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**In Historic Decision, U.S. Supreme Court Decides
Second Amendment Right is Fully Applicable to States and Cities**

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The Second Amendment to the United States Constitution states that the right of the people to keep and bear Arms “shall not be infringed.” Since the time of the infamous pro-slavery opinion in *Dred Scott*, the United States Supreme Court has been slow to acknowledge the Second Amendment right and to apply it to the States. That changed today with the Court’s opinion in *McDonald v. City of Chicago*.

Two years ago, the United States Supreme Court held that the Second Amendment protects an individual right to use arms for self-defense. That case, however, involved a suit filed against the District of Columbia, which is not a State. Therefore, the Court did not consider whether the Second Amendment right also applies against a state or local government.

Enter Otis McDonald, a retired union worker and community organizer, who wanted to keep a handgun in his Chicago home for self-defense. Chicago, however, effectively prohibits the ownership of handguns in its city limits. Mr. McDonald sued, and today the Supreme Court issued an opinion in his case.

According to the Court, “the Second Amendment right is fully applicable” to state and local governments. The Court also reaffirmed that individual self-defense is a basic right and is “the central component of the Second Amendment right.” Thus, citizens must be permitted to use handguns for the core lawful purpose of self-defense. At the same time, the Court made it clear that this is not a right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever, in any manner whatsoever, and for whatever purpose.

In reaching its decision, the Supreme Court rejected the arguments of some groups that only a watered-down version of the Second Amendment right should apply to the States. The Court also rebuffed efforts to use this case as a mechanism to open the floodgates for the creation of countless new rights.

Now that the Court has found Chicago’s current regulatory scheme to be unconstitutional, the case will be sent back to the lower courts for further proceedings consistent with the Supreme Court’s opinion.

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