



# Self-Reliance Institute Newsletter

July 2014 Volume 2, Issue 7

## Digital Privacy:

### The Good and Bad News

As many members of the Self-Reliance Institute probably noticed this week, the United States Supreme Court handed down a big win for electronic data privacy in [Riley v. California](#).

And while we should all be pleased with the Court's unanimous decision, we should also be mindful of the reality that our electronic communications and data remain extremely vulnerable.

So I'd like to discuss the good and the bad of Riley and the reality we face.

Before I do, here's your free copy of the June edition of the [Self-Reliance Institute Newsletter](#).

OK, let's first look at the Riley decision – the good news.

Here's how my friend Ilya Shapiro, a senior fellow in constitutional studies at the Cato Institute and editor-in-chief of the Cato Supreme Court Review, assessed the Riley

[Digital Privacy continued page 4](#)

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Restaurant Safety P 1, 3, 9
- Digital Privacy P 1, 4, 7
- Return to Gold P 1, 5
- Restaurant Safety 2 P 2, 6, 7
- Preparedness P 2, 8

## Guns and Restaurants

Let's discuss something that has been receiving a lot of attention in the media and in the Second Amendment rights community – the lawful carrying of guns in restaurants.

I suspect many of you will agree with the first part of what I have to say and will be offended by the second part.

But I hope you'll read it all and then share your thoughts with me at [Rob@SelfRely.com](mailto:Rob@SelfRely.com)

Let's get started.

In recent months, a small number of individuals have taken it upon

themselves to test how various restaurant chains would react to a group of "patrons" openly carrying guns – in most cases, long guns – as they attempt to enter those restaurants and be served.

These incidents have caused confusion on the part of everyone involved, especially the press.

Here's how the Washington Times described the issue and circumstances this weekend from the latest incident in ["Chili's, Sonic Drive-In tell gun owners to leave firearms at home"](#) – a somewhat misleading headline atop an even more misleading article.

[Restaurant Safety continued page 3](#)

## A Return to the Gold Standard?

Honestly, when I see all the ads on TV for buying gold it makes my head hurt.

Not because I don't believe it's important to own gold, but because many of the companies advertising gold try to scare people into buying and, in the process, paying too much for an important commodity.

In other words, many of the ads insult our common sense. And, by so doing, I fear many folks who should have some gold tucked away have shied away from buying it because of the ads.

So, in one sense, all those ads do

more to confuse the question of whether we should own gold.

Personally, I believe that everyone should own some gold. But I've shied away from talking about it in an advisory because I've been concerned that I would sound just like one of the "know-it-alls" in the ads I see on TV.

That's why I was very happy this week to see that former presidential candidate Steve Forbes publicly stated that there is a good chance the United States will return to the gold standard. And, truth be told, he's not the only one. Ever since the

[Return to Gold continued page 5](#)

## Guns and Restaurants — Part Two

The advisory I sent about guns and restaurants last week generated more email than any other Self-Reliance Institute Advisory to date.

Thank you!

As you recall, the advisory addressed the fact that a small number of individuals recently have taken it upon themselves to test how various restaurant chains would react to a group of “patrons” openly carrying guns – in most cases, long guns – as they attempt to enter those restaurants and be served.

I noted that the incidents were causing confusion on the part of everyone involved, especially the press.

I thought I’d share a few of the representative emails I received so that

we all – especially me! – can learn from the many experienced constitutionalists and gun owners who are members of the Self-Reliance Institute.

As always, I protect the identity and privacy of members who write me by just using their initials and truncating any employment information.

Significantly, everyone who wrote to me agreed with my two major points that:

1) “As a Second Amendment purist – in fact, as a Bill of Rights purist – I support the right of any individual to openly carry a firearm. I will support the right of that individual to openly carry a firearm in almost every circumstance and every location that I can imagine.”

2) “Having stated that, I think anyone who openly carries a firearm (hand gun or long gun) into a restaurant (or most any other public establishment) is a fool.”

I then went on to explain my reasoning by pointing out that:

“If you are openly carrying a firearm in a public establishment that might be a target for robbery – in other words, almost any business in America – you might as well paint a sign on your forehead that says, “SHOOT ME FIRST.”

“Even without the possibility of a robbery, you are openly (pun intended) inviting trouble with some idiot who decides he’s going to challenge your right to openly carry. And if that

[Restaurant Safety 2 continued page 6](#)

## Preparing for the Next 20 Years

I’m often asked where and how I find all the material and resources I share with the Self-Reliance Institute. Truth be told, I’m an insomniac. I rarely get more than three hours of sleep a night.

