

Date of Testimony: February 10, 2018
Bill Number: Bill HB2042
Testimony by: Emily A. Smith

In Opposition
Testimony: Written Only

Dear Chairman Bud Estes and the members of the Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs:

I am writing to voice my opposition to the Concealed Carry bill, HB2042.

As an educator, I work with high school students on a daily basis. Many of my seniors are already 18 – legally adults – yet their decision-making skills are still developing. I can imagine an 18-year-old carelessly leaving a loaded weapon on the seat of his/her car in a school parking lot, or thoughtlessly carrying it into the school building in a backpack. Teenagers can easily be distracted; it's not far-fetched to imagine a legal weapon falling into the wrong hands because of a careless mistake.

Such a mistake could conceivably have dire consequences. Over the past 2-3 years, we have seen several suicides among high school students in Johnson County. Some of those deaths were the result of self-inflicted gunshot wounds. The anguish suffered by the families and communities in the wake of these tragedies is immeasurable. Allowing 18-year-olds to legally carry a gun – and possibly use that weapon on himself, a family member, or a friend, whether deliberately or accidentally -- would needlessly compound the suffering. High school students have enough to deal with – grades, social life, peer pressure, college plans, etc. Let's not add anxiety over the risk of concealed weapons to the mix. This proposed bill defies common sense.

I ask that you oppose HB2042. Lowering the age of concealed carry to 18 is too great a risk for our young people, our families, and our communities.

Thank you for your consideration,

Emily A. Smith
esmithflute@gmail.com
[913-909-3025](tel:913-909-3025)