Argument for *Peterson v. Martinez*, occurred on 11/17/2011, in front of Judges Lucero, Hartz, and Baldock.

JM: John Monroe, Attorney for Gray Peterson, Plaintiff-Appellant

MG: Matthew Grove, counsel for CO AG John Suthers on state law claims and Peter Weir/James Davis, state defendant on reciprocity. Defendant-Appellee's

JCL: Judge Carlos Lucero, 10th Circuit Judge

JHH: Judge Harris Hartz, 10th Circuit Judge

JBRB: Judge Bobby Ray Baldock, 10th Circuit Judge

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-Gray Peterson

JM: Thank you your honor, may it please the court, John Monroe for the appellant, Gray Peterson...

JCL: Now since we, you've already heard that this court takes an interest in its jurisdiction and moot ness, so I have a question about that. Um, I heard on the news last night that reciprocity statute passed the House with a significant majority and it's been moving very fairly quickly. If that becomes law, does that moot this case?

JM: Uh, well, I guess, your honor, I'm not familiar with that, uh, with that bill that's in the House, There already is a reciprocity statute...

JCL: Well, it's a, if I understand from the news, there's a statute that passed a significant margin in the House yesterday, that requires every state to accept a concealed carry license from any other state that's uh...

JM: Oh, I'm sorry; you're talking about the federal statute, HR 822...

JCL: Yes, yes, yes-

JM: Um, if that were to pass, I can see where that would change the tenor of this case but um...of course it hasn't passed, so it...

JCL: Since it's moving...it seems to have been moving very quickly, I only heard about this issue in Congress recently, so my question is, should we pay any attention to that? Or would the adoption, if that passes both House and signed by the President, would that moot your case here? I just wanted to make sure about that...

JM: I think it would certainly moot the reciprocity issue, which was dismissed and not decided on the merits below. I haven't really given thought to whether it would, um, moot the remainder of it...I can think of at least one reason why it would not, and that is, under the federal gun free school zone act, a person is exempt from that act, if he possesses a license issued by the state in which the school zone is located, so in other words.

JCL: A license to do what?

JM: A license to carry a concealed weapon?

JCL: a concealed weapon?

JM: It doesn't matter whether it's concealed or not under the federal gun free school zone act.

JCL: I had, we looked carefully in our chambers and in my chambers to see if whether you had brought an open carry claim and whether that was before us, and uh....I find nothing in your amended complaint that puts that at issue before us. Is it or is it not an issue?

JM: Well the...the issue isn't an open carry claim, it's a carry claim.

JCL: I understand, I understand, the open carry...that is not expressly before us.

JM: No, my client, correct, my client is indifferent; he wants to be allowed to carry a firearm...

JBRB: Well, wait a minute, I think the answer to Judge Lucero's question is extremely important because you're citing, and it's been cited in paragraphs 8, 11, and 12, and are you now saying that you are not, you have not raised the issue of Denver, Denver County, and the fact that you have not plead the carry question?

JM: Perhaps I misunderstood Judge Lucero's question...

JBRB: Well, you better ask him to repeat him to repeat it again because...

JCL: Well I'm interested in your question.

(Laughter on the panel)

JM: Well, the, we have not separately plead an issue of open carry versus concealed carry...

JHH: You have not specifically challenged the Denver ordinance, have you?

JM: No we have not, we accept the ordinance as it is, and the fact that a license is required, and are playing by the game and saying "OK, we want a license"

JCL: Well, we just want to know, whether, because it's important to this panel whether you're asking us to overturn the Denver ordinance, that um, prohibits the open carrying of weapons, handguns, in this city.

JM: We're not...

JCL: That's not a throw away question...

JM: No, and I agree, it's not a throw away question, we're not specifically asking that. We're asking that my client be allowed to carry a firearm in Denver, openly or concealed, he's indifferent, and we're trying to follow the scheme that's in place that requires a license, so he applied for a license.

JCL: So the main thing at issue is that basically the licensing provision that we have to decide.

JM: Correct, and the issue of....

JCL: Whether a license is even necessary?

JM: Well, he hasn't challenged the necessity for a license; he's accepted that, certainly one could challenge it. You know they are kind of intertwined...

JCL: You're presenting a very narrow question for us to consider, then?

