

July 10, 2009

Mr. Alfred W. Speer
Clerk of the House of Representatives
State Capitol
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Re: House Bill No. 523 by Representative Ernst

Dear Mr. Speer:

Under current law, it is illegal to carry a firearm “used in the commission of a crime of violence” within a parade zone. The purpose of this qualifying language is to require that the illegal *use* of a firearm is the primary element of the offense, not the mere possession of a firearm. House Bill No. 523 removes this important provision and criminalizes certain acts of mere possession. The National Rifle Association and others have requested veto of this bill in part because it does not exempt firearm carriers with a valid permit under R.S. 40:1379.3 or unintentional violators. In addition, I have signed House Bill No. 44, which creates the crime of reckless or criminally negligent discharge of a firearm within 1,000 feet of certain public events, including parades.

For these reasons, I have vetoed House Bill No. 523 and hereby return it to the House of Representatives.

Sincerely yours,

Bobby Jindal
Governor

jw