

Date of Testimony: February 10, 2018
Bill Number: Bill HB2042
Testimony by: Alan Marston

In Opposition
Testimony: Written Only

Dear Chairman Bud Estes and the members of the Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs:

I am writing to voice my opposition to the Concealed Carry bill, HB2042.

I am the father of two daughters, one aged 21 and the other soon to turn 17. Like any father, I try to ensure that they are safe and remain in a safe environment. Our schools and universities are places for learning and development. They are spaces where students should be focusing on their studies and personal growth. Students should NOT be forced to be concerned about people bringing guns onto the campus grounds. The fact that the State Legislature authorized weapons to be brought to campus buildings is horrific enough, but now you are lowering the age? That is utterly ridiculous. These are STUDENTS. They are still learning how to be rational and adult. Sure, some have had training, but not all have. This will foster a dangerous environment for everyone concerned.

I can not find ANY study that shows that this sort of legislation makes any student or college campus safer. In fact, studies have shown that there is little chance that a student will need a gun for self defense. There are other, non-lethal, methods of protection available. To bring guns to campus will likely result in increased suicides and unnecessary escalation of minor disputes. There have already been numerous shootings on campuses across the country. Why in the world would we want to increase the risk of that happening in Kansas?

If the only reason you are supporting this legislation is because the NRA points out that the "only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun," then, I ask you to reconsider. The "Good Guy" with a gun should be well trained. They should be licensed. They should NOT be 18 year old civilians. There is a reason why Law Enforcement has a minimum age requirement of 21. The ability to make responsible, sound judgment on the use of deadly force is not to be taken lightly. I am a former police officer and served in the Army. I am confident in my ability to use a weapon properly. I am NOT confident in an 18 year old who is going through Finals Week and breaking up with his girlfriend with a concealed hand gun.

A recent study identified 85 college incidents of shootings and firearms discharges from January 2013 - June 2016. Of these incidents, only TWO involved "rampage" shooters. Most common were disputes escalating into gun violence (45%); premeditated violence (12%); suicide and murder/suicide (12%); and unintentional shootings/discharges (9%).

I ask that you oppose HB2042. Lowering the age of concealed carry to 18 is too great a risk for our young people, our families, and our communities.

Thank you for your consideration,

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