

Dear Federal and State Affairs Committee,

3/12/13

As a teacher, I understand and agree with the ideal that no weapons should ever enter most places, including school campuses, especially illegally or with the intent to harm. However, we all know that is not reality, and we must be real about this topic because massacres in public places do happen. The number one misconception I hear from other educators concerning this legislation is: “I don’t want every kid in my class packing a gun...” This statement is rich with ignorance and fear. Experience has shown that fear and resistance to change comes from a simple lack of understanding of the subject. In this case it’s a lack of understanding of our current concealed carry licensing system which is already in place, paid for by the applicants, and working quite well.

So, I would like to offer you some information on how a law abiding citizen obtains a concealed carry license as stated by the Attorney General of the State of Kansas.

First, you must understand that only adults 21 years of age or older may even qualify for a concealed carry license. This is certainly not “every kid in class.” Then these adults must pay about \$100 (class fees vary) to attend an eight hour class which is approved by the Kansas Attorney General and taught by a firearms instructor who is approved by the Attorney General and or NRA. The class covers firearms safety, laws, rules, and regulations. Upon 100% successful completion of a written test covering these topics, you must then shoot the firearm of your choice in front of said firearms instructor at a target range and qualify with that firearm according to the attorney general’s standards.

Only after successful completion of the performance and written tests, may you submit this certification, application form, and an additional fee to your local county sheriff who then takes the applicant’s fingerprints, submits them to the KBI, and performs a background check. The local sheriff may refuse to approve this license for a multiple of reasons including DUI, misdemeanor battery, domestic violence, restraining order, theft, or pretty much any reason they want.

Now that we have a better understanding of what it takes to earn a concealed carry license, please ask yourself these three questions:

1. Do you feel individuals who earn these qualifications in order to possess such a license are a danger to society? The firearms instructor, Kansas Attorney General, local sheriff, and KBI don’t seem to think so.
2. Do criminals possess these same moral qualities, qualifications and licenses as concealed carry holders?
3. Does a sign stop a criminal from harming others?

I’d like to share with you my campuses’ current policy to deal with an “Intruder on Campus”. Much like most public buildings in Kansas we have absolutely zero security throughout the day.

The two security officers (less if one sick) don't come on duty until 6:00 pm, and even they aren't allowed to carry a firearm. In the event of an "intruder on campus", *if* faculty are notified through the campus PA systems, email, or we feel there is a threat, we are to lock our doors and keep all our students in the classroom... and wait. Wait for rescue, or wait for the intruder to come to us. I am in charge of these students, I cannot legally defend them, *and* there is no one else to do it until police arrive. History has shown that is not soon enough. Current law says any adult who has said license and attempts to stop a maniac who is causing harm is in fact a criminal themselves, but only in places that have a "No Firearms" sign on the front door. I have a big problem with anyone telling me where I can and can't defend myself and others, especially when there is no other form of security in place, and especially when I'm supposed to be in charge of students. Lock my doors is my only defense. Please ask yourself: is that adequate and effective. Further, I challenge you to find a parent who would call me a criminal for defending their child in a building with no security.

Currently, the laws only restrict legal concealed carry holders, who are law abiding citizens and have passed competency tests with a firearm as well as a background check. And this is who you don't want to carry a gun? HB 2055 simply frees licensed adults to exercise their earned right in public buildings, or ensures other adequate security measures are in place. Take into account the concealed carry licensing system that is currently in place is already paid for by the applicants.

In conclusion, restricting legal concealed carry only endangers those who abide by the law and helps criminals no matter where it is. It makes you wonder; if a responsible concealed carry holder was legally exercising their right at a place like Virginia Tech, would 32 people have died? Or could there have been a licensed, trained adult on the scene who could have stopped the massacre immediately.

Thank you for your time. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

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