But don’t get me wrong, I’m not complaining. Because I’m an insomniac, I have extra hours every day to read and absorb tremendous amounts of information. And I can do so while the rest of the world is asleep and, this is the best part, it’s quiet.

I love the quiet. It’s why I moved to a rural community in the mountains.

That middle-of-the-night quiet allows

me to focus far better than during the day when the hustle and bustle of modern living assaults the senses and takes away from the ability to concentrate.

OK. That’s a long way of saying that, during another sleepless night, I found a great video I want to share with you this week.

Then again, the way I found the video was a bit circuitous.

As I’ve probably mentioned before, I love the blog located at [ZeroHedge.com](#). I check it several times a day.

One of the regular contributors at ZeroHedge is Charles Hugh Smith. Smith has a blog of his own – [OfT-](#)

[woMinds.com](#).

So while reading ZeroHedge, I saw a post by Smith that pointed to his blog at OfTwoMinds, which then pointed me to an old favorite resource of mine – [PeakProsperity.com](#).

PeakProsperity is, for the most part, a subscription service. But occasionally they run pieces for free. And it’s one of those pieces – in this case a video - which I want to share with you today.

The video is titled, “Why the Next 20 Years Will Be Completely Unlike the Last 20.” The video runs almost an hour. But, believe me, it’s worth it.

[Preparedness continued page 8](#)

## Restaurant Safety

“Sonic-Drive-In and Chili’s Bar & Grill both issued statements asking diners to refrain from bringing concealed weapons into their restaurants, even if they have a permit, NBC News reported Friday.

“Sonic Vice President of Public Relations Patrick Lenow told the news agency in an email that while the drive-in chain respected current gun laws, certain actions led to new consideration for their restaurants’ policies.

“While we historically have relied upon local laws to guide how we address the display of guns at drive-ins, recent actions required we carefully reconsider this approach. We’ve considered the views and desires of our customers and employees that staff the drive-ins across the country. Accordingly, we’re asking that customers refrain from bringing guns onto our patios or into our indoor dining areas. With respect to the storage of guns in vehicles, we ask that our customers continue to honor local laws,” he said.

“Chili’s parent owner Brinker International issued a statement asking customers to keep their handguns out of plain sight following recent incidents at some of its restaurants.

“We recognize that the open carry of firearms in restaurants creates an uncomfortable atmosphere and is not permitted under many local liquor laws. So, we kindly ask that guests refrain from openly carrying firearms into our restaurants and we will continue to follow state and local

laws on this issue,” Brinker public relations manager Ashley Johnson said in an email to CNBC.”

There is so much wrong in this news report – based on an NBC

News report, [“Chili’s, Sonic Toughen Stance on Guns,”](#) that it’s beyond

frustrating. And it follows faulty reporting when earlier incidents involving Chipotle Mexican Grill and Starbucks took place.

Most important, contrary

to the first paragraph in the Washington Times piece quoted above, neither Sonic nor Chili’s specifically referenced “concealed weapons.” In fact, if you look at the email from Sonic Vice President of Public Relations Patrick Lenow, he specifically references the “display of guns.” That certainly leads to the logical conclusion that he was discussing individuals openly carrying a firearm as compared to concealed carry.

Further, the statement from Chili’s (see above) specifically references “open carry” – not concealed carry – twice in one paragraph.

So it seems clear both restaurants are referencing open carry laws and the open carry of firearms, not concealed carry. This also makes sense as the incidents that sparked the statements from the restaurants involved open carry, not concealed carry.

Now for my thoughts that you might find both agreeable and disagreeable.

For clarity, let’s ignore the confu-



Continued from page 1

sion on the part of the media when it comes to the difference between open carry laws, concealed carry laws, and our inalienable rights under the Second Amendment. Most reporters, even at the conservative Washington Times, don’t have a clue when it comes to the Second Amendment and the current state of gun laws.

Instead, let’s focus on open carry vs. concealed carry when it comes to restaurants. And, in so doing, let’s differentiate between what we can lawfully do and what we should do once we apply common sense.

So here’s the part you’ll probably find agreeable.

In many states it is lawful to openly carry firearms, including long guns. As a Second Amendment purist – in fact, as a Bill of Rights purist – I support the right of any individual to openly carry a firearm. I will support the right of that individual to openly carry a firearm in almost every circumstance and every location that I can imagine.