JM: Yes, we're asking for an order that my client be issued a license, because he's otherwise qualified for one.

JHH: Here's my concern, which may underlie the other questions that's been asked. Uh, I'm not certain that the Supreme Court would follow this now, but...we feel pretty bound by clear dictum by the Supreme Court, and there's a case more than 100 years old, I believe, by the Supreme Court, that the right to bear arms does not include the right to carry concealed weapons, so...the...reciprocity statute doesn't impinge under that precedent. On the reciprocity statute you're challenging with respect to concealed weapons. Doesn't infringe the right to bear arms. But you argue is that you should have the right to carry a weapon outside of your home...when you're law abiding citizen. But you're challenging, but, rather

than challenging the ordinance that forbids you from doing that, you're challenging a statute that relates to an interest that is not protected, by the 2nd amendment or as incorporated by the 14th amendment to apply to the states. And that is the essence of the standing argument that is being made by the state in this case, and it strikes me as a pretty good argument, can you respond to that, if I'm at all clear? Maybe, uh, I haven't been clear.

JM: I'll try, if it sounds like I'm going astray, please interrupt me...the issue with my client is, he wants to be able to carry a firearm. Denver has the ordinance, it doesn't ban carrying a firearm, and it just requires a license. Now, my client could have attacked that provision requiring a license. He may or may not have prevailed in something like that...

JCL: Well we're still trying to define the issues, and that's what I was trying to ask while Judge Harris was asking the question. I think…if you're noticing that we're struggling a little here, it's because we're trying to figure exactly what we have to decide, and what we don't have to decide. Because it might make our task a little easier. Also, we have general, uh, policies that we don't decide matters that are not presented to us. So, are you then saying, in response to Judge Harris' question, Judge Hartz's question that the only real beef that you have is with the fact that you were denied a license? Or is your beef the proposition that no license should be required?

JM: We have raised the latter issue that no license should be required. However, if the license requirement is so onerous, that it deprives someone of the right to bear arms, then that does impinge on the license requirement.

JBRB: Yeah, but we have two different entities, actually three, you've got the city of Denver, the County of Denver, and you've got the state of Colorado, and this is what we're trying to separate out. Are you attacking the fact that the city of Denver and I believe the County of Denver, say that you can't even carry an open weapon in the streets here in these counties? Your other claim is against the state for not issuing you a license to carry a concealed....I think that's we're trying to....

JM: No, no, the state does not issue licenses, that's done by the county sheriff's. So there's a beef against the county sheriff...

JHH: It's a state statute that's involved....

JM: and the problem is, Denver has relied on the existing on the state licensing procedure for its own ordinance against carrying a firearm. The problem could have been resolved if Denver had created its own ordinance with its own license requirement, it didn't do that. So it's using a license that was designed for another purpose, carrying a concealed weapon throughout the state, and they're trying to... and Denver uses that as a license to carry a firearm at all in the city.

JBRB: Open or otherwise?

JM: Open or otherwise.

JBRB: OK, that goes back to Judge Lucero's question and mine, under para—have you plead that? Because all you refer to is paragraph 8, 11, and 12. Does that bring that issue clearly into focus? Because we got standards that we have to apply, and that's what I'm wanting to know. If you're attacking the fact that in one instance they're just prohibiting you from even carrying a weapon of any kind anywhere...versus, the right to have a concealed weapon. Am I making myself clear?

JM: Well, I think so. We're not, and to be clear, we're not attacking the right to...we're not saying there's a right to carry a concealed weapon; we're only saying that there's a right to carry a weapon. And if a governmental entity wants to license that right, as long as the licensing process is not overly burdensome. That's fine. So we're not attacking the existence of the licensing system. What we're attacking is...my client who is a law-abiding citizen, here is no information in the record that indicates that he is not, can't get a license, and therefore he can't exercise the fundamental right to bear arms in the city of Denver.

JHH: But it seems to be that your beef is with the Denver ordinance and because that prohibits you from exercise, what you contend, is your constitutional right to bear arms, your clients, and therefore we aught to do something about the state statute, and that's...I don't think that's the right way to challenge the municipal ordinance?

JM: Well, we're not saying something should be done about the state statute. We're saying that my client should be issued a license. Denver has identified the license requirement...

