

Office of the Sergeant at Arms  
**U.S. House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-6634

May 25, 2022

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer  
Majority Leader  
H-107, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Leader Hoyer:

Thank you for your letter dated April 27, 2022. It is my view that the Capitol Complex should be a place where no one carries a firearm unless they are actively engaged in law enforcement or the protection work done by, among others, myself, the U.S. Capitol Police (USCP), the U.S. Secret Service, and the protective details of visiting foreign officials.

Regrettably, my position on this matter is not shared by all stakeholders. However, in my opinion, the law is clear, and the regulation is unambiguous. Pursuant to Section 5104(e) of Public Law 107-217, as amended and codified as 40 U.S.C. § 5104(e), and the regulations promulgated by the Capitol Police Board in 1967, it is unlawful for anyone, including Members of Congress, to:

carry any firearm inside the chamber or on the floor of either House, in any lobby or cloakroom adjacent thereto, in the galleries of either House or in the Marble Room of the Senate or Rayburn Room of the House unless assigned or approved by the two Sergeants of Arms [*sic*] for maintenance of adequate security.

The same law and regulations require that the firearms Members are allowed to have in their offices be kept "unloaded and securely wrapped" when being transported anywhere else on the Capitol grounds. Members are not allowed, pursuant to the 1967 regulations, to move around campus armed; any weapon must be unloaded and secured *en route* to or from a Member's office, including to, from, or into committee rooms. The Chamber magnetometers installed last January did not reflect a change in law or policy but only a new method to enforce a policy more than 50 years old. I appreciate your inquiry about what steps can be taken to make everyone aware of the restrictions, and we are considering the best ways to inform the House community and clarify these details.

Regarding security enhancements to the Capitol Complex we are working on a host of initiatives. Among them, the Sergeant at Arms Emergency Management Division has partnered with the USCP on a variety of emergency drills including responding to an Active Shooter. Informational materials are being developed and will be distributed to appropriate House staff.

In cooperation with the Office of the Senate Sergeant at Arms and the Architect of the Capitol, this office has taken numerous steps to make the Capitol complex more

physically secure. These include landscape and lighting re-design and reinforcement of windows and doors. There are also efforts, both ongoing and under consideration, to improve security at the entrance points to the Capitol and all House Office Buildings. I am available to discuss additional security initiatives with you, including those that should be discussed in a secure location.

There is room to expand our use of technology. The Sergeant at Arms ID Services and Police Services Divisions are evaluating novel technologies which are respectful of the privacy concerns of Members and staff and are more appropriately suited for use on the Capitol complex. Newer magnetometers and other scanning and security equipment now available, can further enhance our safety posture.

In closing, I would like to iterate my support for efforts to make the Capitol Grounds safer for all by further limiting the number of people who carry firearms here. I stand ready to work with you as you consider how to make the Capitol Complex a safer space for all.

Sincerely,



William J. Walker  
Sergeant at Arms