

Committee chairman: Concealed carry backers harassing family

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — Families of members of the House State Affairs Committee are being harassed by backers of a proposed law to allow Idaho residents to carry concealed weapons without a permit, the committee's chairman says.

Republican Rep. Tom Loertscher, of Iona, said on the House floor Tuesday that his home phone number and the home phone numbers of other committee members are being published, and people are calling them.

"I stand here today to call out those individuals who are singling out members of this body, including yours truly, for an action for which they have absolutely no understanding," Loertscher said. "And the new law is, I suppose, that they are publishing mine and some other members of the body's home phone numbers, where we are not at this time, and harassing our family members."

The Idaho Second Amendment Alliance brought forward the proposed law, dubbed "Constitutional Carry," and is telling individuals to call lawmakers to urge a hearing be held on the bill.

"There are a lot of angry gun owners that want a hearing on House Bill 89," said Greg Pruett, the group's president.

Currently, Idaho residents who want to carry a concealed weapon need a permit. There are two types of permits available in Idaho, one of which requires training and is recognized as valid in some other states. The enhanced permit also allows holders to carry concealed weapons on college and university campuses, but with some restrictions.

The National Association for Gun Rights posted a picture online of Loertscher superimposed over the preamble to the U.S. Constitution. The image also contained his phone number and urged people to call him because he's blocking the bill.

"I would hope the people of this state recognize that this is not the way to win friends and influence people," Loertscher said about the calls and emails.

Loertscher said he wants to make sure the law won't affect Idaho's agreements with other states to recognize Idaho's concealed carry permits.

"We're just holding off until we get some answers and figure out how the best way to approach it is," he said.