JHH: Are your arguments about the license relate to the reciprocity statute? Isn't that the basis of all of your legal arguments in your brief? That the uh...reciprocity statute is not rational? Uh, it's an undue burden on various rights?

JMM: We have two separate claims, really. The failure of the Denver sheriff to issue the license, and then the failure of the state to give reciprocity to my client's license. But those are two separate claims in the case, and the latter one was never decided on the merits, because it was dismissed early on, so there's no decision on the merits on that and we're asking the court to reverse on that as well. Your honor I would like to reserve the remainder of my time if I may?

JCL: You've been very patient, and it's reserved. So far...uh...you haven't had a chance to argue any of your case. I'm sitting here wondering if we shouldn't have to schedule further arguments in this case at some point. Don't be surprised if we do. But in any event, we'll let you know. Counsel, we're ready to hear from you as well. Have we made your task easier or harder? Mr. Grove?

MG: May it please the court. My name is Matthew Grove; I am here on behalf of the state defendants in this case. The executive director of the Colorado Department of Public Safety, who was originally named as a defendant, and dismissed on 11th amendment immunity grounds, and Colorado Attorney General John Suthers, who intervened in the case, when it became clear that Denver wasn't going to mount a substantive defense of the state statute.

JBRB: And so you're telling us that you're also representing the interests of Denver and the County of Denver?

MG: I don't think we are, and it's for the very reasons that Mr. Monroe that he spent 15 minutes up here talking about, the Denver ordinance and the state statutes are two different entities.

JBRB: We have two parties that we have before us...Alvin LaCabe as Manager of the Safety for the city of Denver, and Peter Weir as executive director of the Department of Public Safety for the State of Colorado. Now are you with the Attorney General's Office or the City Attorney's office?

MG: I am in the attorney general's office. And I represent Mr. Suthers the attorney general of Colorado, intervened; he is the third party, uh, to defend the constitutionality of the state statute.

JBRB: Well who's representing Charles F. Garcia?

MG: Uh, well, there have been a lot of turnover, and I think Mr. Garcia is the Denver ex-oficio sheriff is that right?

JBRB: The Manager of Safety for the City and County of Denver?

JCL: Well that's presently Justice...uh...Martinez now.

MG: It's been a revolving door there.

JCL: He retired from the Supreme Court and he's now assumed those duties.

MG: That's right.

JCL: So who's representing him?

MG: The city and county of Denver, they waived their opportunity to participate in this proceeding.

JCL: WHAT?!

MG: They didn't file a brief.

(Laughter on the Panel)

JCL: Wow, ok, I think we're ready to hear you. (More laughter on the panel)

MG: I can probably provide a little bit more background on that, and I'm not trying to excuse that. But I think that the reason that they did so was because the Denver ordinance was never challenged in the first place.

JBRB: Well that's the question we've got to decide. Whether under paragraphs 8 11 and 12...is it raised in the amended complaint? That's why we were hammering your opposing counsel so hard.

JCL: I can see why they're not appearing. They're saying "Hey this is a due process matter, it hasn't been plead, and you don't have authority to enter any orders that violate or revoking our ordinance."

MG: Well, and I think it's for exactly that reason that Denver didn't participate substantively below. I mean, whether or not they wanted to mount a substantive defense on behalf of the state statute that the ex-oficio sheriff is in charge with enforcing, that was a policy decision that they made. But it's very clear that they never interpreted the plaintiffs' complaint or the amended complaint as mounting any sort of challenge on the Denver ordinance. And that's exactly why they, in my opinion, they didn't substantively participate in the proceedings below. So what we're left with, then, as the court pointed out a few minutes ago, a least on the 2nd amendment issue, a challenge to the state statute that doesn't implicate the 2nd amendment right at all. Because, under *Robertson v. Baldwin* which is the case which Judge Hartz mentioned earlier...and it's arguably dicta...but...it's a held up..

JCL: It's a 100 year old case doesn't make it dicta.

MG: It's held up for a long time, and I think it was positively cited in both *Heller* and *McDonald*. There's language in both of those cases that says "We're not calling into question longstanding restrictions on firearms" and it lists a bunch of them. Concealed carry is not listed exactly, but its' cited positively at least in *Heller*. I'm not sure if is in *McDonald*. They're both long cases, so I can't remember...

