MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

July 24, 2012

The Honorable Joseph Lieberman  The Honorable Susan Collins
Chairman  Ranking Member
706 Hart Office Building  413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
United States Senate  United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510  Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Lieberman and Ranking Member Collins:

On behalf of the Major Cities Chiefs, I am writing to express our explicit opposition to Senator Paul’s proposed amendment to S.2345 regarding the carrying of concealed handguns by permit in the District of Columbia. As we are responsible for public safety in the largest jurisdictions in the United States, we recognize that this amendment would be an enormous mistake.

This is a severely flawed amendment that would undermine efforts by law enforcement agencies across the Nation and thwart measures already enacted by the states. Please know that we stand with the more than 400 Mayors who have objected to this ill-conceived and ill-advised proposal.

Not only is this an oversimplification of carefully reasoned standards and licensing provisions, the proposed measure would arbitrarily overturn laws which have been tailored to the needs of regions and local communities. Passage of this amendment would be an affront to Federalism as it would force states, counties, localities, and cities to accept permits from other jurisdictions - whether or not the permits comply with the laws of that state.

Forcing the District of Columbia to allow issuance of permits for the carrying of concealed weapons sets a dangerous precedent. We are confident that members of Congress will not act with irresponsible disregard for the many reasonable and prudent laws already in place across the Nation, and will respect the authority of the District of Columbia, States, counties, and cities to adopt their own regulations.

Furthermore, I have personally testified against this measure in the past and would be pleased to testify in your committee on this matter. We call upon you to reject this amendment.

Sincerely,

Charles H. Ramsey
Police Commissioner, City of Philadelphia
President, Major Cities Chiefs’ Association