



## **Concealed carry prevents more crime than it creates, study says**

Posted on 14 February 2012.

By Matt Gozun

The Marquette Tribune, Marquette U. via UWIRE

With Wisconsin's concealed carry law being in effect for just over three months, a recent national study suggests armed citizens prevent more crimes than previously thought.

The Feb. 2 report by the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank based in Washington, D.C., cites roughly 5,000 news reports from October 2003 to November 2011 involving defensive gun usage. However, the authors, Clayton Cramer and David Burnett, said the actual number of cases is much higher, as many instances are not covered by the media.

"Many defensive gun uses never make the news," the report said. "After all, 'Man Scares away Burglar, No Shots Fired' is not particularly newsworthy." Among the researchers' findings were 285 incidents involving concealed carry licenses, 154 instances involving defensive gun use by women, and 21 cases for minors and 201 for seniors. For specific crimes, 65 carjackings saw defensive gun usage, as did 25 rapes.

The authors also said concealed carry policies on college campuses lead to a reduction in crime, using two Colorado schools as test cases. After the state enacted its concealed carry law in 2003, Colorado State U. decided to allow students to carry concealed weapons while U. Colorado prohibited them. The report found a 60 percent decrease in crime at Colorado State since 2004, while U. Colorado saw a 35 percent increase during the same time period.

"(It does not) seem likely that a would-be robber would be deterred because of stickers on the doors announcing that armed robbery is severely frowned upon by the student code of conduct," the report said. "Conversely, a campus that allows concealed carry, and where even one student, professor, or even a member of the maintenance staff is armed, would present a much riskier target to criminals."

The study comes just days after 35 year old Nazir Al-Mujaahid of Milwaukee shot a robber at an Aldi grocery store in what has become Wisconsin's first major instance of a concealed carry license being used to shoot in self-defense.

The Jan. 30 incident saw Al-Mujaahid fire six or seven shots at the suspected robber, who subsequently dropped his shotgun and fled the store. According to a criminal complaint, the shotgun was not actually loaded and was just a tool to scare the cashier into giving the suspect money.

Although the grocery store posted a sign prohibiting the carrying of firearms inside, Al-Mujaahid will not be charged with violating the store's ban.

But Ladd Everitt, director of communications for the Washington, D.C.-based Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, called the Aldi incident a best-case scenario that was an exception to what he called an otherwise dangerous concealed carry law. Everitt said the concealed carry law is dangerous because it does not have strict time requirements for training.

"How often are you going to have an outcome like this?" Everitt said. "The point is people do not have the training needed to play police officer. Do you want someone who is required to have zero hours of training to open fire in a business you are standing in, under any circumstances?"

Everitt said it was "disturbing" that Al-Mujaahid was breaking the law by bringing a gun into a prohibited location and questioned whether people applying for concealed carry permits were "the most law-abiding people in America." Al-Mujaahid said he was unaware of the store's gun ban and would have gone somewhere else had he known about it.

Meghan O'Leary, a junior in Marquette U.'s College of Communication, echoed Everitt's sentiments, saying the prospect of random people carrying firearms created more opportunities for bad than good.

"By allowing people to conceal guns I don't think it will protect people, but (it will) make things more dangerous," O'Leary said. "I don't feel safe knowing anyone around me could be carrying a gun."