JCL: The gentleman is, all he wants is his gun, it just seems to me...that if it would have made the whole case go away, instead of a major constitutional case. You might have just...settled with it.

MG: Well, there are two problems with that. One, the state doesn't have any authority to issue a license. That is something that up to the Denver Manager of Public Safety, so the state can't do anything about it. Second, issuing him a license would be a flat out violation of what the state law says.

JBRB: Let me move help move you along a little bit. Under the statute that we're talking about here, uh, the first requirement is that you had to be a citizen of the state of Colorado.

MG: You have to be a resident-

JBRB: A resident and this gentleman is not. But he has the reciprocity rights from states that don't require that, and this is where he's hammering away at several areas of the constitution, because granted the case law seems to say that, you know, you don't have a right to carry a concealed weapon, that those are matter of public safety. Now the other four prongs all seem to go to that issue of that statute. But I don't see how in the world that, whether I'm a resident of the state of Colorado, uh, or a resident of, I believe he's a resident of the State of Washington, has anything to do with the safety aspect of it, when you have sister states that don't even require that, and by reciprocity you recognize those.

MG: Well, there are two different issues here...

JBRB: All right

MG: We need to separate the reciprocity issue from the issuance of a Colorado Concealed Carry Permit. The district court did not reach the reciprocity issue on the merits, because it found that the executive director had 11th amendment immunity, and the reason the executive director had 11th amendment immunity is because he is not responsible for administering Colorado's reciprocity scheme. To the extent that anyone's responsible for that, it's the local sheriff's.

JBRB: So we have got the local sheriff and the county involved and they're not here. They're not at the table.

MG: Yes, they've declined to participate. But the reason they've declined to participate. But, the reason they declined to participate is because they were not named as a defendant on the reciprocity issue, only the executive director of the Department of Public Safety was.

JBRB: If we determine that wasn't pleaded?

MG: Sure, yes. And so, the other issue, and reciprocity-

JCL: Well, do we determine, continuing to explore the limit and level of our jurisdiction here, subject matter jurisdiction. Is the only thing we have to decide is the reciprocity issue?

MG: No, I think there are two jurisdictional issues, and there's one substantive issue that you have to decide that you can use to dispose of this case. The jurisdictional issues... the first one is...did the district court correctly rule that the executive director had 11th amendment immunity, and therefore was not subject to the reciprocity claim.

JCL: as an individual or an ex-oficio?

MG: In his official capacity.

JCL: In his official capacity....

MG: That's how he was sued....... So that's the reciprocity issue...let's set that aside for a second. The remaining issue two issues have to do with-

JCL: Qualified immunity, state the issue again? Whether the-?

MG: Whether the executive directory of the Colorado Department of Public Safety was subject to suit for his alleged role in administering Colorado's reciprocity statute, or whether he had 11th amendment immunity against that claim.

JCL: In his official capacity.

MG: Yes.

JHH: and that was decided on the pleading and a review of statutes. The opposing party is claiming that they alleged that he had that authority, and the statutes don't explicitly he doesn't have that authority, and that's an issue be resolved at least at summary judgment, but not at the pleading stage, is that right?

MG: That's how I understand the plaintiff's argument. Our position is that the district court got it right, and that his allegation that the executive director was in charge of administering the reciprocity scheme was directly contravened, is directly contravened, by Colorado Statute.

JHH: But I thought there was an admission that....he keeps track of the reciprocity statutes. He's the one who decides whether there should reciprocity with another state?

MG: Keeping track of and deciding are two very different things.

JHH: Oh...

MG: The question has to do with authority. And the fact that the executive director of public safety, it's actually the CBI, keeps track of this for the convenience, acts as a clearinghouse for local law enforcement officials, doesn't somehow transform what he's does into having some authority over administering the scheme. The fact is, as a factual matter, uh, the authority for this is given to the local sheriff's. They are empowered to do this, and they can ignore the list... All CBI does is put it together and say-

JHH: Well they don't have the resources to check each-

MG: That's exactly right-

JHH: So that's something the state agent does, and is that not enough to overcome to 11th amendment immunity contention?

