

Senate of the State of Kansas
Federal and State Affairs Committee
300 SW 10th Street
Topeka, Kansas 66612

10 February 2018

Re: Strong Recommendation for rejection of HB 2042 & request to deliver oral testimony 13 February

Committee Members:

I hereby respectfully request time to deliver oral testimony on HB 2042 and very much appreciate your considering this written testimony recommending rejection of the bill. So here we are less than a year since guns were first thrust into our classrooms. Now before us is HB 2042 a bill which will put guns in the hands of a much larger percentage of our student body.

As we contemplate this, let's review the predicted, not-newsworthy events that have transpired since KSA 75-7c et. seq. went into effect:

An unstable student was reported to campus safety for threatening a graduate teaching assistant with a weapon on campus. A professor was also threatened on the first day of class by a student who had failed to pass his course twice before. We've also witnessed a cascade of unadjudicated academic misconduct cases (which will do wonders with the accreditation visit this semester). KU lost millions in contracts as high tech projects were moved off campus and out of state and have seen skilled technologists leave Kansas to start high tech aerospace companies in places like California... all because of our irresponsible gun laws.

We've lost droves of first-rate professors and are finding it nearly impossible to recruit highly qualified new faculty who will put up with the toxic combination of armed kids, a hostile administration and substandard pay. Word of the poisonous atmosphere is so widespread that one search this past fall in KU's School of Engineering was reported as having not a single American or European apply. Scholars of real quality don't want to come here. All of the best faculty members who are remotely mobile are leaving, planning to leave or have left.

So what are we to do? Should we make the problem worse by arming the remaining 80% of the student body and induce a flood of guns in our largest lecture halls? Let me recommend that we follow the example of another institution that hosts thousands of 18 - 20 year olds: The US Military.

For those of you who have connections to the armed forces, you will know that even under the latest rules, 18 - 20 year olds are not allowed to carry private firearms on post. Why is this so? In the words of a former military police commander: "Because they are still growing up." If HB 2042 passes, this body would be saying that partying college freshmen can be trusted more with a firearm than a soldier. If you really think that all college students of today are more mature than our men and women in uniform, please come for a visit. I'll show you where Reed accidentally glued Caroline to the table, or where the speeding drunk kid launched his sports car over the fountain into the Chi-O house or the lecture hall where the trio of streakers shocked Chem 184, or the deluge shower that gets pulled as a prank and floods our building from time to time. This is normal college life, and all we're trying to do teach our kids to the best of our ability, make sure they graduate with a good skillset and without injuries. Adding guns to the mix is as smart as arming John Belushi's character Bluto in Animal House. Help us out. Don't pass 2042.

Respectfully,



Dr. Ron Barrett

Spokesperson, State of Kansas Conference of the American Association of University Professors

RMB:pdq