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**Senator Brandon Creighton & Representative Dade Phelan Introduce
Legislation to Protect the Rights of Law-Abiding Citizens to Transport Their
Handguns While Under Mandatory Evacuation Orders**

Austin, TX - This morning, Senator Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) and Representative Dade Phelan (R-Beaumont) filed Senate Bill 506 & House Bill 1177. These identical pieces of legislation would protect citizens from being charged with a crime for carrying a handgun while evacuating from an area subject to a mandatory order issued during a disaster, or while returning home.

"This legislation is important for law-abiding residents of southeast Texas, a region prone to evacuations due to floods and hurricanes." said Senator Creighton. "If the government is instructing citizens to leave their homes, the government should not also be restricting the rights of those citizens to protect themselves and their property."

"Texans should be able to protect themselves and their loved ones by legally transporting their lawfully-owned handguns while evacuating their property," said Representative Phelan. "Evacuees should have the freedom to carry firearms with them and not be in violation of the law or be forced to leave them behind for potential theft or looting."

In 2007, the Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 112, prohibiting the confiscation of firearms from persons who are lawfully carrying or possessing them during a declared state of disaster with no opposition. However, this law offers limited protection to individuals who have lost or do not possess Licenses to Carry (LTCs) and need to transport or carry their legally-owned handguns from their homes to safe locations. In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, Governor Abbott directed the Texas Department of Public Safety to provide no-cost replacement of Licenses to Carry (LTCs) for eligible residents whose cards had been lost or damaged as a result of the storm.

The proposed legislation is similar to Florida law, which has been in effect since 2015. The National Rifle Association and Texas State Rifle Association support both bills.

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