NEW GUN LAWS BEGIN MARCH 27

When Ohio House Bill 495 becomes law on March 27, 2013, Ohio residents will benefit from several important changes to the state’s firearms law, including a somewhat more reasonable definition of an “unloaded gun in a vehicle.” This flier offers a convenient summary of those changes. For the full text of HB495, visit the Ohio General Assembly’s website at: www.legislature.state.oh.us

Important changes created by HB495:

1. **Certificate of Renewed Competency no longer required**

   The competency certification currently required for the second renewal of a concealed handgun license (CHL) has been eliminated. Licensees who will renew their licenses on or after March 27, 2013 will not be required to present a certificate of renewed competency. All other CHL renewal procedures remain the same.

2. **Parking: Statehouse Underground Garage and the Riffe Center**

   It now will be lawful to possess and/or store firearms in a motor vehicle in the Statehouse Underground Parking Garage or the Riffe Center Parking Garage in Columbus, as long as all other firearms laws are obeyed.

3. **Definition of unloaded firearm in a vehicle**

   A firearm in a vehicle now will be considered unloaded if there is no ammunition in the firearm in question, and no magazine or speed loader containing ammunition is inserted into the firearm in question, and ① or ② applies:

   - ① There is no ammunition in a magazine or speed loader that is in the vehicle in question and that may be used with the firearm in question, or
   - ② Any magazine or speed loader that contains ammunition and that may be used with the firearm in question is stored in a compartment within the vehicle in question that cannot be accessed without leaving the vehicle or is stored in a container that provides complete and separate enclosure. Such a container includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

     - A package, box, or case with multiple compartments, as long as the loaded magazine or speed loader and the firearm in question either are in separate compartments within the package, box, or case, or, if they are in the same compartment, the magazine or speed loader is contained within a separate enclosure in that compartment that does not contain the firearm and that closes using a snap, button, buckle, zipper, hook and loop closing mechanism, or other fastener that must be opened to access the contents or the firearm is contained within a separate enclosure of that nature in that compartment that does not contain the magazine or speed loader
     - A pocket or other enclosure on the person of the person in question that closes using a snap, button, buckle, zipper, hook and loop closing mechanism, or other fastener that must be opened to access the contents.

   Ammunition held in stripper-clips or in en-bloc clips is not considered ammunition that is loaded into a magazine or speed loader.

   “Unloaded” means, with respect to a firearm employing a percussion cap, flintlock, or other obsolete ignition system, when the weapon is uncapped or when the priming charge is removed from the pan.

   **Exemption for CHL holders.** According to HB495, the rules above “do not affect the authority of a person who is carrying a valid concealed handgun license to have one or more magazines or speed loaders containing ammunition anywhere in a vehicle, without being transported as described [above] as long as no ammunition is in a firearm, other than a handgun, in the vehicle . . . .” Although this language does not expressly limit the CHL exemption to magazines and speed loaders specifically for handguns, OFCC believes the wording is vague. Some CHL holders may not want to rely on this exemption.