



## LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE SERVICE

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# MEMORANDUM

**To:** Representative Farley  
**From:** John Treadwell  
**Date:** September 28, 2017  
**Re:** Comparison of Permitless Carry States

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You have asked for a comparison of population, socioeconomic factors, and crime rates in Alabama with states that have adopted the permitless carry of firearms. There are currently 12 states that allow the permitless carry of firearms, including: Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas,<sup>1</sup> Idaho, Kansas, Maine, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.<sup>2</sup>

The following charts compare socioeconomic and crime statistical data, as well as general firearm statistics which were retrieved from a variety of sources, which are noted by footnote.

At the conclusion of the memorandum is a summary of which permitless carry states are most comparable to the State of Alabama for the purposes of evaluating policies relating to the use, possession, and restriction of firearms.

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<sup>1</sup> There has been legal controversy over interpretation of certain provisions of Arkansas law, and whether a person may carry a concealed handgun without a permit. Legislation has been introduced in 2017, to clarify that no permit is required. See Arkansas Att'y Gen. Op. 2015-64.

<sup>2</sup> Due to the breadth of firearm laws in each state, sources vary on how each state is categorized with regard to the carry of firearms. For example, some sources include North Dakota as a permitless carry state.

**I. POPULATION AND SOCIOECONOMIC DATA.**

State	2016 Estimated Population <sup>3</sup>	Poverty Rate 3-year Average Percentage 2014 - 2016 <sup>4</sup>	Median Household Income in Dollars	Percent of High School Graduates 2011- 2015 Persons Over 25 <sup>5</sup>
Alabama	4,863,300	16.8	\$44,833	84.3
Alaska	741,894	11.2	\$73,391	92.1
Arizona	6,931,071	18.2	\$51,473	86.0
Arkansas	2,988,248	16.8	\$42,046	84.8
Idaho	1,683,140	11.9	\$47,583	89.5
Kansas	2,907,289	12.5	\$52,205	90.2
Maine	1,331,479	13.2	\$51,419	91.6
Mississippi	2,988,726	20.8	\$40,630	82.3
Missouri	6,093,000	11.1	\$50,200	88.4
New Hampshire	1,334,795	6.9	\$70,003	92.0
Vermont	624,594	9.9	\$55,771	91.8
West Virginia	1,831,102	17.7	\$41,751	85.0
Wyoming	585,501	10.1	\$60,034	92.3

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<sup>3</sup> Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for the United States, Regions, States, and Puerto Rico, U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division.

<sup>4</sup> Current Population Survey, 2014 to 2017 Annual Social Economic Supplements, U.S. Census Bureau.

<sup>5</sup> 2011-2015 Educational Attainment Data, U.S. Census Bureau.

State	Percent of Persons over 25 who have a Bachelor's Degree <sup>6</sup>	August 2016 Unemployment Rates <sup>7</sup>	August 2017 Unemployment Rates <sup>8</sup>	Alcohol Use Disorders – Percentage 2014 - 2015 <sup>9</sup>
Alabama	23.5	5.9	4.2	4.90
Alaska	28.0	6.7	7.2	7.99
Arizona	27.5	5.1	5.0	7.06
Arkansas	21.1	4.0	3.5	5.11
Idaho	25.9	3.8	2.9	6.42
Kansas	31.0	4.3	3.9	6.37
Maine	29.0	4.0	3.8	5.57
Mississippi	20.7	5.8	5.3	5.48
Missouri	27.1	4.8	4.0	6.54
New Hampshire	34.9	2.9	2.7	7.62
Vermont	36.0	3.2	3.0	7.32
West Virginia	19.2	6.0	5.0	5.73
Wyoming	25.7	5.2	4.0	6.71

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<sup>6</sup> 2011-2015 Educational Attainment Data, U.S. Census Bureau.

<sup>7</sup> Over-the-Year Change in Unemployment Rates for States, Seasonally Adjusted, U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics.

<sup>8</sup> Over-the-Year Change in Unemployment Rates for States, Seasonally Adjusted, U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics.

