Dear Senators,

I have requested to appear before this committee to voice my concerns over SB-45. While I appreciate greatly all of the legislation you have done in our state to ensure the rights of citizens under the 2nd amendment, my life-time of experience with firearms, tells me this bill is not right for the state of Kansas.

I stand here as a staunch advocate of our 2nd amendment. I have been a member of the NRA since 1977 and a life member since 1983. I have been heavily involved with firearms, firearms instruction, competitive shooting, concealed carry handgun training for the state of Kansas since 2006 and I am a 20 year veteran of the United States Marine Corps. In none of these organizations or training institutions do they accept anything less than proper training with firearms before participation is allowed. Even then, in most cases, firearms are used in a controlled environment under the watchful eye of a properly trained instructor. Why even the state of Kansas requires hunter's safety.

When I first became aware of this bill, I was shocked to learn that it was endorsed by the NRA. The NRA is the standard bearer of the 2nd amendment. The NRA is the “Gold Standard” for firearms safety and proper training of firearms handling and usage. Yet, the NRA endorses a bill that eliminates any training requirement. A bill that will allow any citizen that can legally own a firearm, to carry a concealed handgun in public for self defense.

While I whole heartedly support the citizens right to carry a firearm, this is not the only purpose of the 2nd amendment. The bill of rights does not provide citizens with the unfettered freedom to do whatever they choose; there are limitations. Too often, activists, concerning rights under the 2nd amendment pick out only the 2nd part, there is also a first part. The first part is integral to the 2nd part. “A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state”.

What part of well regulated do you not understand? I could apply many different dictionary meanings to the word regulated and they would all serve the meaning the founders intended. This is an incontrovertible word, a paradigm that is unassailable. We could say maintain in order, accurate and proper functioning, according to rule, principle or law, to meet a particular specification or requirement; any of these definitions would conform to the intentions of the founding fathers by their usage of the term, “well regulated.”

Now our legislators in their zeal to advance the citizens' of Kansas rights under the 2nd amendment, propose to go from well regulated, to unregulated. In order to get an idea of unregulated verses regulated, all one need do is attach the prefix un, in, or im to some of the a fore mentioned words and we get an entirely different meaning. How do you feel about an inaccurate, or improperly functioning, or imparticluar specification or requirement,?

I don't know about you, but I don't relish the idea of someone carrying a concealed handgun for self defense, that has as much potential of inflicting deadly force on an innocent bystander; as the assailant does. All that; because the person isn't properly trained in the use of firearms.

A requirement for training does nothing to infringe on a citizens right to keep and bear arms. What a requirement for training does is help to ensure the safety of all citizens. Our governments first responsibility is to the safety and welfare of our citizens. Moreover, a citizen that desires to carry a firearm needs to be aware of the legal ramifications of carrying a firearm.

The current course requirement for obtaining a concealed carry license is a good place to start because of all it entails. Students benefit from this class and it is not at all onerous. A handgun carrier needs to know the information in this course. I would well imagine the average citizen doesn't know a thing about deadly force and when, under law, they can use deadly force.

I respectfully request that this bill be killed.

With Respect and Admiration,

David A. Nichols
Salina, KS