



**Concealed Carry Improvement Act
Amendments Relating to Houses of Worship
(Bill S.4005-B-Budget, Part F, Subpart A, Section 1)**

Memorandum of Support

Both Gov. Kathy Hochul and the New York State Senate have released budget proposals that included much-needed changes to the Concealed Carry Improvement Act (CCIA), a gun control law passed in 2022. Specifically, the budget proposals would allow volunteer security personnel to carry firearms in houses of worship.

The CCIA attempted to limit the right to carry firearms in houses of worship to paid security guards and law enforcement officers. By making it unlawful for most people to carry firearms in churches and other houses of worship, the CCIA deprived law-abiding New Yorkers of their constitutionally protected right to bear arms. In recent years, many churches and other houses of worship have created volunteer security teams. Some of those teams include armed congregants. Under the CCIA, those teams have been deemed unlawful. After churches challenged the CCIA in federal court, multiple courts held that the CCIA's strict limit on firearms in houses of worship was unconstitutional.

Congregants do not forfeit their right to defend themselves and their families when they enter a house of worship, and church leaders must be free to provide for the safety of their flocks. Accordingly, the CCIA should be amended to allow volunteer security personnel to carry firearms in houses of worship.