

HB2059

I am Carl Reed from Manhattan. I am writing as a retired college educator to oppose HB2059. That bill would require Kansas colleges and universities to allow eighteen-year-olds to keep and carry loaded guns. Imagine that you are the parent of a 2021 high-school graduate faced with the possibility that an unknown room-mate might keep a loaded firearm in your child's dormitory room. I have personally heard parents of prospective K-State students say that they would send their children out of state rather than expose them to such unsafe conditions.

When I was a university freshman, my dorm room-mate became mentally unstable mid-way through spring semester. I learned later that he had confronted the dean and had made threats against him. Thankfully, when I began my college career in 1965, Americans knew better than to think that vigilantism was sound public policy. Fortunately, academicians in the U.S. had always followed James Madison's policy that weapons did not belong at institutions of higher learning where civilized, educated behavior was being modeled for the benefit of the next generation of citizens.

The Kansas legislature has already violated long-standing Kansas tradition related to firearms in public places and forced changes in academic policy that date to the founders of the institutions. This bill would further erode the rights of academic institutions to set academic policy and would further push vigilante mentality into every aspect of Kansas life, to the detriment of all Kansans.