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Testimony, HB 2220
Federal and State Affairs Committee
March 9, 2017

I am writing this letter in opposition to HB 2220. I am a professor at Johnson County Community College (JCCC), speaking on behalf of the JCCC Faculty Association. We oppose this legislation because ***we believe decisions regarding the security of a complex campus, including policies addressing specific safety concerns, are best made by the people most familiar with the institution and the population that it serves.***

At JCCC there is a police department that offers a full range of services. The Office of Emergency Preparedness at JCCC takes a progressive approach to safety concerns, with continual improvements in policies, safety and communication technologies, and extensive emergency preparedness training available to all employees. As an employee, I have personally been very impressed with the commitment to continually assess and improve the security of the people on our campus. As part of our safety plan, we have all participated in specialized training specifically aimed at improving the chances of survival for us and our students in the rare, but possible, event of an active shooter on campus. Our training has empowered us to realize available options and decisions we can make to help save as many lives as possible, should we ever find ourselves in this situation.

I currently serve as the Vice-President of the JCCC Faculty Association. In this role, I spend significant time attending meetings and listening to the concerns of faculty across campus. Given the current laws do not require any form of training or permit to legally carry a concealed weapon, and considering the diverse population of students that we serve, there is substantial concern that **untrained individuals will pose a safety risk** if they choose to conceal carry on our campus. JCCC has been considering providing some guidance to insure a minimum level of safety regarding gun storage and handling. The policies currently being considered include items aimed at reducing the risk of accidental discharge on campus, such as, keeping a gun holstered rather than loose in a backpack or purse. The college is also considering adopting a requirement that handguns with an external safety be carried with the safety in the “on” position, semiautomatic handguns be carried without a chambered round of ammunition, and revolvers be carried with the hammer resting on an empty cylinder. These are all very reasonable requests that do not infringe on any single individual’s right to arm themselves, but would, if followed, decrease the likelihood of an accidental discharge of a concealed firearm on our campus.

Finally, we do not have the option of providing “adequate security measures” as described in the current statute. This is cost prohibitive and effectively an unfunded mandate imposed on our institution. I hope you will respect the ability of our local law enforcement officers, safety officers, and Board of Trustees, with a thorough understanding of all the complexities of our campus and the challenges associated with the diverse population we serve, to make reasonable policy decisions for the security of our faculty, staff, and students.