



## Indiana Association of Cities and Towns

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February 14, 2011

Dear Senator:

Every four years municipal officials stand for election or re-election by the people they serve. This is the opportunity for residents of cities and towns to step forth and offer a review of their local officials and make determinations on their leadership. However, like so many other bills being considered by the Indiana General Assembly this session, SB 292 attempts to take another giant step away from the kind of local home rule our citizens have grown to expect as a result of the electoral process. This bill ties the hands of local officials to put into law the type of regulatory measures our residents and businessmen and women expect us to enact.

SB 292 is designed to further pre-empt local units' ability to regulate the carrying and discharging of firearms within municipal boundaries. The measure proposes to take away any remaining local decision making on firearm matters, it discounts any community specific safety issues and dismisses potential unique circumstances that make each Indiana city and town different from its neighbor.

Leaders in local government do not attempt to pass ordinances with the intent of inconveniencing or disenfranchising their citizens. They do so when upon consideration by the executive and legislative bodies a change has been determined to be necessary. If a community has carefully weighed the issue of firearm presence in and on its government properties and determined that prohibition is the best option, why would the Indiana General Assembly be in a better position to make this determination than those who were elected to sit in the very council seats affected?

SB 292 would also jeopardize our ability to enforce safe gun usage, in neighborhoods, parks and near schools. For example, many communities have an ordinance to prohibit gun use in neighborhoods or areas with dense population. But, SB 292 would take that authority away, allowing, for example, someone to set up target shooting in their backyard, putting nearby children and neighbors at risk.

Senator, please consider how tying the hands of local officials could negatively impact the very people we both serve. Many communities forego wading into the world of firearms regulation. But for those who have or those who may choose to do so in the future, why should the needs or wants of a particular community and their lawful governing body be overruled today in Indianapolis without the benefit of the facts from that city or town? Where does the interference into local governing stop and what do we tell our citizens about who is accountable for governing municipalities in Indiana?

I respectfully ask that you please vote "no" on SB 292.

Sincerely,

Matthew C. Greller  
Executive Director