

Testimony of Margaret Kramar Opposing HB 2326: Concealed Carry Reciprocity
House Federal and State Affairs Committee
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346-S

On October 1, 2017, I was awakened to news on the clock radio that earlier in the night, five people had been shot on Massachusetts Street in Lawrence, three fatally. The shots were fired into a crowd of kids who were partying and hanging out after a concert at the Granada had let out.

The incident became more personal for me when a student informed me that she had been in that crowd. Although she had not been seriously injured, she told me that she was covered in black and blue marks from head to toe because she had been knocked down and trampled when the shots rang out. That she had never been as deeply terrified for her life. That she had to temporarily move back in with her mother because she could not cope. For several weeks, a zombie stared out from her seat. I distinctly remember the day that she fixed her hair, put on makeup and started talking to those around her, and laughing again, because she became as different as night from day.

Do we need more of this? Our brothers and sisters in economically disadvantaged communities are already living with an unacceptable level of violence, where there are drive-by shootings, people shot as they're riding in their cars and trivial arguments ending in gunshot fatalities. Do we want this method of conflict resolution to spread throughout the remainder of the neighborhoods in our cities, suburbs and small towns? How would we like it if we lived with the level of violence to which they are already subjected?

I understand that there are those who argue that they carry a weapon in order to protect themselves from becoming such a fatality. But I would say to them, as guns proliferate through laws such as HB 2326 which make it easier for more people, some of whom are crazy, to have more guns, how do you know you'll even have an opportunity to face your assailant? What if you're shot in the back as you're sitting in a restaurant, or walking down a sidewalk?

Think of the last time somebody was shaking his fist at you in traffic, and because you had been driving slowly and carefully, you had no idea what you may have done to set that person off. What if that person had a gun, and used it?

Providing more resources for mental health services is salutary, but would anyone in his right mind seriously argue that any amount of money or legislation is going to totally eliminate either permanent, or temporary, insanity?

More guns equals more gun violence, period, and with a national gun homicide rate that soars far above that of any other developed nation, we have the stats to prove it.