

GUNS ON CAMPUS: FAST FACTS

Beginning in August 2016, the Campus Carry law passed by the Texas legislature in June 2015 will go into effect at public four-year universities across the state. Here are a few facts Longhorn students, faculty, staff & parents should know about the presence of concealed firearms on our campus:

Results of a 2015 SurveyUSA News Poll conducted in Texas indicate that the **majority of Texans are opposed to Campus Carry**, which allows concealed handgun license holders to bring weapons onto university campuses.

- 63% of Texans are opposed to allowing college students to carry concealed handguns onto college campuses
- 72% are opposed to allowing college students to bring concealed handguns into the classroom
- 66% are opposed to allowing college students to bring concealed handguns into campus dormitories
- 75% are opposed to allowing concealed handguns at college sporting events
- 85% are opposed to allowing concealed handguns on college campus facilities that also permit alcohol
- 73% are opposed to allowing concealed handguns in fraternity and sorority houses
- 67% oppose or strongly oppose a law requiring universities to allow people to bring concealed handguns to college classes.

Source: SurveyUSA News Poll, March 2015

College students & suicide:

As of 2014, the student population at University of Texas-Austin was 51,313. According to recent studies conducted by UCLA and by the American College Health Association, nearly **1 in 10 college students admits to feeling frequently depressed**. More than 50% have felt “overwhelming anxiety” in the past year, and almost 40% have felt at some point that things hopeless. Now Texas legislators are adding Campus Carry to this already volatile mix.

- Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among young people ages 15 to 24. The suicide rate among this age group has tripled since the 1950s.
- The suicide rate among college students in the U.S. is 7 per 100,000.
- The suicide rate of young men, ages 20-24, is **double** that of young women in the same age group. Among teenagers ages 17-19, young men commit suicide at **five times** the rate of young women.
- Guns are the leading method of suicide for male college students. Attempted suicide with a firearm is fatal more than 85% of the time.

The financial burden: Who’s going to pay for Campus Carry?

- Six of the largest public university systems in Texas estimate that it will cost anywhere from **\$39 million to \$49 million** to install gun safes, cameras, metal detectors and other equipment, train staff and security personnel, erect signs around campus, and offer classes to students to boost awareness of Campus Carry rules.
- The University of Texas System, in particular, says it will pay more than **\$39 million** to further train campus police, add personnel, build gun storage facilities, purchase equipment and signage, and update security systems.
- The cost of Campus Carry will eventually be passed on to students and their families in some form (tuition increases, higher fees, etc) and to Texas taxpayers. **The very citizens & voters who opposed Campus Carry will end up paying for it.**

***Sources: American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, National Network of Depression Centers, U.S. Centers for Disease Control, Texas Tribune, Houston Chronicle, Dallas Morning News, Los Angeles Times, Johns Hopkins University, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Smartgunlaws.org, American College Health Association*

Campus Carry: Voices of Reason

“The presence of concealed weapons will make campus a less safe environment.”

Admiral William McRaven, Chancellor of the University of Texas System

“The fact that student suicide rates are lower than general population rates is largely attributed to the relative dearth of access to firearms on campus.” Doris Iarovici, MD, in *Perspectives on College Student Suicide*, the National Network of Depression Centers

“The ability to carry firearms on campus will stifle the learning and growing processes... It is a heinous offense to our campus that, after all of students' and administrators' outspoken opposition to campus carry, our representatives decided they knew better...” *Daily Texan* Editorial Staff

“There is no recorded incident in which a victim – or spectator – of a violent crime on a campus has prevented that crime by brandishing a weapon.” Gary Olson, former provost of Idaho State University, in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*

“It will cost our schools and universities...tens of millions of dollars. It won't make our schools safer. It will make them more dangerous.” Rep. Chris Turner (D-Grand Prairie) in the *Ft. Worth Star-Telegram*

“We believe that both private and public institutions deserve an opt-in or opt-out of the campus carry policy...we believe that the entirety of our campuses should be “gun-free” zones if said institution sees fit.” Excerpt from a letter to Gov. Greg Abbott from student body presidents of Rice University, UT- San Antonio, Angelo State University, Trinity University, The University of Houston, The University of North Texas, Texas Tech University, UH-Clear Lake, UT-Austin, UH-Downtown, San Jacinto College, Houston Community College and UT-Dallas

"We're very concerned. In the classroom there are times when conversations can get heated. It changes the learning environment when there is that risk." Ashley Alcantara, UT-Austin student, in the *Los Angeles Times*

“SHSU and TSUS (Texas State University System) are opposed to both open and concealed carry on campus.” Dr. Jaime Hebert, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Sam Houston State University

“As a university, we're against it.” Adam Alattray, student body president, University of North Texas

“When you're responding to a situation...and someone's in plain clothes with a gun, who's the bad guy? Who are you going to take out to save the lives of the 10,000 other students you're trying to protect?” Regina G. Lawson, chief of police, Wakeforest University, in *Forbes*

Who's Responsible for Campus Carry?

Sponsors and supporters of the Campus Carry bill in Texas include:

1. First, we can thank **Gov. Greg Abbott** for signing this bill into law, despite opposition from the majority of Texans.

2. Then we can thank the following **Texas legislators** for thinking that the grades, social pressures and athletics weren't enough for college students to worry about.

Sen. Brian Birdwell (author of bill)
Rep. Allen Fletcher (House sponsor)
Sen. Paul Bettencourt
Sen. Konni Burton (co-author of bill)
Sen. Donna Campbell
Sen. Charles Creighton
Sen. Kevin Eltife
Sen. Craig Estes
Sen. Troy Fraser
Sen. Bob Hall
Sen. Kelly Hancock (co-author of bill)
Sen. Donald Huffines
Sen. Lois Kolkhorst
Sen. Jane Nelson (co-author of bill)
Sen. Robert Nichols
Sen. Charles Perry
Sen. Charles Schwertner
Sen. Kel Seliger
Sen. Larry Taylor
Sen. Nicholas Taylor

*** All sponsors of this bill are members of the Republican party.**

3. Last, but by no means least, we can look to **Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick**, who wrote on his Facebook page: "Regarding the Second Amendment, our first priority this session is to pass Campus Carry." He then prioritized both Campus Carry and Open Carry by scheduling them for the first State Affairs Committee hearing in the recent legislative session.