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Statement concerning Constitutional Carry for the Kansas State Legislature

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When Arizona enacted its trend-setting legislation in 2010, for discreetly carrying firearms without government permits or red tape of any kind, coining the term Constitutional Carry in the process, several remarkable things occurred.

First, the market for firearms safety training immediately expanded from the 2% of the public willing to get government papers for exercising their rights—the concealed-carry permit—to more than 50% of homes where people routinely keep arms, who were then freed to exercise discreet carry without government interference.

Next, some trainers expressed fear that their businesses would collapse, if government no longer forced people to take their classes to qualify for papers in order to get carry permits. Some trainers, with little experience in actually promoting and running a business did fold. But with such an explosion in potential market size, and awareness dramatically increased, firearms safety training flourished, ranges got busier, and new shooting ranges opened statewide. It was an unexpected economic stimulus plan.

Then, perhaps the most startling realization came when new fears arose—often fanned by ignorance and the news media. Now that people could simply possess loaded firearms in their purses or briefcases, in their glove boxes, in desks at work, or discreetly holstered as they went about their day—Oh My God! we'll have "BITS"—blood in the streets.

This was the same literally paranoid delusion we had heard every single time a state got the carry-permit scheme. But it never ever happened ever. Ever. But people persisted in saying that. Delusion is the right word. It was

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hoplophobic—an unfounded morbid fear of firearms with no rational basis.

And in Arizona there was this one extra connection—these people exercising Constitutional Carry didn't need any training! It would surely be a disaster! Until we connected the dots and realized—we've had OPEN carry constitutionally without government mandated training or papers since statehood in 1912, and we've done pretty well with that. Why would it make a difference if your sport coat covered your holster or a woman had a handgun in a handbag? It did not.

It's five years later now, and everything's fine—just like carry with those plastic permission slips for 16 years prior—and crime has decreased. The newspapers report drops in crime, with pundits befuddled as to why. We've got so many people armed for crime deterrence, with self-defense classes filled to bursting just based on free-market dynamics, and some so-called experts can't connect those dots.

The naysayers and blood-in-the-streets folks really are acting paranoid—expressing a fear that has no evidentiary basis. They should consider medical treatment for themselves, not changes to our laws and repression of our rights as a solution to their unsettled mental state.

Advancing freedom has positive outcomes, restricting it does not.

Support for Constitutional Carry is the wise public-policy choice, defends our precious civil and constitutional liberties, upholds the oath of office and should be made without delay or regret.

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Let me add one closing thought about possible insurance concerns and ill-advised gun-ban signs that may spring up at places open to the general public, once Constitutional Carry is in effect.

We introduced a bill in Arizona, twice, called the Gun-Free-Zone Liability Act. It basically says if you create a so-called gun-free zone, you're liable for any harm it causes. We haven't enacted it, yet. But we're persistent.

Those signs are worthless because they don't stop anyone. That's obvious, right? People can walk in and out with guns as they please, regardless of intent. The signs create dangerous, reckless and negligent *quote-unquote make-believe* gun-free zones. And mass murderers, knowing this, have uniformly selected these places as targets for their atrocities, knowing that honest people will tend to be defenseless inside.

By discriminating against people who exercise their specific enumerated civil and human right to keep and bear arms—by refusing them admission to a public establishment—right there you are in the wrong, at least morally. Knowingly creating this danger by posting feckless signs puts the property owner at risk.

If your actions cause harm, because visitors were put in a position where they couldn't properly defend themselves, against a danger we all know is reasonably present, you should not be able to simply ignore that and say tough luck. That seems reasonable to us out here, and we're working on it. Disarming an innocent person is an act of violence and should not be tolerated. The justification for doing so—because you're blindly fearful—is a paltry excuse for denial of civil rights and exposure to a known, proven, very real extreme danger.

Don't make this obvious error:

