

## **NEBRASKA TAXPAYERS FOR FREEDOM ISSUE PAPER: MAYOR STOTHERT ALLIES WITH GUN CONTROLLERS.**

**BACKGROUND.** In April, 2023, the Legislature, following several years of fruitless efforts, finally passed **LB 77**, sponsored by conservative State Sen. Tom Brewer. State law now allows individuals over 21 to carry concealed handguns legally without purchasing a state permit or taking gun safety training. This law eliminated the myriad of different and conflicting firearms laws and ordinances in NE localities. Many Nebraska gun owners hailed **LB 77** as giving them the freedom to use a handgun without paying for the privilege of exercising this 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment right. Also, most firearms owners have taken a form of firearms training. Although the new law automatically invalidates a host of Omaha and Lincoln ordinances that restricted handgun possession and use, NE localities still can prohibit the possession of concealed firearms on their properties and facilities if public notice posted. Unfortunately, both Lincoln and Omaha mayors and councils sponsored ordinances that still restrict the possession and use of firearms.

**STOTHERT ACTION.** Notwithstanding the new state law, Omaha Mayor Stothert, claiming to fear for the safety of her constituents, issued an executive order mandating the posting of signs prohibiting firearms in all city owned or leased and managed buildings and facilities, including libraries, fire stations, pools, parks, recreation centers, and public places like sidewalks or parking lots. This executive action taken following a vote by the city council to repeal the previous 22 sections of code in city ordinances that restricted firearm possession and transportation. Her order exempts federal, state, county, and city law officers, trained security personnel under contract to a government agency, the city trap and skeet facility, or anyone with prior approval from the police chief.



**THE RISK.** Although the mayor believes that she is keep citizens safe at work, while visiting a city facility for business, or enjoying amenities at a park or pool, and swearing truthfully that her order complies with state law, actually she is endangering citizens by making us vulnerable to crazed gunmen intent on slaughtering scores of unarmed and unsuspecting citizens. She refuses to accept the knowledge that concealed carry lawful citizens have neutralized gunmen in other localities and saved the lives of countless individuals. Her ordinance deprives citizens of the right to assume their safety by protecting themselves and others. Killers dedicated to gun down scores or fulfill a personal grievance simply will ignore the signs. Remember, when every second counts, police are only minutes away. Stothert in her ordinance referred to threats made in public buildings and to public figures and to episodes of public violence in various American communities to justify her decision. Many public buildings like city hall and the courthouse already have security personnel. The mayor seems to ignore the rash of murders, carjackings, and other mayhem currently occurring on both Omaha public and private property that is making citizens fearful of going out at night and taking measures to arm themselves. Because all sidewalks are public property, residents may fall afoul of this order by merely walking on their own sidewalk.

**THE COST.** In order to placard every such city and public location, the city must spend a huge amount of tax money to place prohibition signs in every park, trail, or other large venue. Printing the signs in Spanish will only increase the cost.

**HER ALLY.** Leftist City Council President Pete Festersen is leading the charge for local gun control on the city council. He asked the city law dept. to research options to regulate ghost guns and bump stock accessories. Festersen also seeks to ban semi-automatic weapons and adopt a Red Flag law, which allows law officers to seize a weapon without due process. He ignores state law that local governments lack the authority to regulate or enact such ordinances or similar policies. Local governments wield only the power that state government gives them. **LB 77** preempts local regulation of firearms.

**TAKE ACTION NOW.** Contact your city council member today to repeal the mayoral decree and to halt new restrictions on the ownership and use of firearms within the city limits. Murderous criminals prefer to attack in venues where firearms prohibited, knowing they can carry out their heinous crimes without immediate counter actions. Email [netaxpayers@gmail.com](mailto:netaxpayers@gmail.com) for city council contact information and to join our NTF *City Watch Project*.

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