<sup>9</sup> Alcohol Use Disorder in the Past Year, by Age Group and State: Percentages, Annual Averages Based on 2014 and 2015, 18 Years and Older, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

State	Serious Mental Illness— Percentage 2014 - 2015 <sup>10</sup>	Marijuana Use in Past Year -- Percentage 2014-2015 <sup>11</sup>	Cocaine Use in Past Year – Percentage 2014 - 2015 <sup>12</sup>	Heroin Use in Past Year – Percentage 2014 - 2015 <sup>13</sup>
Alabama	4.64	9.59	1.31	.29
Alaska	4.02	22.31	2.15	1.36
Arizona	4.33	13.08	2.44	.59
Arkansas	5.27	11.54	1.13	.18
Idaho	4.57	11.17	1.09	.29
Kansas	4.08	12.37	1.24	.15
Maine	5.06	19.88	1.88	.62
Mississippi	4.14	8.57	1.08	.16
Missouri	4.68	13.59	1.43	.26
New Hampshire	5.42	17.44	3.28	.66
Vermont	4.88	20.80	2.83	.83
West Virginia	5.41	10.97	1.63	.38
Wyoming	4.41	10.62	1.12	.39

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<sup>10</sup> Serious Mental Illness in the Past Year by Age Group and State: Percentages, Annual Averages Based on 2014 and 2015, 18 Years and Older, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

<sup>11</sup> Marijuana Use in the Past Year by Age Group and State: Percentages, Annual Averages Based on 2014 and 2015, 18 Years and Older, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

<sup>12</sup> Cocaine Use in the Past Year by Age Group and State: Percentages, Annual Averages Based on 2014 and 2015, 18 Years and Older, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

<sup>13</sup> Heroin Use in the Past Year by Age Group and State: Percentages, Annual Averages Based on 2014 and 2015, 18 Years and Older, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

**II. FIREARM STATISTICS GENERALLY AND VIOLENT CRIME RATES.**

State	Gun Ownership Percentage (2013) <sup>14</sup>	Firearm Related Death Rate Per 100,000 People Per Year (2015) <sup>15</sup>
Alabama	48.9	19.6
Alaska	61.7	23.4
Arizona	32.3	13.8
Arkansas	57.9	16.9
Idaho	56.9	14.7
Kansas	32.2	11.4
Maine	22.6	9.8
Mississippi	42.8	19.6
Missouri	27.1	18.1
New Hampshire	14.4	8.9
Vermont	28.8	9.6
West Virginia	54.2	14.0
Wyoming	53.8	19.6

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<sup>14</sup> Kalesan, Villarreal; Keyes, Galea, Gun Ownership and Social Gun Control, Columbia University and Boston University (May 2015).

<sup>15</sup> Firearm Mortality by State (2015), Centers for Disease Control.

**Robbery**  
by State, Types of Weapons, 2016<sup>16</sup>

<b>State</b>	<b>Total robberies</b>	<b>Firearms</b>	<b>Knives or cutting instruments</b>	<b>Other weapons</b>
Alabama	4,415	2,876	143	369
Alaska	848	242	81	116
Arizona	6,882	3,002	802	716
Arkansas	2,045	1,096	120	176
Idaho	209	56	36	32
Kansas	1,248	607	98	97
Maine	266	59	40	34
Mississippi	1,570	1,043	74	134
Missouri	6,481	3,508	323	440
New Hampshire	415	83	75	41
Vermont	48	16	6	4
West Virginia	497	176	69	76
Wyoming	58	21	2	13

<sup>16</sup> 2016 Crime in the United States, Table 13, Robbery by State, Criminal Justice Information Service Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation.

**Murder**  
by State, Types of Weapons, 2016<sup>17</sup>

State	Total murders	Total firearms	Handguns	Rifles	Shotguns	Firearms (type unknown)
Alabama <sup>18</sup>	?	?	?	?	?	?
Alaska	52	43	12	4	1	26
Arizona	336	227	156	16	10	45
Arkansas	209	151	72	11	3	65
Idaho	47	17	13	1	0	3
Kansas	96	61	43	5	1	12
Maine	20	11	2	1	3	5
Mississippi	154	128	101	4	6	17
Missouri	535	437	211	23	6	197
New Hampshire	16	8	4	1	1	2
Vermont	14	6	2	2	1	1
West Virginia	76	47	30	2	0	15
Wyoming	19	6	1	0	1	4

<sup>17</sup> 2016 Crime in the United States, Table 13, Murder by State, Criminal Justice Information Service Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation.