Having stated that – here comes the part you might not agree with – I think anyone who openly carries a firearm (hand gun or long gun) into a restaurant (or most any other public establishment) is a fool.

Let me explain.

If you are openly carrying a firearm in a public establishment that might be a target for robbery – in other words, almost any business in America – you might as well paint a sign on your forehead that says, “SHOOT ME FIRST.”

[Restaurant Safety continued page 9](#)



## Digital Privacy

ruling in his piece, [“Unanimous Supreme Court Correctly Stops Police from Searching Peoples’ Entire Lives Willy-Nilly.”](#)

“In its ruling today in *Riley v. California*, the Supreme Court unanimously established a clear new rule for police-citizen interaction: The police can’t, without a warrant, search the digital information on cell phones they seize from people they arrest. This is a big deal because it means that being arrested for, say, not paying a speeding ticket, will no longer open you up to having your entire life examined by law enforcement. Unlike the satchels and billfolds of yore, people now carry essentially all their private documents with them at all times: address books, financial and medical records, photo albums, diaries, correspondence, and more. To allow police to review all of that information just because they happen to have arrested someone would violate the Fourth Amendment’s protection of personal papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures.

“If the police have independent probable cause to access someone’s digital information, they can get a warrant. If they don’t, making an arrest shouldn’t give them license to go on a fishing expedition.

“What’s really surprising about this ruling is that it’s both broad and unanimous. Sweeping rulings on high-profile subjects tend to split the Court, whether ideologically or, in criminal procedure cases like this one, between formalists and pragmatists. Unanimous rulings, mean-

Continued from Page 1

while, tend to be cautious, splitting the baby in a way that doesn’t significantly change the law. Yet here we have a loud and unified “bright-line rule” that sets a major standard for the digital age. Kudos to the Court—and raspberries to the federal government, which has now had its expansive arguments rejected unanimously 11 times since January 2012.”

As you can see, Shapiro is pleasantly surprised that a unanimous Court created a “bright-line rule” protecting the digital information on cell phones.



I echo his surprise. It’s rare for the Court to issue such a sweeping vindication of our constitutional rights. But, thankfully, in this case

they did. They’ve put much needed life back into the Fourth Amendment and the protection the Founders intended.

Here is the key language from the [Court’s opinion](#):

“Modern cell phones are not just another technological convenience. With all they contain and all they may reveal, they hold for many Americans “the privacies of life.” The fact that technology now allows an individual to carry such information in his hand does not make the information any less worthy of the protection for which the Founders fought. Our answer to the question of what police must do before searching a cell phone seized incident to an arrest is accord-



ingly simple—get a warrant.”

So when it comes to the data on our cell phones (and, arguably, other portable electronic devices like tablets, etc.) the Court has made it fairly straight-forward. If the police want to search the device – even if an individual has been arrested – they must get a warrant.

That’s the good news.

Here’s the bad.

There are still many ways that the government can obtain your personal communications without a warrant.

This week, ProPublica, an independent, non-profit newsroom that produces investigative journalism in the public interest, updated [“No Warrant, No Problem: How the Government Can Get Your Digital Data.”](#)

As the introduction to the update notes:

“The government isn’t allowed to wiretap American citizens without a warrant from a judge. But there are plenty of legal ways for law enforcement, from the local sheriff to the FBI to the Internal Revenue Service, to snoop on the digital trails you create every day. Authorities can often obtain your emails and texts by going to Google or AT&T with a court order that doesn’t require showing probable cause of a crime. These powers are entirely separate from the National Security Agency’s collection of Americans’ phone records en masse, which the

[Digital Privacy continued page 7](#)

## Return to Gold

start of the Great Recession, there has been more and more discussion about a return to the gold standard.

OK. Let's first take a look at what Forbes had to say this week in an interview with Newsmax and then examine what a return to the gold standard could mean for the price of gold.

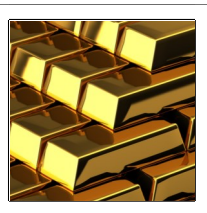
In, ["Steve Forbes: We Will Return to Gold Standard,"](#) Newsmax provides two videos of Forbes discussing why the U.S. will have to go back to the gold standard.

