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## Majority of Illinois Voters Oppose Concealed Carry

*Statewide survey reveals desire for stricter gun laws,  
opposition to concealed, loaded handguns*

CHICAGO, April 4, 2011 – A statewide poll of Illinois voters – conducted March 23-27 by renowned opinion researchers, The Mellman Group, and commissioned by the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence – reveals overwhelming opposition to a proposed state law allowing ordinary citizens to carry concealed handguns.

A large, 56 percent 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 Illinois. Just 34 percent favor a concealed carry law. When told that the proposed law would allow the carrying of “concealed, loaded handguns” (rather than simply “concealed handguns”), opposition jumps to nearly two-thirds, compared to just 29 percent who favor.

Even after hearing strongly worded arguments on both sides, 60 percent of Illinois voters are opposed changing the law, and only 33 percent are in favor.

Opposition to the proposal is also widespread across both ideological and geographic lines. A majority (57 percent) of moderates and two-thirds of liberals oppose concealed carry, and conservatives are evenly split. However, 62 percent of conservatives oppose the idea of loaded, concealed weapons. Chicago voters oppose concealed, loaded guns 86-to-12, and across northern Illinois, opposition is 73-to-24. In southern Illinois, 55 percent majority oppose carrying loaded, concealed weapons, while only 40 percent favor.

“What we see here is that the people of Illinois clearly do not want more guns on the streets, in their neighborhoods,” said Mark Walsh, Director of the Illinois Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, a project of the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence. “North to south, east to west; Republican or Democrat; liberal, independent or conservative, the will of the people is in plain sight: they want legislators to holster concealed carry.”

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## **Concealed carry may be a loaded vote**

Opposition to changing the law is so robust that voters indicated their readiness to punish legislators who vote for a concealed carry law. By a nearly 2-to-1 margin, voters say they would feel less favorable toward their state representative if they voted in favor of concealed carry, while if their legislator opposed the law, they would feel more favorable by a margin of 43 percent to 21 percent.

When asked about gun safety laws in general, 59 percent of Illinois voters said that laws covering the sale and possession of firearms should be made more strict. In contrast, just 9 percent want them made less strict and 28 percent feel they should be kept as they are now.

Support for stricter gun control laws spans ideological lines: liberals (by a 56-point margin), moderates (by 41 points), and conservatives (by 8 points) all said laws on sale and possession should be made more strict.

A detailed analysis of survey results is attached; survey questions are available upon request. Mark Mellman, President and CEO of the Mellman Group, is available to discuss the survey.

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**The Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence (ICHV)** is the oldest and largest statewide organization in the U.S. working to prevent the devastation caused by firearms. Founded in 1975 by four suburban Chicago women concerned about the tragic consequences of handgun proliferation and availability, ICHV works on a variety of fronts to educate, raise public awareness, and build coalitions to enact change in laws and behavior. For 35 years, ICHV has been a leader among state gun violence prevention groups.

**The Illinois Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence (ICPGV)**, a project of Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence (ICHV), is a research-based public education campaign to promote meaningful gun policy reform in Illinois. Working with a statewide advisory group representing law enforcement, the medical and public health communities, faith-based organizations, local and state policymakers, victims and advocacy groups, ICPGV informs the public and the media on the facts about gun violence and prevention policies.

**The Mellman Group** provides research and strategic advice to clients ranging from the Democratic Leaders of both the U.S. House and Senate to *Fortune* magazine, from the World Wildlife Fund to United Airlines, from Intuit (the makers of Quicken) to the Pew Charitable Trusts. Many of the nation's leading companies, membership organizations, public interest groups, government agencies, foundations, and political figures have turned to The Mellman Group for carefully researched, unbiased evaluations of public opinion.

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