

Concealed carry meeting in Glenview canceled over crowding concerns

January 27, 2014 | By Alexandra Chachkevitch | Tribune reporter
January 27, 2014

chicagotribune.com

A scheduled meeting in Glenview about the new statewide concealed carry gun law was canceled after village officials expressed concerns over crowd control.

Rep. Laura Fine (D-Glenview) said she had planned to host a discussion of the law, which went into effect on Jan. 1, after getting numerous questions from residents about it.

But village officials asked Fine to postpone the event when they saw an alert the Illinois State Rifle Association sent to its members asking them to "flood" the event.

Referring to Fine as "gun-grabbing," the alert encouraged the association's members to attend the event, saying the organizers "plan to use the meeting to frighten the public and spread lies about the impact of concealed carry on public safety."

The event, which was planned to be held at 7 p.m. on Jan. 22 at the Glenview police department's headquarters, was initially expected to get between 30-50 attendees, Fine said.

Once it became apparent that the number of people who planned to show up might have been more than the space allowed, the village asked Fine and her team to cancel, Glenview Village President Jim Patterson said.

"We just want to make sure we can accommodate people," Patterson said.

Fine said the meeting was supposed to help business owners and other residents who have questions about the law. The focus of the material to be covered mainly would have been where business owners and residents can carry their concealed guns and how they can discourage unwanted concealed guns on their property should they so desire, she said.

"This was supposed to help people understand the law," Fine said, adding that the event would be rescheduled.

The Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence and representatives from the Cook County State's Attorney's Office also were supposed to be at the event, Fine said.

Richard Pearson, executive director of Illinois State Rifle Association, said his organization has about 31,000 members and frequently sends out alerts on similar meetings across the state.

He said he believed the meeting was going to have a biased nature because its organizers have opposed the law.

"It was going to be an editorial meeting," he said.

Fine, who was against the legislation, said her personal stance is no longer relevant, as the measure was put into law. Fine said the meeting was about explaining to Glenview residents and business owners what the law means for them.

"The law is the law ... We stick to the facts," said Mark Walsh, campaign director with Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence. He said his organization has been holding similar informational meetings throughout the area since the legislation passed.

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