Here's a bit of the accompanying article:

*"Business mogul Steve Forbes says that not only is a return to the gold standard a realistic option, but 'circumstances' in our economy will necessitate it.*

*"We were on the gold standard for 180 years in this country's history — did very well with it," Forbes told J.D. Hayworth, John Bachman and Miranda Khan on "America's Forum" on Newsmax TV on Monday.*

*"If we'd been on a gold standard since 1971, when Richard Nixon took us off the gold standard, today our economy*



*would be 50 percent larger if we'd just maintained historic growth rates we had for the first 180 years of our existence,' the chairman and editor-in-chief of Forbes Media explained.*

*"The gold standard is a monetary system in which the value of currency is equal to a fixed amount of gold. The currency can also be converted into gold.*

Continued from Page 1

*"Gold gives money . . . stability just like the ruler measures length, the clock measures time, a scale measures weight," Forbes added. 'A dollar measures value and when the value is stable, you get a lot more investment, a lot more growth, a lot more opportunity.'*

*"Without the gold standard in place, the dollar has grown increasingly unstable, even though there have been 'periods of strength,' Forbes says.*

*"When you have an unstable dollar, you get more speculation," he explained. 'You get the kind of thing you saw with the housing bubble, and so that spells trouble for all of us.'"*

Trouble indeed!

What will happen if Forbes is correct and the U.S. returns to the gold standard?

While no one can predict the exact price – and there is always the possibility that the price could go lower – most "experts" agree that the price of gold could jump five to six times (or more) from whatever the price is at the time the return to the gold standard is announced.

In fact, even speculation of a return to the gold standard could push prices up dramatically. In other words, those who own gold when serious talk about a return to the gold standard begins could see the value of the gold they own skyrocket.

Most important, since the whole purpose of returning to the gold standard would be to stabilize the dollar, it will be too late to buy gold



once the decision is made because the price will most likely jump and then settle in at a stable figure.

Bottom line: I'm not an investment advisor and, obviously, everyone's situation is different. But Forbes is an intelligent man who understands money better than most, so his view that a return to the gold standard will happen is worth considering.

If you agree with him, do a bit of research (after all, this is the Self-Reliance Institute!) and investigate what a return to the gold standard could mean for the price of gold. I think you'll find what I did – that the price could rise dramatically.

Let me know what you think!

Do you think Forbes is correct? Do you own gold? Do you think gold is a good investment? Do you think gold is a good commodity to own in case there is a collapse in the monetary system of the U.S.?

Email me at [Rob@SelfRely.com](mailto:Rob@SelfRely.com) and share your thoughts.





## Restaurant Safety 2

Continued from page 2

*challenge becomes a physical confrontation, well, that's not a good situation for anyone.*

*"So let's apply a bit of common sense.*

*"When it comes to your personal safety and your ability to tactically defend yourself against an assailant who places you in imminent fear of death or serious bodily harm – the legal reason to employ deadly force – you are far better off carrying a concealed handgun than openly carrying a firearm.*

*"Why? Because you have the element of surprise and that is always to your advantage.*

*"In short, while you may have the legal right to open carry, concealed carry is the right thing to do."*

Here's what several of you had to say (I've done some editing for clarity and space, but the context is preserved):

*"I am a former police captain and I agree with you wholeheartedly about open concealers setting themselves up as targets. Rule #1 from the police academy: I cannot protect others if I have emitted the "Shoot Me First!" message." –V.R.*

*"I agree 100 percent. All this gun (displaying) does is give anti-gun nuts something else to gripe about. A low profile is always better." –P.S.*

*"Rob: I totally agree with you. It's "PURE STUPIDITY" to openly carry any firearm in public. You're asking for unwanted trouble if you do. The people who do that are the ones that give us "LAW ABIDING" citizens a*

*bad name. I strongly think that every American should own and carry. That would drop the crime rate drastically if the criminals know that everyone is armed and willing to use their weapon. Criminals are "COWARDS" and look for easy targets not wanting to get hurt or killed themselves. But when you get down to the "BRASS TACKS" of it all, not everyone owning a concealed permit should be allowed to carry. You need a MATURE RESPONSIBLE MIND. There are too many people that are hotheaded or quick-tempered that would pull their weapon out and use it when they are NOT justified in doing so. I've had my permit for 15 years now and have never seen an occasion where I would need it." –B.J.*

*"You are right. Anyone who openly carries a gun into an eating place is a nut and is just looking for a fight." – B.R.*

*"Rob: I totally agree with you to only practice concealed carry and not even attempt open carry in a restaurant." –C.P.*

