

Crimes by Virginia Concealed Handgun Permit Holders

[Full pages with graphics can be viewed at www.csgv.org/vaccw]

The Virginia General Assembly is considering several bills during the 2010 legislative session that would significantly weaken concealed carry laws in the state, including SB 334, which would allow concealed handguns in bars, nightclubs, restaurants, pizza parlors and bowling alleys across the Commonwealth. This legislation is progressing through the House and Senate despite several high-profile mass shootings and other criminal acts by Virginia concealed handgun permit holders in recent months:

1) Jose Avila

On January 25, 2010, Jose L. Avila, 57, pointed a 9mm Astra A-90 handgun (loaded with 14 hollow-point bullets) at two U.S. Deputy Marshals in Annandale, Virginia. Avila, a licensed anger management counselor and family therapist from Fairfax County, drove by the two men and brandished his gun because he believed they had parked their cars inappropriately outside an apartment complex. The Marshals chased Avila in his vehicle, pulled him over, and were able to subdue and arrest him only after using "U.S. Marshals Service defensive tactics."

[Court records show that Avila was issued a permit to carry a concealed handgun in Virginia in 2005.](#) Avila is now in federal custody on charges of assaulting a federal officer.

2) Christopher Bryan Speight

On January 19, 2010, Christopher Bryan Speight, 39, shot and killed eight people inside and around the home he shared with family members in Appomattox, Virginia. His victims were Lauralee Sipe, 38, Speight's sister; Dwayne Sipe, 38, his brother-in-law; Morgan Dobyms, 15, Speight's niece; Joshua Sipe, 4, his nephew; Emily A. Quarles, 15, Morgan's friend; Karen Quarles, 43, Emily's mother; Jonathan L. Quarles, 43, Emily's father; and Ronald "Bo" Scruggs II, 16, Emily's boyfriend. More than 150 law enforcement officials descended on the house and arrested Speight in the woods nearby, but not before he was able to bring down a Virginia State Police helicopter with a high-powered rifle. Authorities found 17 bombs on the property. They also recovered at least a dozen firearms inside the home, including three AR-15-style assault rifles and two Chinese-made Uzis.

Speight was removed as the trustee of the Appomattox County home in 2007 after suffering "a mental breakdown." When family members met with Speight to discuss removing him as trustee, he "talked about booby-trapping his bedroom." Speight also told friends he heard a "zinging" in his ears following the death of his mother in 2006.

Despite Speight's long history of mental illness, [he was able to obtain a permit to carry a concealed handgun in Virginia in 1999 and renew it twice \(in 2004 and 2009\).](#)

3) **Gerald Ung**

Early in the morning of January 17, 2010, Gerald Ung, a law student at Temple University, got into an argument and altercation with Edward DiDonato Jr., 23, in Philadelphia's Old City. Ung drew a handgun and fired six rounds into the chest, shoulders, abdomen and hand of DiDonato, who was unarmed. The shooting was captured on video in front of Fox 29's offices in the area. DiDonato has undergone nine intensive surgeries to repair his lungs, liver, intestines, and colon.

Police reported that [Ung, 28, holds a concealed handgun permit from Virginia, his home state](#). He has been charged with attempted homicide, aggravated assault and related offenses.

4) **Nidal Malik Hasan**

On November 5, 2009, Major Nidal Malik Hasan, a licensed Army psychiatrist, walked into the Soldier Readiness Processing Center on Fort Hood military base in Killeen, Texas. After yelling "Allahu akbar," Hasan, 39, opened fire with a FN Herstal Five-seveN semiautomatic handgun, killing 13 people (12 of them Soldiers) and wounding 34 others before he was shot by military police. Hasan sustained multiple injuries but survived. He faces 13 charges of premeditated murder in a military court. The shooting ranks as the nation's worst ever on a military installation.

Hasan had openly opposed America's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and espoused extremist Islamic views. He was being monitored by the FBI-led Joint Terrorism Task Force because of emails he had exchanged with the radical imam Anwar al-Awlaki. The FBI was also investigating whether he was behind violent anti-American comments left on a website under the screen name of "NidalHasan." On two separate occasions, officials from Walter Reed and the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences met and expressed concern about Hasan's behavior, which fellow students and faculty had described as "disconnected, aloof, paranoid, belligerent and schizoid."

[In March 1996, Hasan obtained a concealed handgun permit in Roanoke County, Virginia, where he lived at the time. The permit was renewed in February 1998.](#) The application for his original permit can be viewed [here](#).

5) **Aaron Jackson**

On May 5, 2008, Aaron Jackson of Stafford, Virginia donned a bulletproof vest and used a semiautomatic AK-47 assault rifle to kill his girlfriend, Lastasha Thomas. He then killed their two young children (ages 2 ½ and 1 ½) and himself with a handgun. Police found six handguns, the AK-47 assault rifle, numerous boxes of ammunition, a sword, and a machete in the family's trailer where the murders occurred. The kitchen counter top in the trailer was crowded with empty liquor bottles. Family members cited stress from financial issues, relationship problems, and a struggle with a cocaine addiction as the most likely causes of Jackson's breakdown.

[Authorities reported that Jackson possessed a concealed carry permit in the state of Virginia.](#) "He carried a gun with a holster underneath him," said another woman who was dating Jackson at the time.