MG: The question is whether that list has any real meaning from a legal perspective. A local sheriff, could if he wanted to, completely ignore it. The CBI, the executive director of public safety, can't order the sheriff to say, "Well, you need to give reciprocity to Kansas permits", when that local sheriff maybe consulted his county attorney and disagrees with that interpretation of the law-

JCL: Was an indispensable party motion filed below and ruled on?

MG: To my knowledge, no.

JCL: and is the Sheriff of the County of Denver a party to these proceedings?

MG: Yes, but not vis a vis the reciprocity claim

JCL: Well, is there a different complaint other than the complaint that I got in my hand, which is the amended complaint in case number 10-CV-59?

MG: That's the last one that I've seen.

JCL: Well...I'll hand it to you...you may approach the bench for that purpose...and um...ask you where you see the...sheriff of the county of Denver named in those proceedings? I mean we normally do that in the style of the complaint, we don't do it in the pleadings, I mean he hasn't been...you gotta sue somebody and you just told me that he hadn't been served and he chose not to appear.

MG: He did appear, the sheriff did appear below, but he didn't mount a substantive challenge. He-

JCL: You mean he appeared even though he wasn't sued?

MG: He was...the sheriff was sued below.

JCL: Well, then show me in the complaint where he was?

MG: Well its paragraph 5, your honor-

JCL: Well that's a plea, that's part of the pleadings. That's not part of the style of the complaint.

MG: The sheriff and maybe this will clear up the confusion, when I refer to the sheriff, that is, Denver doesn't have an elected sheriff. Denver has a safety manager.

JCL: The Manager of Safety.

MG: and that's the ex-oficio sheriff, and that is Alvin LaCabe. So it's Gray Peterson v. Alvin LaCabe, in his official capacity

JCL: Then under the state scheme, Mr. LaCabe assumes the administrative authority to issue or not issue a permit?

MG: He has the sole authority to do that. The state has no authority over that. Nor does the state have any authority to order Mr. LaCabe or any other sheriff to recognize or not recognize another state's permit for reciprocity permit.

JCL: Thank you!

JHH: I thought I heard that the district court didn't address the constitutionality of the reciprocity statute because the state's officer was given 11th amendment immunity, but that could still be raised in a challenge to the sheriff's authority could it not?

MG: It could, and in fact if you look at the motion to dismiss, in the ruling on the motion to dismiss, that's in the record, the district court explicitly invited Mr. Peterson to amend his complaint to include the sheriff as a defendant on that claim. Mr. Peterson didn't do it.

JHH: So the reciprocity statute was challenged only in the claim against the state officer.

MG: That's accurate.

JHH: Huh...OK.

MG: So...that's the first issue. The Second issue and it's a substantive one, and I think that Mr. Peterson has standing to raise this, and the court is going to need to reach a substantive ruling on it, is privileges and immunities.

JHH: Right.

MG: and privileges & immunities has to do with, solely with, the fact that Mr. Peterson is alleging, that, as a matter of under article IV Section 2 or maybe under the 14th amendment, I am not really clear the genesis of the claim, uh, that he should be accorded the right to a concealed handgun permit in the same way that the citizens of Colorado are. I'll address that substantively in a moment, but the third issue is the second amendment issue, and that's the issue that we have argued that basically Mr. Peterson challenged the wrong statute, and that he doesn't have standing because he can't trace any alleged second amendment injury to the fact that he wasn't issued a concealed handgun permit, because concealed handgun permits are not protected by the 2nd amendment. There's no 2nd amendment right to carry a concealed firearm in the first place. So therefore, our position is that he had to mount a challenge to the law, and in this case, it happened to be the Denver, that actually had some potential impingement on that 2nd amendment right. Um, I don't have much time left if the court wants to hear-

JCL: Why don't you keep arguing until we till you the stop...?

(Laughter on the panel)

MG: That could be dangerous

JCL: Supreme Court used to take five hours or two days I'm told so um...

JBRB: Just remember we're not the Supreme Court, though.

JCL: Give us a minute

(Discussion on the panel about resetting for hearing or restarting oral argument)

JCL: All right. I think we're going to make it easy on you, the court is of the opinion that we will need to reschedule this case for further argument

JBRB: We beat up on the other counsel so long that he didn't even get to argue hardly...

JCL: All he did was answer questions on jurisdiction and...

MG: OK, thank you.

