



**New York State Conservation Council Inc.**  
8 East Main Street, Ilion, New York 13357-1899

## **MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT**

### **Clarification of the definition of gravity and switchblade knives.**

The NYSCC supports the decriminalization of the possession and lawful usage of opening assisted knives. These are blade-in-handle knives that have a bias toward closure but may be opened with one hand using centrifugal force. No springs or mechanical assistance is involved. This differentiates these knives from other currently prohibited knives such as switchblade, gravity or pilum ballistic knives which use some type of spring, mechanical or ballistic device to open and have no impediment to the release of the blade.

What makes these knives useful as ordinary tools is the ability to easily open and close the blade with one hand. This is invaluable to an individual who has lost the use of a hand or who has one hand otherwise occupied. It is also very useful to workers engaged in tasks where one hand access is just more convenient and productive.

Originally developed as a tool for parachutists to free themselves from tangled parachute lines, knives of this type are widely used by sportsmen, workers in a wide range of crafts and trades as well as law enforcement, firefighters and EMTs.

Decriminalization of the legitimate and very beneficial use of this type of knife while retaining the penalty for criminal misuse is the correct way to deal with this issue. The sanction of absolute prohibition should be reserved for implements designed to inflict serious bodily injury and that serve no common lawful purpose.

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