

March 13, 2015

RE: Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs, Senate Bill No. 45 Hearing

Dear Chairman Brunk and Honorable Members of the Committee:

Thank you for considering my testimony. As a law enforcement officer in central Kansas, I am a proponent of Senate Bill No. 45.

I've polled several officers on their thoughts regarding Senate Bill No. 45. That personal poll has shown my colleagues are in support of this legislation. We understand that we are the gatekeepers for the constitution and support legislation that upholds the constitution.

The United States Supreme Court has ruled the second amendment is an individual right in ***District of Columbia v. Heller***, 554 U.S. 570 (2008). The constitution says it, the United States Supreme Court upheld it and it is my belief that Kansas proceeding with Senate Bill No. 45 is just.

Open carry has been legally practiced by Kansans who want to protect themselves for far longer than concealed carry and well before constitutional carry was even a twinkle in the legislatures eye. People have been open carrying for quite some time without issue, placing a shirt over the top of the firearm changes nothing.

Law enforcement officers treat all contacts with people as if there is the possibility of being harmed by fists, knives, bats, cars, or firearms. We are trained to plan for that contingency at any time and why we wear body armor. I have no fear law abiding Kansans will use it to protect themselves and others. Criminals will continue to be criminals and I will continue to protect myself as I've been trained to do.

The general response time of an officer in my jurisdiction is 2.52 minutes according to our report management system. That is from the time the call is received and the officer dispatched is "on scene." If, heaven forbid, that time comes where someone wishes a Kansan, you, or your family harm. I want you to think how many times someone can swing a bat, punch with a fist, or pull a trigger in 2.52 minutes. I'm minutes away, when seconds count.

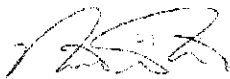
Laws don't keep bad guys from doing bad things. They merely give officers, prosecutors and judges the guidelines to use to keep bad people from society. When someone means to do you harm legal words are only words on a piece of paper. A mother with a firearm, protecting her children will do much more than the piece of paper.

People talk about the lack of training. While I agree that training is important I think it isn't in touch with what the founding fathers envisioned when drafting the constitution. The current "training" is basically 7

hours on the law and maybe 1 hour on the range shooting to ten yards. Concealed carry is a lifestyle change. When you make the decision to concealed carry you change your lifestyle. You change your wardrobe, where you sit in a restaurant, how you sit, how you bend over to pick up your child, tie your shoe, where you shop and how you hold the significant others hand. Out of the hundreds if not thousands of traffic stops I have performed that someone presented me with a concealed carry permit NOT A SINGLE ONE had the firearm on them. I want to point this out because people cite issues about the training. Those that can't or won't adapt to the lifestyle changes won't carry. I believe this is a good thing. If they're willing to walk out of the house without their gun to protect themselves or others they don't have the mental fortitude to carry a firearm. Thus, they don't have the mental fortitude to train, change their lifestyle, or carry and will weed themselves out. This makes the training issue a moot point. Those who want to carry, want to change and want to protect themselves from immediate harm will SEEK the extra training. Those are the people you want protecting you and I.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for considering my opinion regarding this proposed law. I strongly urge you to pass SB45 and send it to the floor of the House for a debate and vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Sowers', with a stylized, cursive script.

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