



Kansas State Rifle Association
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RE: House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee
House Bill No. 2584 Hearing

Dear Chairwoman Colloton and Honorable Members of the Committee:

Thank you for considering my testimony. My name is Patricia Stoneking and I am the President and Registered Lobbyist for The Kansas State Rifle Association and I represent over 6000 KSRA members, 48,000 NRA members as well as nearly 900 gun dealers. I am a proponent of House Bill Number 2584.

We are proponents for HB 2584, which would amend K.S.A. 21-6301 and 21-6302 in a way to provide a more fair and reasonable provision regarding knives under Kansas law.

We support this legislation on its most foundational character. It brings preemption to the law so that we have a uniform law statewide concerning knives. The existing law provides an environment for a patchwork quilt of laws and citizens have no idea what law they are operating under as they move from one jurisdiction to another. This sets up law abiding citizens for unintentional violation of the law. We believe there should be a statewide law for knives just as there are for firearms and that law should be uniform and easy to comply with.

We believe that the current restrictions in Kansas law are outdated and antiquated as well and do not fully and competently provide definition of specific types of knives. There are many common use knives that are actually prohibited under Kansas law currently with no logical reason for the prohibition.

Under Section (2) Subsection (1) refers to "any knife, commonly referred to as a switch-blade, which has a blade that opens automatically by hand pressure applied to a button, spring or other device in the handle of the knife, or any knife having a blade that opens or falls or is ejected into position by the force of gravity or by an outward, downward or centrifugal thrust or movement." These knives are no more dangerous than any other knife. We must remember that it is the user that is dangerous, not the knife itself.

Knives are tools with many uses. Hunters use many kinds of knives for cleaning and skinning animals they have killed and many times the ability to cut bone is necessary. Almost all of those knives are considered illegal under the current law. A regular pocket knife with a maximum 4" blade could not possibly do the job. Businesses use a variety of knives to perform multiple functions, none of which conform to current law. Many folks are knife collectors. There are some very beautiful and handcrafted knives, all illegal under this law. Most gun owners likely own knives. It doesn't make sense that we trust them with firearms but not with knives. I think it brings up the question, do we punish law abiding citizens with restrictions because we think they might do something wrong? Of course we don't.

We also look at the definition of deadly and I wonder why a knife would be restricted based on being called dangerous. Many tools are dangerous but we don't outlaw them. Certainly any knife could be called dangerous if it's being used by a dangerous person. Let's remember that criminals don't care about laws and the only thing this law does is serve to restrict law abiding citizens.

KSRA is dedicated to encouraging safe and responsible use of firearms and we also advocate for the safe and responsible use of knives. We support the efforts of the Knife Rights organization and believe we have complementary interests and goals. Freedom and Liberty for law abiding citizens being at the top of the list.

Ms. Chairwoman and members of the Committee, thank you for considering our position in this most important matter. We respectfully urge that you protect Kansas knife owners and vote in support of HB 2584, recommend it for passage, and send it to the floor of the House for a vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

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