

# Traveling Man's Gun Arrest Appealed to Supreme Court

## New Jersey Puts Man In Jail On Gun Charge For Late Flight With Legally Checked Firearm

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WASHINGTON -- Missed flights only inconvenience most people. A late flight landed Utah gun owner Greg Revell in jail for 10 days after he got stranded in New Jersey with an unloaded firearm he had legally checked with his luggage in Salt Lake City.

The [Supreme Court](#) could decide Tuesday whether to consider letting Revell sue Port Authority of New York and New Jersey police for arresting him on illegal possession of a firearm in New Jersey and for not returning his gun and ammunition to him for more than three years. Lower courts have thrown out his lawsuit.

Revell was flying from Salt Lake City to Allentown, Pa., on March 31, 2005, with connections in Minneapolis and Newark, N.J. He had checked his Utah-licensed gun and ammunition with his luggage in Salt Lake City and asked airport officials to deliver them both with his luggage in Allentown.

But the flight from Minneapolis to Newark was late, so Revell missed his connection to Allentown. The airline wanted to bus its passengers to Allentown, but Revell realized that his luggage had not made it onto the bus and got off. After finding his luggage had been given a final destination of Newark by mistake, Revell missed the bus. He collected his luggage, including his gun and ammunition, and decided to wait in a nearby hotel with his stuff until the next flight in the morning.

When Revell tried to check in for the morning flight, he again informed the airline officials about his gun and ammunition to have them checked through to Allentown. He was reported to the TSA, and then arrested by Port Authority police for having a gun in New Jersey without a New Jersey license. He spent 10 days in several different jails before posting bail. Police dropped the charges a few months later. But his gun and ammunition were not returned to him until 2008.

Revell said he should not have been arrested because federal law allows licensed gun owners to take their weapons through any state as long as they are unloaded and not readily accessible to people. He said it was not his fault the airline stranded him in New Jersey by making him miss his flight and routing his luggage to the wrong destination.

Prosecutors said it doesn't matter whose fault it was: Revell was arrested in New Jersey with a readily accessible gun in his possession without a New Jersey license. Lower courts have sympathized with Revell but refused to let him sue the police.

"We recognize that he had been placed in a difficult situation through no fault of his own," wrote Judge Kent A. Jordan of the U.S. 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia. However, the law "clearly requires the traveler to part ways with his weapon and ammunition during travel; it does not address this type of interrupted journey or what the traveler is to do in this situation."

The case is Revell v. Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, 10-236.

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