<sup>18</sup> Alabama only provided limited supplemental data with regard to weapons used for homicides. Therefore, the data for Alabama is incomplete.

State	Violent Crime Rate	Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter rate	Rape Rate	Robbery Rate	Aggravated assault rate
<b>PER 100,000 RESIDENTS (2014)<sup>19</sup></b>					
Alabama	427.4	5.7	41.3	96.9	283.4
Alaska	635.8	5.6	104.7	85.4	440.2
Arizona	399.9	4.7	50.2	92.8	252.1
Arkansas	480.1	5.6	59.4	69.1	346.0
Idaho	212.2	2.0	37.3	12.5	160.5
Kansas	348.6	3.1	48.6	46.9	250.0
Maine	127.8	1.6	36.5	22.9	66.9
Mississippi	278.5	8.6	35.3	81.2	153.4
Missouri	442.9	6.6	39.2	92.2	304.8
New Hampshire	196.1	.9	44.8	40.5	110.0
Vermont	99.3	1.6	17.6	11.2	68.9
West Virginia	302.0	4.0	27.3	35.2	235.5
Wyoming	195.5	2.7	29.8	9.1	153.9

### III. COMPARABLE STATES.

Based upon a comparison of the socioeconomic data relating to each state's population, general firearm statistics, and applicable crime rates, the following permitless carry states appear to be most comparable to the State of Alabama for purposes of consideration and comparison of firearm policies relating to the use, possession, and restriction of various firearms:<sup>20</sup>

1. **Mississippi.** Beginning in 2016, no state permit is required to possess a rifle, shotgun, or handgun, subject to certain limitations.
2. **Kansas.** Beginning in 2015, residents of Kansas age 21 and older may carry concealed firearms regardless of whether they have obtained a permit, subject to certain limitations.
3. **Missouri.** Beginning in 2017, lawful owners of firearms will be able to conceal and carry them anywhere in Missouri without a permit, subject to the limitations that already exist.
4. **West Virginia.** Beginning in 2016, any person 21 years or older who is legally able to own a handgun may carry the weapon concealed without the need of obtaining a permit.

<sup>19</sup> Uniform Crime Reporting Statistics, Violent Crimes, National Archive of Criminal Justice Data , Federal Bureau of Investigation (2014).

<sup>20</sup> Arkansas is comparable to Alabama in most of the categories listed in the memorandum. However, due to the uncertainty of the interpretation and application of its firearm laws, it was omitted as a possible contact state.



**IV. CONTACT INFORMATION.**

The following is contact information for each sponsor of the legislation establishing permitless carry in the state:

State	Legislation	Legislative Sponsor
<b>Mississippi</b>	HB786—Signed by the Governor in 2016.	<p><b>Rep. Andy Gipson-</b> House Judiciary Committee Chair</p> <p>Room: 112-B P. O. Box 1018 Jackson, MS 39215</p> <p>Office: (601) 359-1541</p> <p><a href="mailto:agipson@house.ms.gov">agipson@house.ms.gov</a></p>
<b>Kansas</b>	SB45—Signed by the Governor in 2015.	<p><b>Sen. Terry Bruce –</b> Senate Majority Leader</p> <p>P.O. Box 726 Hutchinson, KS 67504</p> <p>Office: (785) 296-2497</p> <p><a href="mailto:Terry.Bruce@senate.ks.gov">Terry.Bruce@senate.ks.gov</a></p>
<b>Missouri</b>	SB656—Legislature overrode veto of the Governor in 2017.	<p><b>Sen. Brian Munzlinger –</b> Majority Caucus Whip</p> <p>201 W Capitol Ave., Rm. 319 Jefferson City, Missouri 65101</p> <p>Office: (573) 751-7985</p> <p>Form email may be accessed at: <a href="http://www.senate.mo.gov/D18WebApps/Contact.aspx">http://www.senate.mo.gov/D18WebApps/Contact.aspx</a></p>

<b>West Virginia</b>	HB4145—Legislature overrode the veto of the Governor in 2016.	<b>Delegate Saira Blair</b> – Assistant Majority Whip  Room 221E, Bldg. 1 1900 Kanawha Blvd. E. Charleston, WV 25305  Office: (304) 340-3122  <a href="mailto:saira.blair@wvhouse.gov">saira.blair@wvhouse.gov</a>
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