

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
1979 SESSION

CHAPTER 661  
HOUSE BILL 1184

AN ACT TO PERMIT THE POSSESSION OF TEAR GAS AND DEVICES FOR  
SELF-DEFENSE.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**Section 1.** G.S. 14-401.6 is rewritten to read:

"§14-401.6. **Unlawful to possess, etc., tear gas except for certain purposes.** — (a) It is unlawful for any person, firm, corporation or association to possess, use, store, sell, or transport within the State of North Carolina, any form of that type of gas generally known as 'tear gas', or any container or device for holding or releasing that gas; except this section does not apply to the possession, use, storage, sale or transportation of that gas or any container or device for holding or releasing that gas:

- (1) by officers and enlisted personnel of the armed forces of the United States or this State while in the discharge of their official duties and acting under orders requiring them to carry arms or weapons;
- (2) by or for any governmental agency for official use of the agency;
- (3) by or for county, municipal or State law enforcement officers in the discharge of their official duties;
- (4) by or for security guards sanctioned under Chapters 74A and 74B of the General Statutes, provided those security guards are on duty and have received training according to standards prescribed by the State Bureau of Investigation;
- (5) for bona fide scientific, educational, or industrial purposes;
- (6) in safes, vaults, and depositories, as a means of protection against robbery;
- (7) for use in the home for protection and elsewhere by individuals, who have not been convicted of a felony, for self-defense purposes only, as long as the capacity of any tear gas cartridge, shell, device or container does not exceed 50 cubic centimeters, and any tear gas device or container does not have the capability of discharging any cartridge, shell, or container larger than 50 cubic centimeters.

(b) Violation of this section is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00), imprisonment for not more than six months, or both.

(c) Tear gas for the purpose of this section shall mean any solid, liquid or gaseous substance or combinations thereof which will, upon dispersion in the atmosphere, cause tears in the eyes, burning of the skin, coughing, difficulty in breathing or any one or more of these reactions and which will not cause permanent damage to the human body, and the substance and container or device is designed, manufactured, and intended to be used as tear gas."

**Sec. 2.** This act is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified, this the 28th day of May,  
1979.