

January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Dear Chairman Barker, Vice Chairman Highland, Ranking Minority Member Ruiz, and members of the Federal and State Affairs Committee:

I'm a graduate student and instructor at the University of Kansas, and I write today in support of HB 2074.

Last Christmas, a family member invited us downstairs to see his new basement remodel. While we looked around, he pulled out a handgun with a new laser sight and shined it on my boyfriend's stomach. He pointed a gun at a guest in his home. This gun owner is an adult. He is married with children. He completed hunter safety training as a young man. He grew up surrounded by responsible gun owners who had served as positive role models. And he pointed a gun at another human for no other reason than because he was excited to show it off. For him, handguns had become normalized and stripped of danger. They were fun gadgets. They were impressive technology. And his toy might have killed someone in his basement on Christmas day.

I fear for what this means on college campuses. Unlike my family member, students in Kansas will not be required to complete any form of gun safety program to obtain a gun. If positive role models and some degree of training were not enough to temper with caution the enthusiasm of my family member, what can we expect of true novices? Students who buy the newest and most technologically-advanced guns will doubtless be proud of them. I'm sure they'll want to show them off. I'm much less sure that they'll do so responsibly. After all, Kansas has taken no steps to encourage them to do so.

I've spoken only of my fear of accidents. I've said nothing here of the increased risk of suicide or the dangerous combination of guns, underage drinking, and perceived slights. But make no mistake, I'm afraid of those things as well. Any of these elements could lead to the death of my students, or my colleagues, or me.

Please support HB 2074. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Kate Nygren