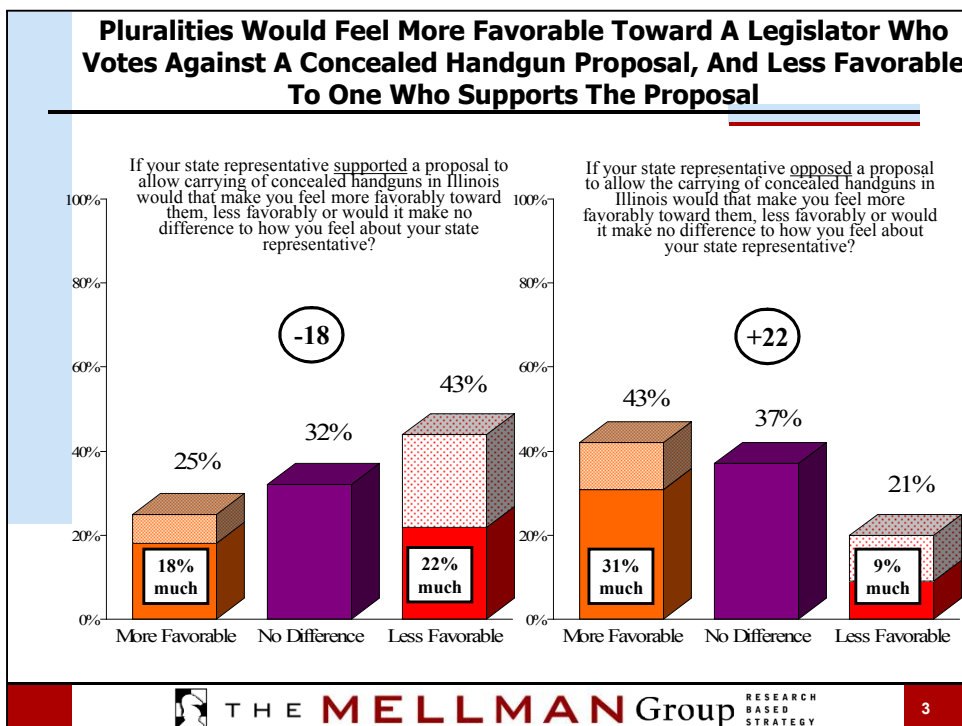
weapon in public places. They say citizens in every state except two are already allowed to carry concealed weapons and law-abiding citizens in Illinois ought to have the same rights as the vast majority of U.S. citizens, to defend themselves and their families against crime, which will be reduced if criminals don't know who is armed."

And on the opponents' side, voters heard this statement: "Opponents of the proposal say it will endanger ordinary citizens by allowing people with no connection to law enforcement to carry concealed handguns in sensitive places like schools, parks, government buildings, places of worship, and public gatherings where families and children congregate. They say that in other states, thousands of convicted criminals have been able to legally get a permit to carry concealed handguns. Over the last few years, hundreds of people have been killed by those legally carrying concealed handguns, including victims of a number of mass shootings and murder-suicides."

Prior to hearing the arguments from both sides, a 60% majority opposed concealed-carry and just 32% favored (combining the results of the two different versions of the question). After hearing these arguments—including some of the strongest arguments available to the pro-concealed-carry side—the majority opposed to concealed-carry remains at 60%, with just 33% favoring concealed-carry.

Once again, we find widespread opposition around the state. After hearing arguments on both sides, voters in Chicago oppose concealed-carry by an overwhelming 73% to 22%. In the non-Chicago part of Cook County, a large 63% majority oppose concealed-carry after hearing from both sides, while fewer than a third (29%) favor the idea. Sixty-percent (60%) of voters in the “collars” oppose concealed-carry (34% favor). In the north, a majority oppose concealed-carry (56% oppose, 35% favor), and in southern Illinois, voters remain divided (47% oppose, 46% favor).

IT IS POLITICALLY FAR RISKIER FOR A LEGISLATOR TO SUPPORT CONCEALED-CARRY THAN TO OPPOSE IT



By nearly 2-to-1, voters said they would feel less favorable toward a state legislator who supported concealed-carry (43% less favorable, 25% more favorable, 32% no difference). We also asked the mirror opposite question and found by 2-to-1, voters would feel more favorable toward a concealed-carry opponent (43% more favorable, 21% less favorable, 37% no difference). Clearly the political costs of supporting concealed-carry exceed the benefits by a

wide margin. Likewise, the political benefits of *opposing* concealed-carry far outweigh the costs.