*"Rob: I fully and completely agree with every word that you said in your blog. Ironically, we had a conversation on this topic this morning here at work. All of the men I work with are avid 2nd Amendment supporters, myself included. The feeling among all of us was that the recent incidents involving men carrying long rifles into eating establishments is one of the dumbest things I have seen in many years. It only takes a few of these sort of incidents to give the anti-gun people all the ammunition they need to persuade those*

*who don't care one way or the other about the topic to move against our 2nd Amendment rights. Why people choose to act out in such a manner is beyond the comprehension of the vast majority of people with even one ounce of common sense. Simply put, it causes the millions of decent people who believe in our right to own firearms to lose years of hard work trying to stand up for our constitutional rights. It is too bad that a background check does not include some way of finding out if you are just plain stupid.*

*"These FEW individuals have done more to alienate the public against gun rights, in only a few minutes, than the rest of us could do unintentionally in a hundred years. So next time we try to convince someone who is riding the fence when it comes to the 2nd Amendment, we are going to have to apologize for the actions of a few really stupid individuals.*

*"Thanks for allowing me to vent. I'm really angry with these people and would love to spend 5 minutes with all of them out behind the wood shed. And you know what I mean." – J.M.*

*"I agree 100%. Some people are very afraid of guns. When they see long guns, they probably would not go to that particular restaurant or business. Why advertise that you have a weapon. I conceal carry everywhere here in south Florida. My personal advice to anyone: Lay low and do not advertise you have a weapon." –D.P.*

[Restaurant Safety continued page 7](#)

## Digital Privacy

Continued from page 4

*House of Representatives voted to end last month.*

ProPublica then provides a chart of “Stuff They Can Get,” “How They Get It,” and “What the Law Says.” The categories include: Phone Records, Location Data, IP Addresses, Email, Email Drafts, Text Messages, Cloud Data, and Social Media.

I highly recommend that you take a look at the [information provided by ProPublica](#). In this day and age, it's important to know just how vulnerable your electronic communications are to government seizure.

OK. That's the good and the bad. Let me leave you with a bit of optimism.

Given the Supreme Court's decision in Riley, I believe we will see more recognition of our Fourth Amendment rights when it comes to our digital information from the Court in coming decisions.

But, until that time arrives, we must be aware that much of what we transmit electronically is vulnerable to government interception and seizure.

As always, you can share your thoughts and comments by writing me at [Rob@SelfRely.com](mailto:Rob@SelfRely.com)



## Restaurant Safety 2

Continued from Page 6

“As we have a situation in our country which has developed over a century, almost, whereby the vast majority are programmed – just like Dr. Pavlov's dog – to react at the sight of a gun – “He's got a gun (scream, panic), Horrors!” – so we are definitely at the center of a problem when we openly carry. In the Constitutionally pure U.S. (used to be), it wouldn't be that way. Folks would feel more secure in the

As you can see, this topic – open carry of firearms into public facilities – generated a lot of interest and many great opinions. Interestingly, not a single email was received that agreed with the group that is causing the controversy when it comes to how they are comporting themselves.

I think that's a sign that the Self-Reliance Institute is composed of

**. . . Self-Reliance Institute is composed of mature, responsible, adults who are very serious about their Second Amendment rights . . .**

company of an armed individual. Were we able to miraculously recreate that world, it would be a very safe one, what with every fifth or sixth person carrying openly. No criminal with any wits would attempt to rob or assault. Meanwhile, in the real world, it would be great if one out of five would be carrying concealed, and that folks would be aware of this. I believe the effect would be generally the same. But, we mustn't allow gun-free zones, as these would only make folks within defenseless.” –B.P. (retired military and airline pilot)

*“As you point out, surprise is generally a strong element in a good defense. Elementary, Mr. Douglas.”* – J.M.

Elementary indeed, J.M.!

mature, responsible, adults who are very serious about their Second Amendment rights while also realizing that with rights comes responsibility.

And the responsible thing to do when it comes to your personal safety and your ability to tactically defend yourself against an assailant who places you in imminent fear of death or serious bodily harm – the legal reason to employ deadly force – is to carry a concealed handgun and keep it concealed until the moment that you've determined that you need to employ it.





## Preparedness

Before I share with you a bit of what Smith and others have to say about the video, let me go ahead and give you four links to where you can find the video as it is available at more than one location on the web. This way, if one of the links doesn't work for your browser, you can try the other links.

