

To Members of the Federal and State Affairs Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to share my concerns with you. Because I have professional responsibilities during the time of this hearing and cannot travel to Topeka, I wish to share these concerns with you in writing. Though I teach at a state university, I address you in my capacity as a knowledgeable private citizen.

Since last year's passage of the so-called "campus carry" legislation, several valuable faculty members have left the university where I teach. One, in my own department, is sorely missed. He was a brilliant, well published scholar, a highly regarded teacher, and the recipient of extramural grants and awards including the prestigious, international Fulbright fellowship. Even if the department had the budgetary resources to attempt to find a replacement, it would be very difficult to find someone of his caliber. When he left the campus, he took a position at a university in England, he took a pay cut, he and he gave up a tenured position in a department that universally respected him, because, as he told me, "there was nothing they could offer that could keep me there as long as the law made it easy for my students to bring guns into classrooms and offices."

When universities lost their ability to restrict firearms on campus, many speaking in favor of the legislation insisted that the number of individuals actually carrying guns would be minuscule, because the minimum age of 21 would exclude most undergraduates. This new legislation removes that justification.

Through research generated by the Docking Institute, the majority of students and faculty at the universities and colleges in Kansas made it clear at the time of the original concealed carry debate that they did not want to see campuses unable to bar the carrying of weapons. HB 2042 exacerbates the problem, and in so doing invites the departure of excellent faculty who will choose to leave rather than work in an environment where they cannot even exclude weapons carried into their own office. Loss of talented teachers and researchers means a loss of all those faculty bring to the state of Kansas—their expertise, their personal investment in Kansas students, research funding (sometimes millions of dollars). Please protect our campuses from the likelihood of tragic accidents; from the loss of outstanding teachers and researchers; and from the attendant financial costs our institutions cannot afford.

Elizabeth Dodd  
Manhattan, KS