JCL: Thank you counsel....Mr. Monroe...you have three minutes, we're gonna make it four minutes since we went over with Mr. Grove.

JM: Thank you your honor.

JCL: I will try not to ask any questions but don't hold us to it...

JM: OK..Um...first I want to address a few things Mr. Grove mentioned, one the issue of the concealed handgun permit, and it being outside the second amendment. Just to reiterate what I said in my opening remarks. We're not seeking to carry a concealed handgun, we're seeing to carry a handgun, openly or concealed. It's clear that states can prohibit one and allow the other. Some states prohibit open carry and require concealed carry. Colorado prohibits concealed carry and requires open carry. That's fine with us. My client just wants to carry a handgun-

JCL: But in the city of Denver, you're prohibited from openly carrying a weapon.

JM: Yes, he has to get a license.

JCL: and you didn't challenge that ordinance. We're just trying to, at this point, and it would help us the most, given that we're going to hear further argument, it really helps us to know what is that you challenged, what is have you not challenged, what we ultimately have to decide...very helpful to us.

JM: Ok, then, to that point, we have not challenged the requirement to have a license to carry a handgun in Denver. What we have challenged is the inability to get that license. And the Denver sheriff, who actually is the Denver Manager of Safety, and is by law the ex-oficio sheriff, of Denver County. We sued him directly for failing to give the license that was applied for.

JCL: and that's where they granted the immunity?

JM: No, the immunity was to the executive director of the state department.

JCL: OK, all right.

JM: He was granted 11th amendment immunity, and we alleged in our complaint as Judge Hartz mentioned, that the executive director does administer the reciprocity system, and the district court dismissed the executive director based on the licensing issuing scheme, which is within the sheriff's departments. The Denver Sheriff issues the license, but the reciprocity is administered by the state. It is incredible to believe that on a county by county basis, um, Denver Colorado has reciprocity with Washington in one county but not another county, that can't be the law, it doesn't make any sense.

JCL: That you have challenged...the disparate treatment aspect of the case?

JM: Yes that was the reciprocity issue that got dismissed, so it wasn't decided on the merits?

JCL: The disparate treatment of reciprocity

JM: Yes

JHH: You didn't make any argument about distinction between the counties in Colorado?

JM: No, because not until we got in the case did we learn that it was even the state's position that each sheriff is responsible for administering the reciprocity-

JHH: But that's a matter of statutory scheme, isn't it?

JM: But the statute doesn't say that. The statute is silent on who administers it, and we alleged as a matter of fact in our complaint that the executive director does it on behalf of the state. We alleged that as a fact and there's not a statute that says anything differently.

JBRB: We just heard from opposing counsel that each sheriff each county in Colorado doesn't have to pay any attention to the reciprocity statute. Now, is that anywhere written...?

JM: No, I don't' believe it is, and I believe the short brief that Denver did file in this court disagreed with that position of the state and says "Denver sheriff doesn't have anything to do with reciprocity, it doesn't administer it. That's the state, not us".

JHH: I think what counsel said was that nothing requires a sheriff to follow whatever decision the state official makes regarding whether we have, whether Colorado has reciprocity with Georgia or Ohio, or some other state. Is there something that requires that gives the state official some authority over the county sheriff, to say, "You have failed to recognize reciprocity with Ohio, and you have to change that, or you've given reciprocity where you shouldn't have"?

JM: Your honor, I am out of time.

JCL: Uh, we have one of our colleagues has a plane to catch. Here's what we'll do-

JHH: May I have an answer, please?

JCL: Absolutely, give me one second. Here's what we're going to do. Go ahead and answer Judge Hartz's question and then you're out of time. We'll reschedule the case for further argument. We may enter order for supplemental briefing on

certain aspects; we'll let you know on that. I didn't mean to cut you off, Harris, so um...so please answer Judge Harris, er, Judge Hartz's question and we'll be in recess.

JM: The statute is woefully silent on the administration of reciprocity. It doesn't say who administers it. It doesn't say the state can or can't require the sheriffs to follow what it says, and that's why it inappropriate to dismiss on a motion to dismiss instead of as you said, on a motion for summary judgment.

JCL: Good enough, counsel you're excused. The court is recess until tomorrow morning at 9 O'clock or 8:30 in some instances. Thank you.

(Gavel Pounded)

END SESSION