The video can be found [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

OK. Here's a bit of what Adam Taggart has to say, by way of introduction, about "Why the Next 20 Years Will Be Completely Unlike the Last 20."

*"We're facing a future in which the economic growth the world has enjoyed over the past century can no longer continue.*

*"Over-indebtedness, mal-investment, cronyism, manipulation, and misguided policymaking have all certainly contributed to our current predicament. But the principal causes are much bigger. And much harder to address.*

*"Simply put, we're entering an era when it's becoming increasingly difficult to obtain the resources we need -- at the cost we need -- to power the economic activity we need.*

*"The trends of resource depletion, escalating mining & drilling costs, species die-offs, emptying aquifers, declining energy yields and the like are increasingly pitting the world's 7 billion people (soon to be 9 billion before 2050) against each other in competition for the remaining biomass and minerals that make industry possible.*

*"As a result, massive changes to our way of life are in store. No matter where each of us lives.*

*"This brand-new video shines a bright light on these trends and the risks we face as a result. But it also offers hope. If we take action now, while there's still time, there's much we can do not only to reduce our personal vulnerability to these threats, but also to step into this new future with newfound optimism."*

Sound familiar? These are some the issues we often talk about here at the Self-Reliance Institute and that my colleague Chris Peterson discusses with his clientele.

Additionally, here's what Charles Hugh Smith has to say about the video:

*"The Status Quo is not sustainable...Coming to the understanding that the Status Quo is not sustainable is often a crooked path of overcoming programming, propaganda, denial and fear. My colleagues at PeakProsperity.com (where I am a contributing writer) have summarized why the Status Quo is not sustainable in an engaging one-hour video program. ...*

*"The program's roots are in Chris Martenson's original video presentation, "The Crash Course," a series that went viral around the time of the Global Financial Meltdown. The entire series has been completely reworked, and this one-hour summary introduces the key dynamics in a way that is accessible to those to whom these concepts and realities are new.*

Continued from Page 2

*"This program is free. If you've been looking for one program that would help those who are new to the topics of unsustainability, this is it."*

Look. I realize some of you won't watch an hour-long video. I hope you will. It'll be a far better spent hour than watching most anything else when it comes to thinking about your future and whether your prepared for the changes that are on the horizon.

But in case you don't, here are the six steps that Martenson includes in his Call To Action at the end of the video:

- 1) *Invest in Your Community – The strength of your local community will be key in the future.*
- 2) *Protect the Purchasing Power of Your Financial Wealth – Gold and silver.*
- 3) *Reduce Your Dependence on Fossil Sources of Energy – Solar power and other small changes.*
- 4) *Source More of Your Calories Locally – This will reduce your exposure to price spikes.*
- 5) *Boost Your Emergency Readiness – Are you self-reliant? Do you have emergency supplies?*
- 6) *Improve Your Health – Physical and emotional health and strength are key to survival.*

Again. I highly recommend watching the entire video and it can be found [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

Once you do, drop me an email at [Rob@SelfRely.com](mailto:Rob@SelfRely.com) and let me know what you think.





## Restaurant Safety

Continued from page 3

Even without the possibility of a robbery, you are openly (pun intended) inviting trouble with some idiot who decides he's going to challenge your right to openly carry. And if that challenge becomes a physical confrontation, well, that's not a good situation for anyone.

So let's apply a bit of common sense.

When it comes to your personal safety and your ability to tactically

defend yourself against an assailant who places you in imminent fear of death or serious bodily harm – the legal reason to employ deadly force – you are far better off carrying a concealed handgun than openly carrying a firearm.

Why? Because you have the element of surprise and that is always to your advantage.

In short, while you may have the legal right to open carry, concealed

carry is the right thing to do.

Do you agree? Do you disagree? Let me know by emailing me at [Rob@SelfRely.com](mailto:Rob@SelfRely.com) and I'll use your thoughts (I won't identify you personally) for further discussion on the best way to use our Second Amendment rights in a future advisory.



## Self-Reliance Institute Newsletter

### Privacy:

**HERE'S THE BOTTOM LINE: WE WILL NOT EVER GIVE, SELL, OR RENT YOUR INFORMATION TO ANYONE – EVER.**

### Questions or comments?

Please email me at [Chris@SelfRely.com](mailto:Chris@SelfRely.com) or call me at my Freedom Writer's Publishing office at 970-367-7624.



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