

**"I WANT TO LET FOLKS KNOW
THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM IS
NEVER OVER. IT'S NEVER OVER. YOU
JUST CAN'T LET YOUR GUARD DOWN."**

Mississippi Agriculture
Commissioner Andy Gipson

Officer attempted to disarm AG Commissioner Andy Gipson at August 2018 Jackson Fairground event

Recently appointed Mississippi Agricultural Commissioner Andy Gipson informed the public via Facebook that a security officer at an event at the Jackson Fairgrounds attempted to search and disarm him while attending an event there; that is until the officer was informed as to who Gipson was. The Mississippi Agriculture Department's Director is over the fairgrounds and its policy.



Gipson a staunch 2nd Amendment advocate, who replaced Cindy

Hyde Smith when she was appointed to the Senate seat in March of 2018, said in August 22nd Facebook post,

“a few days ago at a public event on public, taxpayer owned property I was approached by an armed official who attempted not only to unlawfully search me, but also to confiscate my personal lawfully-owned and carry pistol. He attempted this while carrying his own pistol in plain view. Also this was an official whose salary is paid by Mississippi taxpayers.”



As for his attempt to take my weapon, let's just say he was unsuccessful.”

The previous agricultural Commissioner, Cindy Hyde Smith, who was appointed by Governor Bryant in March of this year to the United States Senate, is currently running for the Senate seat against state Senator Chris McDaniel and Mike Espy.

In 2013, after the enhanced carry laws were in effect, Hyde-Smith requested guidance from the Mississippi Attorney General's office regarding her ability to prohibit, “weapons , concealed or not concealed” at the Fairgrounds complex and

other departments under the purview of the Agriculture Department. Hyde asked Mississippi Attorney General Jim Hood in [Opinion 2013-00215](#),

In light of recent amendments to Miss. Code Ann. Section 97-37-1 (House Bill 2, 2013 Regular Session), can the MFC and the Department prohibit the carrying of weapons, concealed or not concealed, on the Mississippi State Fairgrounds Complex and at properties of the Department, including but not limited to the Mississippi Farmers' Market and the Mississippi Agriculture & Forestry Museum, by posting signage prohibiting the carrying of a weapon?

The answer from the Mississippi Attorney General directed Hyde-Smith to 45-9-101(13) and stated with regard to concealed carry (not enhanced concealed carry),

In addition to the places enumerated in this subsection, the carrying of a stun gun, concealed pistol or revolver may be disallowed in any place in the discretion of the person or entity exercising control over the physical location of such place by the placing of a written notice clearly readable at a distance of not less than ten (10) feet that the "carrying of a pistol or revolver is prohibited

It is the opinion of this office that MFC and the Department can disallow the carry of concealed weapons by concealed permit holders by following the notice provisions of Section 45-9-101(13). Thus, with regard to regular concealed carry permit holders, a public body can prohibit the concealed carrying of weapons in all locations by posting the signage referenced in Section 45-9-101

Just before the October, 2017 Mississippi State Fair, Hinds County Sheriff Victor Mason informed the public that a policy prohibiting the carry any firearm into the Mississippi State Fair would be in effect. [WAPT covered the 2017 Mississippi](#)

[State Fair gun policy directive by the sheriff](#) and reported,

“Mason said law enforcement officers are the only ones who should be carrying weapons at the fair.

‘If we find that you are carrying a weapon, you will be escorted out,’ Mason said.”

That policy, on the part of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and the Hinds County Sheriffs Department in 2017, was not in accordance with Mississippi State Law as it pertains to the privileges of Mississippi Enhanced Carry permit holders.

Hattiesburg Patriot News Media contacted MDA Director Andy Gipson for comments and clarity related to his August 22nd Facebook Post. Gibson explained that there was a private non profit group at a “gun related event” that contracted for security with the Hinds County Sheriffs Office and a reserve deputy approached him and asked to search him. Gibson asked why?

According to Gipson the deputy said,

“We don’t allow any guns in here.”

Gibson went on to explain,

“Somebody said ‘THIS IS THE COMMISSIONER!’ And he said ‘Oh, well that makes all the DIFFERENCE in the world.’ And I said (out loud), ‘It shouldn’t make any difference, cause if anybody has a right to have it, leave em alone.”

Gipson said,

“I want to let folks know the fight for freedom is never over. It’s Never over. You just can’t let your guard down.”