



Kansas State Rifle Association

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

Dear Chairman Ostmeyer and Honorable Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your time. I represent thousands of KSRA members and Kansas gun owners. We are a proponent of Senate Bill No. 45. I sincerely appreciate you considering our opinion regarding this piece of legislation.

This bill can be referred to as Permitless Carry, Constitutional Carry or Freedom to Carry. Freedom being the key word. In essence this bill simply allows for law abiding citizens aged 21 and over to carry a concealed handgun without having to pay the government for permission. It repeals the requirement to obtain a permit to carry concealed but leaves all other regulations and the permitting process intact. There are many reasons to reestablish this liberty for our citizens.

The Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and Article IV of the Kansas Constitution never imply in any way that citizens should have to comply with government applications, mandatory classes, testing or paying fees to exercise that right. It is unmistakably an unalienable and natural right for citizens to exercise self-defense.

Beyond the Constitutional issues there are practical reasons why this legislation should be enacted. There are many citizens who do not have the money to pay those permit fees. Money should never be a reason to prevent someone from exercising their right to self-defense. Many Senior Citizens live on fixed incomes and simply cannot afford the costs to obtain a permit yet they are undoubtedly one of the segments of the population that are at the most risk and need to be able to carry a handgun. Some people simply do not have an income that will provide expendable cash for licensing and those folks probably live in lower income neighborhoods where crime is more prevalent. They too are at higher risk and should be able to protect themselves. I think we have to ask ourselves why we deprive them of that right.

Additionally, Kansas has always been an Open Carry state and with the enactment of last year's local preemption bill citizens 18 and over are allowed to Open Carry and are doing so without incident. No licensing or training is required and no fees must be paid in order to do so. However, should someone's coat or shirt accidentally cover their firearm they are guilty of a criminal use of weapons offense. This is not a fair or reasonable situation to be faced with.

Several other states have repealed permit requirements for carrying concealed. Vermont has never required a permit to carry. Arizona passed their repeal in 2010 and there have been no problems. Other states with Constitutional or Permitless Carry are Alaska, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Wyoming. Currently there are several other states that have Constitutional Carry legislation making its way through their statehouses.

The predictions are always the same and they have always been proven wrong. When we were passing concealed carry and local preemption in Kansas people said there would be bloodshed in the streets. There was none. People said there would be shootouts in parking lots over parking spaces. There were none. We should be guided by fact and not emotions.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for considering our position regarding this most important matter. We respectfully urge that you vote in support of SB 45, recommend it for passage, and send it to the floor of the Senate for a debate and vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

President and Registered Lobbyist

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