



# Education that goes to work.

Kansas Community Colleges

[kacct.org](http://kacct.org)

March 9, 2017

Chair Barker and members of the State and Federal Affairs Committee,

The Kansas Association of Community College Trustees (KACCT) and its member colleges are submitting written testimony in opposition to HB 2220 which prohibits the “governing board of a postsecondary educational institution from taking any administrative action, governing the ownership, possession, storage, carrying, manner of carrying or transporting of concealed handguns or ammunition, or any component or combination thereof.”

Community colleges believe that the safety and security of their students and their campuses are of utmost importance. Each of our governing boards is comprised of elected board members, trustees, who hold the safety and security of the students and the facilities in trust for their local taxing district. As a system of nineteen colleges, the local communities who elect our trustees provide the majority funding for their college.

We believe it best to allow locally elected trustees who govern community colleges, who are closest to the college and knowledgeable of the issues and concerns of their campuses, to make decisions about the safety and security of their campuses. Each of them have taken this responsibility very seriously.

This bill raises concerns for us and we want to ensure that you are aware of some examples of the practical issues and conflicts this bill’s restrictions raise for some of our campuses:

- Chemistry labs – In many labs, backpacks must be placed away from work stations, in a specific location, because of the safety issues of potential chemical spills or open flames. This is done in the lab area so instructors can intervene quickly if there were some sort of an accident, without tripping over stools or backpacks. Our understanding is that the law requires that the concealed weapon must be at all times within the exclusive and uninterrupted control of the individual, whether being carried on them or in a backpack or purse. Safety measures in place in Chemistry labs such as this would not allow weapons to be in the “exclusive and uninterrupted control of the individual” if carried in a backpack or purse. Yet, we feel strongly that this type of safety rule that we have implemented in the labs is in the best interests of our students and our colleges.

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- Athletics, vocal music or theatre classes – Practice for these activities, classes, games and presentations would not allow the wearing of a backpack or other such device to hold the weapon. Yet if the students do not, their weapons are not under their exclusive and uninterrupted control. We need to be able to make a reasonable decision for storage, or put into place some restrictions during these types of activities.

If they are carrying on their person, the law also states that “concealed” means completely hidden from view and does not reveal a handgun in any way. How will this law be applied in these situations?

- Tutoring and testing centers require for testing purposes that backpacks must be stored on shelves when students enter the room to take tests. Especially when taking licensing exams (like NCLEX) there are very strict testing guidelines to prevent cheating. How do we adhere to those required licensing guidelines for testing and still adhere to this bill that prohibits us from limiting backpacks or purses if that is where the gun is concealed?
- Childcare centers on campus are covered under KDHE licensing regulations that prohibit weapons from being carried into childcare centers and pre-schools. These centers can lose their licenses if this regulation is violated. How does this align with Kansas law related to concealed carry on our campuses?
- Nursing students in clinical sites and sims labs with “volunteer” patients must lift and transport patients. Conceal carry in these situations can also be problematic while dealing with patients.

These are just a few examples of the kinds of concerns this bill would cause for us. We know that you, just like all of us, care about student, staff and community safety, and we believe each college is in the best position to know how to deal with each of these issues on their campuses.

We would ask that you oppose this bill and support safety decisions by locally elected officials.

Thank you for consideration of these important issues and for giving us the opportunity to submit our comments.

Sincerely,



Linda Fund, Executive Director  
Kansas Association of Community College Trustees