



DC to fight judge's ruling to stop enforcement of portion of gun law

Tom Fitzgerald

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D.C. officials are vowing to fight on after a federal court judge shot down a big part of the District's gun law.

At issue? The city mandates that anyone applying for a concealed carry gun permit has to have a "good reason" for wanting it. A U.S. District Court judge now says that question is unconstitutional.

It turns out the "good reason" question may be keeping hundreds of you from getting gun permits that you may be entitled to. We have learned that question may have given D.C. a loophole to deny hundreds of people from getting this application, but also sit on hundreds of other applications.

Right now, there are only 74 concealed carry permits in the District of Columbia. It turns out that 363 permits are still awaiting action and 231 other applications have already been denied.

This debate is not just about guns. Some critics say this opens up a legal hornet's nest if the government is allowed to demand you have "good reasons" to exercise your constitutional rights.

D.C. Attorney General Karl Racine said the city does allow gun ownership since a 2008 Supreme Court ruling, but concealed carry permits are different.

"When it comes to carrying a concealed weapon in the streets of the District of Columbia, the District of Columbia Council passed a law that required the citizen requesting that privilege to demonstrate a specific need to defend themselves," said Racine.

"You can't ask someone what is your good reason for exercising that right? Why is it that you want to speak freely? Why is it that you want to want to be free from the police ransacking your home?" said Ilya Shapiro, a senior fellow in constitutional studies at the Cato Institute. "No, it works the other way. The government is supposed to have a justification for restricting your right. That is what this case is about."

Racine said they plan on taking this case to the U.S. Court of Appeals. From there, it is likely that whoever loses will try to press on to get a hearing right back at the U.S. Supreme Court.

