



**Testimony of Mark Walsh
Campaign Director, Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence
Cook County Board of Commissioners Criminal Justice Committee
Wednesday, September 9, 2015**

CHICAGO OFFICE

222 South Morgan Street
Suite 4A
Chicago, Illinois 60607
312.243.ICHV (4248)
312.243.4258 (fax)
www.ichv.org

ICHV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tim Scott, Chair
Elizabeth Coolidge, Vice Chair
Adrienne Archia, Secretary
Hon. William A. Marovitz, Treasurer

Matt Basil
Carole Brown
Jadine Chou
Dr. Marie L. Crandall
Deborah Crockett
Mary Fox
Dr. Willard Fry
Chuck Garfien
Andrew Hochberg
Leticia Peralta Korovessis
Rebecca Levin
Lindsie Miller
Steven McKinley Monson
Beverly W. Pacelli
Paula Riggins
Emily J. Rupp
John Schmidt
Scott Seder
Hon. Lawrence J. Suffredin Jr.
Hon. Patrick D. Thompson

ICHV HONORARY BOARD

Dr. Katherine Kaufer Christoffel
Rebecca Janowitz
Eileen Mitchell
Hon. Harry Osterman
Hon. Ann Marie Williams
Robert Williamson
Kathleen Yosko

Colleen Daley, *Executive Director*

Good Morning, Chairman Garcia and members of the Criminal Justice Committee, My name is Mark Walsh and I am the Campaign Director for the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence and I am here in support of Commissioner Boykin's proposed ordinance to appoint a Cook County Gun Czar and Establish a Cook County Gun Violence Task Force.

Gun Violence is a public health epidemic in this country and we must do everything in our power to combat its ravages on our communities. It affects all of us-stopping not for economic status, not for education level, nor race, age, color, or creed. Although the statistics show it the disparities based on those factors are strong -to think it is not all our problem is shortsighted and foolhardy.

For 40 years, the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence has been on the frontlines of the battle to protect all people from gun violence and help save lives.

The easy access to firearms has cost all of us-in human lives-over 30,000 in this country, 1,000 in Illinois on average in a year.

The economic burden in Illinois alone is \$9.6 billion each year. How many schools could we build? How many jobs could we create? How much of our crumbling infrastructure be repaired and how many families could be kept from the pain of burying a loved one?

Commissioner Boykin has proposed an intensive effort to stop gun violence in Cook County and we applaud that effort and ask for a "yes" vote today-but we must do more.

The study conducted for the city of Chicago y the University of Chicago Crime Lab shows we have to slow the pipeline of guns entering the illegal market.

4 gun dealers account for 20% of guns used in Chicago crimes between 2009 and 2013. 3 in the suburbs and 1 in Indiana.

Nationally 90% of crime guns come from 5% of dealers-we need to go after the bad apple gun dealers who put profits above lives. ICHV and are partners believe we must pass a state licensing of gun dealers-something 15 other states and the District of Columbia already do. The license should require background checks on employees, videotaping of sales, video surveillance and security plans, law enforcement inspection of inventories and reasonable restrictions on locations of gun stores and ranges.

Nationally we must pass a universal background check system on all gun purchases. Closing these loopholes will help stop guns from being in the hands of those who shouldn't have them and keep them from entering the illegal market.

We cannot sit ideally and let this epidemic continue to spread. Please pass this important initiative that can help save lives. Thank you all