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## Issue: Starbucks' Policy on Guns An Overview

**POSITION:** The Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles urges Starbucks, as well as other businesses, to bar guns from their stores. We ask Starbucks to adopt a "no guns" policy for the safety of customers and employees.

**PROBLEM:** Recently, radical gun enthusiasts began gathering in California restaurants and coffeehouses brazenly and openly carrying handguns with ammunition clips readily available. They did this in order to "make a statement" about their "right" to carry guns. Their meetings gained media attention in California when gun carriers began meeting in Starbucks.

**STARBUCKS' RESPONSE:** When asked what its policy was on guns in its stores, Starbucks made the statement: "Starbucks does not have a corporate policy regarding customers and weapons; we defer to federal, state and local laws and regulations regarding this issue."

**PROBLEM WITH RESPONSE:** Simply put, the response is an evasion and disturbing, given Starbucks' reputation as a socially responsible business. The law in all states gives businesses the right to bar guns on their premises. Just as stores may prohibit entry by people for not wearing shoes, they may prohibit people who are carrying guns, openly and concealed.

**THREAT:** The small minority of gun owners who want to carry their guns into places like Starbucks reflects the gun lobby's vision of "any gun, anywhere, for anyone" in America. As the NRA's Executive Director stated last year, "It's the guys with the guns who make the rules." Those who openly carry guns in public follow that logic. It is bullying behavior that is inherently threatening and dangerous.

**URGENCY:** The safety of our families and communities are put at risk as more people carry guns in public. Families, including children, should have the right to drink their coffee and eat their muffins without being confronted with the threatening and dangerous presence of open-carried guns by someone in line or sitting next to them.

**SOLUTION:** Starbucks should do what Peet's Coffee & Tea and California Pizza Kitchen did when gun enthusiasts began openly carrying guns into their establishments. They adopted a "no guns" policy. Starbucks should respond to the requests of its customers and bar guns at its stores across the country for the safety of its customers and employees.