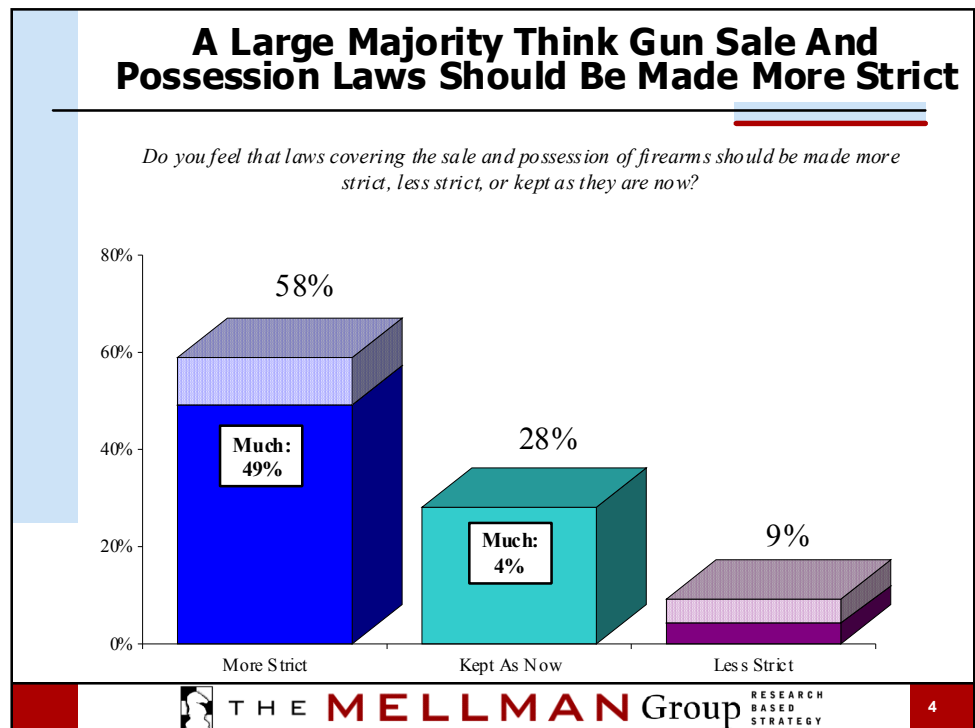
That holds true, to a significant extent, across party lines. A large 58% majority of Democrats would feel less favorable toward a concealed-carry supporter (14% more favorable), and by 40% to 26%, a plurality of independents concur. Republicans lean toward saying they would feel more favorable toward a concealed-carry supporter, but only 39% of them lean that way. Sixty-one percent of Republicans would either feel less favorable toward a concealed-carry supporter or say it wouldn't make a difference (27% less favorable, 35% no difference). And Republicans are even less likely to punish a concealed-carry opponent. Fewer than a third of Republicans (31%) say they would feel less favorable toward a concealed-carry opponent, while 24% say they would feel more favorable and a 45% plurality say it would not make a difference.

ILLINOIS VOTERS THINK GUN LAWS SHOULD BE MADE MORE RATHER THAN LESS STRICT

The climate is ripe for stricter, not weaker, gun legislation. An overwhelming 58% majority of Illinois voters believe "laws covering the sale and possession of firearms" should be made more strict, including fully 49% who say gun laws should be made "much" more strict. A mere 9% want them made less strict.

This view is also quite widespread with 70% of Democrats calling for stricter gun laws, as well as 63% of independents. A 40% plurality of Republican voters say the laws should be left as they are now, but almost as many (38%) agree with the Democrats and independents that gun laws should be stricter. Only 15% of Republicans say gun laws should be less strict.

What's more, the view that gun laws should be made stricter holds up even when the question is asked using language thought to be less favorable to the pro-regulation side. We asked voters another version of this question referring to "gun control" laws rather than "laws covering the sale and possession of firearms". As expected, the comparatively inflammatory "gun control" language proves prejudicial to the pro-regulation side.



Nevertheless, even with the "gun control" language, a 52% majority of Illinois voters still say gun control laws should be stricter, including 43% who say gun control laws should be "much" stricter (27% keep as they are now) and just 18% who want gun control to be less strict.

At least a plurality in every region of Illinois say “laws covering the sale and possession of firearms” should be made more strict, including 80% in Chicago (2% less strict), 71% in the non-Chicago part of Cook County (5% less strict), 55% in the collar counties (10% less strict), 58% in the north (6% less strict), and by almost 2-to-1, 35% in southern Illinois (18% less strict). The geographic story is similar when the “gun control” language is used. From 77% in Chicago (12% less strict), to 53% in the non-Chicago part of Cook County (14% less strict), to 55% in the collars (17% less strict), to 43% in the northern part of the state (32% less strict), and 29% in the south (23% less strict), at least a plurality in every region thinks “gun control” laws should be made more strict.