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Senator Bud Estes  
Chair, Federal and State Committee  
300 SW Tenth Street, #136-East  
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Dear Senator Estes and Members of the Committee,

I'm writing to urge your opposition to HB 2042, a bill that passed through the House written primarily for national lobbyists' aims, that further weakens Kansas' guns laws. It requires Kansas to accept out-of-state concealed carry permits – including from states that allow teenagers to carry hidden, loaded handguns in public and on campuses.

Since 2015, current Kansas law permits people over 21 years old – even those who have never completed firearms safety training – to carry hidden, loaded handguns in public. If the Senate enacts HB 2042, Kansas would be compelled to recognize concealed carry permits from every other state, including from states that permit teens to carry concealed. Counted among the 13 states that issue such permits? Our neighbor Missouri.

The sad realities are that suicide rates peak with teens at age 16, and remain elevated through age 25; 18 to 20-year-olds are nearly four times more likely to commit gun homicides than adults; risky decision making by young people whose brains are not fully developed include imperfect safety practices (locking firearms away in dormitory safes, or storing ammunition separately from guns). We know that stolen guns become criminals' guns. Rates of firearm thefts are rising and this poses risks colleges have not yet had to face.

Please, this committee's focus should be on improving Kansas' gun laws and Kansans' lives – passing proposals to help keep guns off college (and now high school) campuses – not weakening Kansas's laws and endangering the public further. I urge you to side with the safety of Kansans, not the gun lobby, by opposing HB 2042.

Sincerely,

Leslie D. Mark