



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ®
OF INDIANA**

Dear Sen. Steele,

I am writing to express the League of Women Voters of Indiana's strong opposition to Senate Bill 36.

Founded 95 years ago, the League is one of the nation's oldest nonpartisan organizations. Although primarily known for its voter education and service work, the League has also taken a strong advocacy stance on a wide range of issues, including gun violence prevention. Our support for sensible measures to protect our families and communities from gun violence is shared by an overwhelming majority of Hoosiers; according to the 2015 “Hoosier Survey”—a poll conducted by Indianapolis WISH TV and Ball State University—more than four out of five of Indiana citizens are in favor of stronger laws and policies to reduce gun violence in our state.

In proposing to remove existing legal restrictions on persons with a record of alcohol abuse from obtaining a license to carry a handgun, SB 36 flies in the face of basic common sense. Anyone who meets the legal definition of “alcohol abuser”—someone with two or more alcohol-related offenses, any of which resulted in conviction or treatment within the past three years—is a risk taker, possibly in need of serious treatment, and should not be entrusted with the right to carry a loaded handgun in public spaces.

We respectfully draw your attention to the disturbing correlation between alcohol abuse and violence against women. Law enforcement officials report that up to 80 percent of domestic violence calls involve alcohol. Of the roughly 1,000 American women killed each year by intimate partner, 70 percent involved handguns. And of course, the correlation between alcohol abuse and car accidents is well-established; Mothers Against Drunk Driving reported that in 2014 more than 25% of all traffic deaths in Indiana involved alcohol. Granting individuals who already present a clear danger to their families and communities the right to carry a handgun only increases the likelihood that they will cause death or injury.

We urge you, as the Chair of the Judiciary Committee, strenuously to oppose SB 36, and we look forward to following your ongoing efforts to support responsible gun ownership and common sense regulations to reduce gun violence in Indiana.

Sincerely,

Erin Kelley & Lisa Plencner
Co-Presidents
League of Women Voters of Indiana

CC: Sen. R. Michael Young, Sen. Rodric Bray, Sen. Michael Delph, Sen. Susan Glick, Sen. Randall Head, Sen. Joseph Zakas, Sen. Lonnie Randolph, Sen. John Broden, Sen. Greg Taylor