



Kansas State Rifle Association
P.O. Box 219
Bonner Springs, Kansas 66012-0219
(913) 608-1910
info@ksraweb.org

www.ksraweb.org

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RE: House Committee on Federal and State Affairs
House Bill No. 2033 Hearing

Dear Chairman Siegfried and Honorable Members of the Committee:

My name is Patricia Stoneking and I am the President and Registered Lobbyist for The Kansas State Rifle Association. I represent over 6000 KSRA members, 48,000 NRA members in Kansas, as well as nearly 900 Kansas gun dealers. I am writing to urge you to support House Bill HB2033.

HB 2033 would amend K.S.A. 21-6301 and 21-6302 in order to protect Kansas citizens via Knife Law Preemption and also allow them to carry a wider variety of knives which provide practical advantages.

HB2033 will ensure that we have a uniform knife law applied statewide. Under existing law Kansans must deal with a confusing patchwork quilt of laws and citizens cannot possibly keep track of the law as they move from one jurisdiction to another. This sets up law-abiding citizens for unintentional violation of the law, when they are doing nothing at all criminal in nature. We believe there should be uniform statewide law for knives just as there are for firearms.

We believe that the current ban on switchblades, dirks, daggers, stilettos, straight-edged razors and so-called "dangerous knives" in Kansas law is outdated and antiquated. With the exception of the switchblade, none of those type knives are defined and thus are subject to discriminatory and subjective enforcement. These could describe many commonly available and used knives that with no logical reason for the prohibition.

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." However, these knives are no more dangerous than any other knife just because they open automatically. It is the user that could be 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 might be considered illegal under the current law. Businesses and tradespeople use a variety of knives to perform multiple functions, many of which could be considered illegal under the current law. Many Kansans are knifemakers and knife collectors. They make and collect some very beautiful handcrafted knives, many potentially illegal under this law. Most gun owners likely own knives. It doesn't make sense that we trust them with their choice of firearms, but not with knives. Do we punish law abiding citizens with restrictions because we think they might do something wrong? Of course we don't, unless they have clear intent to break the law. These knives have no intent, they are simply tools.

We also look at the term "dangerous knife" and wonder what possibly can that mean? How can the law-abiding citizen possibly understand that term? 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, but the knife is never inherently dangerous. Criminals don't care about the law 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 Knife Rights and their Kansas members, many of them our own members, because we have complementary interests and goals; freedom and liberty for law-abiding citizens being at the top of the list.

Mr. Chairman 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 2033, recommend it for passage, and send it to the floor of the House for a debate and vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Stoneking, President
913-667-3044 Direct Line
913-522-4765 Cell
913-608-1910 Main Office